

Transcript to Class:

Courageous Hearts: An Editorial Overview

By Inspired Living Publisher Editor Bryna René Haynes

For your convenience, the following is the transcript to accompany Inspired Living Publishing's "Courageous Hearts: An Editorial Overview" audio class hosted by ILP Chief Editor Bryna René Haynes.

About Editor Bryna René Haynes

Bryna René is a Word Alchemist, Chief Editor for Inspired Living Publishing since 2010, the President and founder of The Heart of Writing, and the best-selling author of [*The Art of Inspiration: An Editor's Guide to Writing Powerful, Effective Inspirational and Personal Development Books*](#). Her mission is to empower writers to move through their perceived limitations, harness the power of their authentic voice and message, and create world-changing written works.

Bryna's editing portfolio includes many successful non-fiction works, including all of ILP's best-selling print anthologies. To learn more about Bryna and her current projects, please visit www.theheartofwriting.com.

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Bestselling Publisher, Authentic Marketing & List-Building Catalyst, Linda Joy brings select heart-centered visionary female entrepreneurs and authors in front of her global audience with her high-visibility marketing offerings and results-oriented list-building packages.

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Hello and welcome! My name is Bryna Haynes, and I'm the Chief Editor for Inspired Living Publishing. I've created this audio class to support you in understanding the particular focus and requirements for your story submission to Inspired Living Publishing's latest collaborative book project, *Courageous Hearts*.

This audio is offered in addition to our four Master Class audio recordings, which you'll find in your Author Resource Center. Please be sure to listen to all of the audios before you start writing, so you can create a powerful story which is a perfect match for this project, and will make the maximum impact on our readers.

Today's class is entitled "**Courageous Hearts: An Editorial Overview.**" In this class, we'll explore how you can identify the most appropriate moment of your personal experience to serve as the basis for your story submission in this anthology.

Some of the questions I'll be answering for you today include

What is a "Courageous Heart" moment?

What types of stories are appropriate for this project?

What types of stories are NOT appropriate for this project?

What other resources can you utilize as you begin your writing process?

All of the stories featured in Inspired Living Publishing's projects are, at their hearts, teaching stories. Through your story, you will share your personal experience with our readers in a way that helps them grow as you have grown.

Let's begin with the first question: What is a Courageous Heart moment?

Courage comes in many forms. Sometimes it's loud and brash, but more often, it's quiet. It comes from that still place inside us that the noise and chaos of daily life cannot touch. It is the voice that inspires us to live in our truth, even in the face of overwhelming fear, vulnerability, and opposition.

A "Courageous Heart" moment is one where you chose to step out of your comfort zone and be true to yourself regardless of any outside factors—the moment in which you chose to live from your own truth and walk your own path, no matter how frightening or uncertain the way ahead appeared.

And, once you made that choice, something happened. Something shifted—first in your inner world, and then in your outer world. And your life was never the same again.

Your Courageous Heart moment doesn't have to be earth-shattering (at least, from an outsider's perspective). It is simply a moment where you chose to follow your heart's lead despite everything that was pushing you in the opposite direction, a moment when you released all of your "shoulds," "can'ts," and "could haves," and made a soul-connected choice that moved you forward into greater authenticity, connection, and expansion.

Courageous Hearts is a project that is intended to honor every woman's sacred journey back to herself. No matter what courage looks like for you, it is vital for women everywhere to get a glimpse of your journey, so that they can make similarly powerful choices for themselves in their own lives.

The world needs our courage right now, so let's dig deep and bring out the light for all to see!

What kinds of stories are appropriate for this project?

Your story will be told from the first-person point of view (the "I" perspective) and will focus on a moment or series of moments during which you experienced heart-centered courage and made choices from that place of deep connection.

As long as the focus is on your courageous moment of choice, your story can be about anything: your work, your health, your relationships, or your spiritual life. It could describe an earth-shattering epiphany, a grand adventure, a climactic conversation, or a quiet internal shift.

As long as the moment you choose to write about involved a courageous choice made from your deep heart connection, you can make it work in your story. It doesn't have to be a "universal" moment; readers will be able to relate to any story you choose to tell, as long as you share, deeply and fully, the emotions you were experiencing at the time of your big moment. As I discuss in greater detail in my Master Class audio recordings, it's not about *what* you did; it's about *how you felt* when you did it. If you write with your whole heart, and share the deep emotion around your story, readers will be able to connect with even the most "out there" experiences.

Once you've identified the moment about which you want to write, set up the story around it. What was going on before you had your Courageous Heart moment? What did life feel like when you were still making choices that didn't honor your heart and your truth? What changed once you connected to your Courageous Heart?

Here's an example:

Let's say that you really wanted to start your own business, but you were caught up in the "shoulds" of your family's beliefs around success. You kept making choices that weren't aligned with your own truth, and as a result you felt trapped, stressed, overwhelmed, and angry. Describe that place of "stuckness" to your readers. What did a day in your life look and feel like? What thoughts ran through your head every time you thought about giving it all up to do what you loved?

Then, share in real time the moment when you were able to tune into your heart's true desire, and connect with it more strongly than ever before. Let the reader feel it with you. What did you see? What did you feel, touch, smell, or taste? What forces could you feel pushing you toward (or away from) your heart and your inner courage?

Then, when you've tapped into your courage and made your first choice (or choices) from that empowered place, share how that felt in your mind, body, and heart. What looked, smelled, or tasted different in your world? What did you let go of? What did you learn? What events resulted from this choice in both your inner and outer worlds?

Finally, close the story by sharing how your courageous choice brought lasting change into your life, and how you connect to your courageous heart today.

You can find more information about how to create the story arc for a teaching story in our Master Class audios, classes 1 and 2.

You can structure your story several ways. You can start with the past, in the time before you had this learning experience, and then moving through the story of the learning experience and on to the conclusion (which is your life today). You can also start in the moment the shift occurred, and skip back to the past to fill in the backstory. Finally, you can start in the here and now, with a snapshot of your daily life, and then return to the past to share how different things were before you made your Courageous Heart choice. Personally, I think the first two approaches are the most powerful, but any of the three can work if you approach them correctly, so please feel free to use your creativity, and write from a place of intuition and inspiration.

What kinds of stories are NOT appropriate for this project?

The stories published by Inspired Living Publishing are all about personal growth. They are teaching stories, because they provide examples to readers of what's possible if they follow their hearts, souls, and divine inspiration.

Therefore, we want to steer clear of any blame-and-shame drama, or any fictionalized accounts. Our stories are for real women, by real women. Since most of you are already familiar with our brand and mission, I don't expect this to be an issue—but if you have any questions or need clarification, you can feel free to check in with me.

Another thing we want to avoid is treating this story like an article or blog post. While this is a “teaching story” in the sense that readers will learn from your journey, I don't want to see lists of things readers can do to be more courageous in their lives, or instructions to the reader about how to tap into their heart's courage. This is a personal, intimate story about a moment or moments in your life, not a how-to. For drawing out the story lessons, we have a great tool in our reflection questions which will follow your story. So if there is a particular point you want to make, we can discuss putting that in the questions that follow your story, rather than trying to work it into the story itself.

Basically, if you find yourself writing directly to the reader (using “you” to refer to the reader, as I'm doing right now in this instructional audio), you're on the wrong track and need to rein your story back in to focus on you, your experience, and your feelings.

Also, although there is a strong marketing and business growth component to this project, we only want to mention your business and/or brand in the story itself if it has a *direct bearing* on the moment about which you've chosen to write. This story is an opportunity for the reader to get to know you better; if she resonates with you and your message, she can learn more about you and what you do in the bio section in the back of the book. Your story is a great place to introduce yourself, but it's not the place to sell your brand.

Finally, if you've contributed to one or more of our previous collaborative books, I'm thrilled to welcome you back! However, I would prefer not to see a revision of one of your previous submissions here. While I understand that for some of you your personal story may be tightly integrated with your brand and message, there are surely numerous story-worthy moments in your life to choose from for this project, so please don't rehash the same events. Dig deeply, and let something new and creative bubble up for you. If I think your story submission reads too closely to what we've published before, I will send it back to you for a rewrite.

Finally, I'd like to mention a few other resources that I, Linda Joy, and the team at Inspired Living Publishing have created to help you in your story creation process.

In addition to this class, we have also created four additional audio Master Classes to assist you in your writing process. These are:

- Class 1: Choosing Your Story
- Class 2: Story Crafting
- Class 3: Language, Flow, and Other Self-Editing Basics
- Class 4: What to Expect from the Editorial Process

In **Class 1, Choosing Your Story**, we'll delve deeper into how to identify the climactic moment in your life experience that will be the focus of your story submission, and discuss the particular requirements of a teaching story.

In **Class 2, Story Crafting**, we'll explore story arc, talk about tapping into the emotion of your story, linear story flow, making your story relatable, choosing the appropriate point of view, and becoming your own story heroine. I'll also offer some writing tips for completing your first draft.

In **Class 3, Language, Flow, and Other Self-Editing Basics**, we'll talk about what to look for in your self-editing process and how you can hone your story so that it says more, and not less, about you and what you want to express.

And in **Class 4, What to Expect from the Editorial Process**, we'll review the flow of the editing process step by step, and I'll give you some options to consider if you need extra help creating your story or matching our submissions guidelines.

These classes are available in audio format, or in transcript format as PDF files. They contain important information that will be valuable to you as you write and self-edit your submission for this project. Please take the time to listen to the audios or read the transcripts before you start writing. Even if you've contributed to previous publications, it may be helpful for you to review them. It is my hope that these classes will answer any questions or uncertainties you have about the focus and quality of the stories we are looking for in *Courageous Hearts*.

While not directly related to this process, my blog posts on InspiredLivingPublishing.com and AspireMag.net may also offer some additional inspiration.

This concludes our audio class for *Courageous Hearts: An Editorial Overview*. I can't wait to read your stories. If you have questions during your writing process, please feel free to e-mail me at submissions@inspiredlivingpublishing.com.

Have a blessed day, and happy writing!