



Transcript for Episode Four

Inviting Shift podcast focuses on how we step through this messy journey of life confidently so we can feel good about how we show up, have more connected relationships and connect to purpose and meaning.

Or in short, how we manifest the lives we crave in practical, tangible ways.

On this episode, we're going to cover the one huge block that we have when employing the SKILL of confidence.

I want to start with a story today. I don't tell a lot of people about this and it was probably one of the most life-changing experiences - so here goes my vulnerability in order to make some important points about how we can be more confident - even with extreme fear.

When I was 21 and tired of college and bartending, I took a chance on a crazy idea. Selling perfume and cologne in order to start my own business. If you know, give me a break I was young.

Now if you were around in the 90s there were all kinds of weirdly structured companies like this where you apprenticed for commission only in hopes that you would promote yourself through the structure and one day own your own franchise type. Not the important part.

The important part was that I had to sell cologne and perfume on the street and by cold calling businesses in person. It wasn't designer stuff either - it was the knockoffs of the designers for a lot more affordable pricing.

Let me also inject that I am an introvert at heart. I can put on the smile and make conversation with anyone as a bartender, but for the most part, I was an introvert. So going up to strangers or selling inside someone else's business wasn't exactly my cup of tea.

I had a lot of fear: what if they ignore me? What if they think I'm slinging drugs (cops were called several times and our stash of perfumes were rifled through several times because people thought we must be doing something illegal)? What if they insulted the product? What if I am bothering them? What if they think I'm just a pain in the butt? What if they never ended.

And surely when I focused on the what ifs and fear, I showed up fearful and easy to dismiss.



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But then I learned more about sales. It's a statistic. The idea isn't to get everyone to buy. It was to eliminate as quickly the ones that wouldn't and move on. There can't be fear of being told no because I was going to hear it.

Then I was told a stat. If I could get 10 people to try a spritz of perfume, I would get at least one sale - even when I was fearful. So if I talked to 100 people, more than half would say yes to a free spray which meant I was minimally selling 5 bottles. Of course as I got better, so did my stats.

The feared NO, became a beacon for me, no problem, let me get to my next spray. I started focusing on the joy of making the sale and finding sales rather than giving all my focus to the fear.

Fear even helped me in my sales. When you are on the street, bad things can happen. SO I only focused on those things that were truly about safety. I got over the fear by walking with it and repeating.

While it wasn't wildly successful -- meaning I don't sell cologne and perfume today, I did learn a ton about fear, judgment and how we can allow that to change how we see ourselves. Either by backing down and stepping away from the uncomfortable or leaning into it with the SKILL of confidence and lessening the fear over time.

That time was the time I proved to myself that the opinion of me that mattered most was mine. It showed me that I can step through fear and do the thing anyway. It taught me that my success didn't depend on who thought what about me or even 'getting rid' of my fear -- it depended on where I put my focus and how willing I was to step into the uncomfortable.

While you may not have had a fear experience just like that, there are so many things we do even though we have fear: having babies, going to that interview, having the vulnerable and challenging conversations with people we love, speaking our truth.

These things all take some courage in order to employ the skill of confidence.

Definition of courage: the quality of mind or spirit that enables a person to face difficulty, danger, pain, etc., *without fear*; bravery.

But I think that definition is a bit off. I mean *without fear*? What would we need courage for if there was no fear?



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I think Brene Brown's definition is better here. Courage is Fear Walking.

It's when we move forward whether we know what lies beyond the next few steps, or if we'll get an unfavorable outcome.

Kind of like confidence, right? They are both skills. We aren't necessarily born with a natural talent for these, in fact I would even say we might have a natural tendency for the opposite because humans love their comfort. We are creatures of comfort right?

That's why even though there may be a fire inside to do those big goals or dreams, we choose against them in our every day choices. We don't employ confidence or courage because it's scary stuff. Growth is uncomfortable and growth often requires confidence and courage.

So confidence and courage are *meant* to be uncomfortable for us. Otherwise we wouldn't be growing and we get stuck, like the rose that refuses to bloom.

For confidence and courage, we have to get to know our fear.

We have several ways we naturally deal with our fear as humans...

Definition of fear: a distressing emotion aroused by impending danger, evil, pain, etc., whether the threat is real or imagined; the feeling or condition of being afraid.

What fear is physiologically is a natural response to our thoughts. The more fearful our thoughts, the more fear we feel. The thinking comes first.

Ignore it.

We love to just avoid fear. Pretend it isn't there. Call ourselves fearless (as if there is such a thing). In my life, when I do this I tend to miss the actual safety issues too or the fear comes back louder than before and knocks me down. Either way it hasn't been effective.

Control it.

Oooh we love to control things right? If I can just think of all the things that might go wrong I can definitely avoid any kind of discomfort. However, all this ever does is have me show up controlling and freak out every time a detail falls out of line with what I wanted it to be. And we can't really control everything, can we?

Settle for it.

It's too scary so it must mean it just is what it is. I have to stay stuck because fear tells me not to move. I stay in my box.



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But what if we got to know it so we could manage ourselves through the fear.

When we get to know our fear we can pick out the truth in things, we can relax into more trust in ourselves and we build our confidence.

And it's not optional - fear is a natural human emotion and actually a HUGE benefit to us.

Let's think about why we have fear - it keeps us safe! We are here today because our ancestors had a great sense of fear that kept them alive long enough to create new generations.

Fear is an indicator that safety is at risk. It keeps us from death getting seriously injured.

But most of us don't run into serious dangers every day. We run into discomfort. And our brain gets confused because in our thoughts, we make it out to be life ending... yet most aren't.

Outside of some real risk-takers and risky jobs, most of our everyday fears revolve around things that are not life-threatening.

We're afraid of having that hard conversation because someone else might judge us harshly or not like us

We're afraid because we don't know what will happen and we could fail and feel humiliation

We're afraid because we try to think of every scenario and know we can't control every detail

We're afraid because we had a bad experience in the past (which we obviously survived)

We're afraid mostly because we don't want to be uncomfortable and uncomfortable means we are not happy - our chosen emotion.

While there are valid things to be fearful over, most of the things we worry about are uncomfortable, not truly life or death situations.

Here's the thing, life is meant to be uncomfortable.

One of my top 3 favorite quotes is from Dr. Susan David's book, Emotional Agility:

"Discomfort is the price of admission to a meaningful life."



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And we crave meaning don't we? We crave deeply connected relationships. We crave growth and learning new things. We crave the challenging.

Which means we crave discomfort. And the thought of discomfort will naturally bring us fear... unless we get to know our fear and how to distinguish between safety and discomfort.

We know discomfort, don't we. We feel it. It usually comes in the form of uncomfortable feelings: shame, guilt, anger, grief, sadness, jealousy, fear...

The reason that these feelings are so uncomfortable is because we've never been truly taught how to manage them. Many of us are completely okay with feeling happy, joy, pride, etc. but maybe we weren't allowed to be angry or sad or disappointed... so we don't know how to deal with them. In many cases, we were even taught those uncomfortable feelings were wrong or if you were raised in some religions, a sin.

The truth is all feelings are valid. We wouldn't have the capability of this huge range of emotions if we weren't meant to feel them all.

It's what we do with them that gets us into trouble.

If we tell ourselves we aren't allowed to be angry (which is a popular thing I hear by the way), then we can start shaming ourselves for feeling angry. We can make our essential humanness invalid or wrong.

Invalidating our humanness looks like:

I should just be grateful.

I can't feel this way.

What's wrong with me for feeling this way?

How this relates to fear: if we can start seeing our emotions as indicators rather than directives or something to 'get rid of' quickly, we can get the message without fear stopping us from doing the thing we know we need or want.

Normalizing the discomfort visualization: Listening to the message

Close your eyes if you are in a safe space to do so.



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Think of one fear: it could be a big dream or goal, or maybe a hard conversation you might need to have. Zoom in on one particular fear. If it's a big mess of fears, just choose one. Like if I want to write and publish a book, there might be a million steps I fear, but let's start with one single medium sized one. Like I fear no one will be interested in my writing or I fear getting started and not finishing.

Take a moment and tap into one fear behind something you want.

Breathe that story in. Notice the thoughts. Tap into the fear and the spiral of what it means if the worst thing happens. They may even feel like a spiral. One negative message to another.

Now notice the fear in your body. Fear is merely an emotion and emotions show up as physical sensations in the body. Your chest may feel tight, you might feel a little nausea, or a headache starting. It can feel different for everyone. Notice what fear feels like in your body knowing you are safe in this moment and we're just tapping in.

Through this feeling or sensations in your body, does this feeling feel familiar? Can you think of other times in the past that you felt this way?

Okay deep breath. Again and you can open your eyes.

Fear can grip us, right? It's familiar. We probably can all think of times that felt familiar, yet we are feeling fear about things that are yet to happen. In this moment we aren't in danger, yet we can feel it as though the worst case scenario is happening right now.

And we all know we've spent a ton of time in worry or fear over things that never even came close to coming to fruition. What a waste of energy that we could have put into what we actually wanted instead of what we don't. In fact, I think we often manifest the worst case because we're so focused on it.

The second step to walking with fear, or courage is to

Tell the *whole* truth and lead with intention.

Visualization: What is the best case scenario?

Close your eyes if it's safe to do so wherever you are.



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Think of that same future goal or situation you were thinking about. Remind yourself just briefly what the fear is. What could go wrong or not turn out the way you want it? What happens if you fail?

Now ask yourself, what if the opposite is true? What is the most positive result or intended result in this situation or goal?

What would it look like for it to turn out even better than the best case scenario? Picture it.

Now, how does it feel for the best of the best to come true? Breathe it into your body.

What physical sensations come up? Is there tingling? Lightness? Freedom? Pride? Fulfillment?

Give the sensations some feeling words. If you struggle, think of a time when you felt these sensations before. What did that feel like?

3-5 feelings that would come up with the best of the best scenarios.

Breathe that in. Again.

Open your eyes.

Now you have intention. Intention is what we focus on in order to hold ourselves for what we want.

WE HAVE TO PUT IN WHAT WE WANT OUT. This means if your words are free, lightness and brave, then you need to put the free, lightness and brave into your actions.

If we want to feel meaningful, impactful and curious, then we have to lead our actions with meaning, impact and curiosity.

If we want to feel love, compassion and kindness, we have to approach it with love, compassion and kindness.

It's really that simple.

But let's look at an example from one of my clients.



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I have a client, let's call her Susie. Susie has been struggling with her relationship for years but she's afraid to have the hard conversations. In almost every area of her life she avoids having the hard conversations - even when she's left feeling hurt or diminished by something her husband says. She's sure he probably doesn't mean what he's saying but he says things and she just sucks it up.

When she has brought it up, she's been overwhelmed with fear. Afraid he won't listen. Afraid he doesn't care and will continue it. But mostly afraid he is going to see her as needy, bitchy or overly-sensitive. She fears the judgement she may receive if she speaks her truth.

So we worked on it. We looked at her fear.

It seems in the past when she's spoken her truth, it's only come out when she's truly over her limit with anger and even a bit of rage. So instead of having the conversation, she starts with fury and yells to be heard. In response, her husband starts to feel defensive and pushes anger and frustration right back. So she fears bringing up stuff because she doesn't know how to approach it without fear.

She was focused on how she could get it wrong. She was focused on the fear and the outcome that would just result in another argument.

Instead I had her imagine, just like we did, what the best outcome could be to a hard conversation. The best of the best - right? I asked her what that would feel like.

She said: connection, compassion, and being heard. That's what she really truly wanted from the conversation.

So we focused on ways that she could get more of that by putting more of that into her intentions. So if her intentions are connection, compassion and being heard, then she probably needs to approach the situation differently.

She thought about it and focused on it. She meditated with those feelings before having the conversation with her spouse. She chose her words with connection, compassion and being heard being the focus and she delivered it with those in mind.

She even shared those as her intentions at the beginning of the conversation to keep herself accountable. She told him that if he felt she was speaking without connection, compassion and being heard as the focus, he could point it out so they could both stay on



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track. It was the first (of many) conversations that went well. When she focused on what she wanted, she brought it with her instead of the fear and the focus on the worst of the worst.

She shifted her focus and her energy. You can too. We'll talk more about it after this message.

Listen, fear comes with really good things too. Ignoring our fear is also banning the great things we really want.

Ever felt excited? Excitement is something a lot of us say we crave but by the very definition, excitement means: An emotional state characterized by its potential for impulsive or poorly controlled activity.

Fear is always going to come along with excitement, yet so many of us squash our excitement because it's scary. Excitement can also mean curiosity and newness and we want those too. Fear is going to happen. We suffer whether we hide in comfort or we pursue the things that we truly want. I'd rather fail striving for better. Better to shoot for the stars and land on a mountain than stay stuck.

So now that we're listening (not reacting, but listening) to the messages of fear and walking with it rather than giving it the spotlight, how do we develop more courage and confidence?

Employing confidence & courage

Let's review the steps.

- Feel the fear and listen for the messages
- Find the truth - we're going to talk about that last.
- Lead with intention. How do we want to feel at the end, and how can we infuse that now.
- Walk with the fear compassionately.

Being kind to ourselves when we fail. It's one of the hardest, yet most resilience building tool we can give ourselves.



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We're probably not going to get it perfect the first time. When we normalize that things happen, we can give ourselves more compassion. Sometimes people are going to show up as jerks even when they don't intend to. People are going to miss deadlines that make your life harder. Acts of God are going to happen when we have that perfect thing planned. Stuff we never could have thought of or prepared for is going to happen. We can't base our confidence over how things look when we get there, but we can ensure we still feel good about our part if we remember that we are only responsible for how we show up -- not for the goal looking exactly how we want it to.

There are external factors that we are not responsible for or can't change. We can do our best to circumvent them, but to judge ourselves on the outcome is what keeps the fear-loop going, isn't it?

We fear doing things because the last thing wasn't perfect. It was scary and then when we got there, it didn't even look like we wanted. We put all that effort and time in and it didn't seem to make much of a difference to the goal, right?

But it probably did make a difference to our ability to be resilient and try again IF we focus on what we do control - ourselves.

We talk more about manifesting confidence in episode one to be able to see how we actually step into confidence. But the short of it is, we get intentional.

Then we move forward with compassion.

Compassion means we put down perfection. We put down expecting ourselves to get it right every time - especially when we're learning.

Compassion is seeing confidence as a skill that doesn't require us to get it right, just that we tried. Then it's celebration or compassion. And often both.

Celebrate all the ways you showed up the way you want.

Have compassion for the ways you didn't and learn how you might choose to do it differently. Not as a shaming tool, but a lesson.

Normalize not getting everything right and you'll have less fear around it.



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"Things aren't going to go as I want them to and I might suffer some discomfort."

That doesn't mean we're unsafe - we're just uncomfortable - two different things.

We can do the uncomfortable things -- in fact we discussed how it's required for a meaningful life.

Confidence doesn't happen by accident. It's a skill we hone.

I've added a bonus alignment to this podcast episode so you can walk through the fear through a voice we are all familiar with -- the inner critic. You know the inner critic -- always shouting in our ear about how we aren't enough or we're too much and we never get it right.

I've heard many people say they put up with the inner critic or let her come along but don't allow her to speak. I don't know about you, but my inner critic doesn't stop talking because I tell her to. Instead, I have a new way to manage the inner critic. What if we befriended her and actually listened mindfully so we could pull out the truth and leave the rest behind?

It's in the bonus so I hope you'll click and try out the visualization and the questions that come with it to help you journal. It's one small part of my Confident, Connected and Impactful coaching program that has helped other women like you keep the Inner Critic from taking over and keeping them from the life they truly crave.

That's it for this program.