

GROWING UP BOLDNESS

Building the
Fortitude to Keep
on Keeping On

a eBook by

Kathryn C. Lang

Growing Up Boldness

Building the fortitude to keep on keeping on

An eBook by

Kathryn C. Lang

Growing Up Boldness
Copyright © 2014 Kathryn C. Lang
Copyright Licensed to Peculiar Productions, www.pecuproductions.com



All rights reserved.

No portion of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means - electronic, mechanical, photocopy, recording, or any other – except in the case of partial quotes for review purposes - without receiving the PRIOR written permission from the copyright owner.

Cover images have been adapted by Kathryn C. Lang from stock images
Logo image developed by Lewis Screen Printing & Monogramming for the exclusive use of Kathryn C. Lang.

All Scripture references are paraphrased in the words of the author unless otherwise noted.

Growing Up Boldness

The change that I want for my life will require bold and purposeful action. Boldness is not something that the world embraces so I will have to grow up the boldness that will allow me to push through the limits of the world to live out my possibilities.

Growing Up Boldness - One

Honest Evaluation

I have been learning about what makes me smile and what makes me brave and what makes me focused. I have also been learning quite a bit about what pushes me over to the others side.

The investments that I have been making into learning have given me the motivation I need to push on or push over or sometimes to recognize how to push better. I am making better choices even when my first desire is to slow down or put off what I should be doing.

With the help of the learning and the new people I have been meeting and connecting with, I am getting bolder in the pursuit of my dreams. Boldness is that fearless daring that keeps me looking forward and stepping forward. Boldness is that courageous energy that moves forward without hesitation or without becoming fearful of actual (or possible) danger – or just simple rebuff from THEY.

I know that I am designed for something more than I am walking out right now. I have honed that vision in my heart and fed it with my imagination. Now I am ready to bolster the pursuit with boldness that is the quality of exceeding the ordinary rules.

I am ready to break out into my impossible dreams.

I grow up this type of boldness by:

First – being honest about where I am in this moment. I can dream about running a marathon and even schedule a date to run, but if I am not honest about the fact that I haven't run any distance – except that time the yellow jackets were after me – then I will never be in a position to run that marathon.

Second – I have to be serious about change. Change – dream producing and purpose fulfilling change - must be taken seriously because it will require that I take action and make investments and those don't happen by accident.

Third – I have to be willing to be uncomfortable. It's not about "no pain - no gain" but about moving from a place of comfortable to a place of amazing. Even a place of discomfort can become "comfortable" because it's expected. Change is different and therefore will be uncomfortable to one degree or another.

Fourth – I have to be daring enough to take that first step even if I have no idea what will be the results or how many steps will be required or even exactly what I am doing. I have to have the daring to step because I know I have to step and be okay with it.

Fifth – I have to find the consistency and persistence that will drive me to my next step. This will never be a one-step journey. It will take more, and it will take more on a regular basis.

Boldness will drive me on farther up and farther in. It is not about performance – or the results – being bold is all about the determined and forward motion.

It starts with a realistic look at who I am and where I am and even a serious look at where I want to be. I have to be honest about the start of the journey if I am going to move up to the next level.

One – I need to take a time inventory.

Two - I need to review my goals and weigh my desires.

Three – I need to compare what I am doing with what I want to be doing.

Four – I need to set a new time budget and schedule based on all that I learn.

Five – I need to monitor and review my actions daily.

It is not an easy - task being honest about the journey. I have to look in the mirror and choose to see the truth that is staring back at me. No more sugar coating. No more pretending. No more masks.

Raw and real and exposed – because that is the only way I am going to come to grips with where I am so that I can take the steps to move to where I want to be. It is a little scary moving out into this place of exposure, but it is the only way to create the boldness that I am going to need.

It is up to me and it starts with being honest.

Boldness has gotten a bad rap from most of society because most of the THEYS in society are scared of bold. Anything daring or courageous is outside of the box and THEY never like outside of the box. Therefore THEY decided that bold would be equal to bad.

Bold is not bad – it is good. Bold is strong. Bold is the exceeding of ordinary. Those that are daring to be more than ordinary are beginning to tap into the magic that comes with being bold.

I was in a group discussion recently where we were talking about our dreams. “What do you want to be known for” was the question that the leader posed. I responded that I want to be known as the purpose expert but I revised that – because I believe in the power of positive thinking and said I WILL be known as the purpose expert. But I revised that as well and felt a boldness begin to well up in me. “I AM the purpose expert.” When I made that bold declaration I felt like I did when I first declared I am a writer – my stomach had butterflies, my face flushed, and I felt a surge of energy.

Boldness is not about big things but about those things that will push me into the unexpected and push me beyond the ordinary.

Boldness begins with an honest evaluation of where I am and also of where I want to be – not where I hope to be, or where it might be nice to be, but that place that I have a burning desire to be – my dream job, experience, life.

Determining where I am is not as easy as it may sound. I remember hearing a story about a girl that drew a line in the sand. “I will never pass this line.” She declared. The line would be too far down the wrong path or outside the desired results. She would get close to the line, but she

determined not to go over it. She would get up on the line, but she had determined not to go over it.

One day she looked around and decided that she was doing so well she had moved completely away from the line. She no longer had the need to push the bounds up to the edge or even to step right on the line. She patted herself on the back and looked around at all she had accomplished.

That was when she noticed it – her line in the sand – it was a long way behind her. Little by little she had managed not only to step over her line but to leave it so far behind that she almost hadn't noticed.

Being honest about where I am right now challenges me to look at more than what I think but to take inventory of all the actions, behaviors, and lines around me.

First – I have to take a time inventory. I catch myself saying I don't have enough time to do all that I need to do. I say it quite often. It feels like if I had more time then I could get more done. The truth is that it is usually my investment of the time I have that is the real problem.

Several years ago I realized if I would evaluate my time like I would evaluate my finances then I could tell how I was really investing my time. I created a time chart to monitor my time spending and then I put that into a pie graph. I even color coded the different sections. It became strikingly clear that I was investing my time in places that were not returning anything for the effort.

The moment I feel like I am struggling for time, I being evaluating my spending with a time chart.

Second – I have to review my goals and then I have to weigh the desire for reaching those goals. I remember setting a goal for running a marathon once. My brother had run a marathon – and I was the runner growing up. My son wanted to run a marathon. It made sense that I should set that goal.

Only, it didn't make sense because I didn't really have a desire to run a marathon. I like to run, but that much running is just not my cup of tea. When I evaluated that goal – it was good but when I weighed my desires I took it off my goal list.

No matter how good the goal or even how much it aligns with my purpose, if I don't have the desire to back it up then I will NEVER reach it.

Third – I have to compare what I am doing with what I want to be doing. Earlier my son and I were talking about the jobs around the house. I am very organized for business, and so I have the ability to organize for the house as well – but if I spend my time on the household organization then I have less time to invest on the business organization. If I want to build my business then I have to invest in my business and be okay with a little household clutter or trust others to do what needs to be done.

Fourth – I have to make an action plan. I have to take all of the information I get from evaluating my journey and put it to work. My White Board of World Domination is one step for my action plan. My Focus Folder is the second step. My weekly goals and daily to-dos are the third component of putting my evaluation to work. I had to be honest about where I was, I had to review my goals and desires, and then I had to take a look at my current actions – only then was I in a position to create a schedule and a system that would work for me.

Fifth – I have to review my progress on a daily basis – which is one of the reasons I need those weekly goals and to-do lists. I have an immediate way to measure my journey so that I can make any necessary adjustments as quick as possible.

I can be bold in pursuit of my dreams, but I have to be honest about the journey.

Foundation for Honest Evaluation

Boldness should be a badge of honor or maybe a super power because there is so much that can come from a life lived out in boldness. I can take steps that would never be managed without a little boldness and those steps are often the ones necessary for greatness. I can make changes that may have felt impossible when I am fueled by boldness and bold changes are the ones that affect the world.

David was BIG on self-evaluation because he wanted to become all that he was designed to be and he recognized that if he didn't look into his heart regularly then he would never reach that potential.

Psalm 77:6 reads “I will remember my song in the night; I will meditate with my heart, and my spirit ponders.” David is looking in his heart and pondering what he is doing and where he is going.

David even asks God to examine his heart and his journey and help him make corrections. In Psalm 26:1 – 2 David says: Judge me, O Lord; for I have walked in my integrity: I have trusted also in the Lord; therefore I shall not slide.” He is looking at what he's doing and he is seeing that there is fruit for his journey. But he takes it to the next level “Examine me, O Lord, and prove me; try my reins and my heart.” David not only wanted to know how his journey looked to him, but he wanted God to help him stay on track.

Paul talks about self-evaluation – being honest about my journey – in Galatians 6:4 he points out that each one of us must examine our own work – what we are doing and what we are accomplishing.

No one else can evaluate my journey because no other person has the whole story. If I am not open and honest with myself then there is no way I will be open enough for someone else to give me a true evaluation of my journey.

I have to be honest with myself and when I am honest and I meditate with my heart and I let my spirit ponder my journey then I can see if I have crossed the line or if maybe I ended up just erasing it all together.

Paul explains the value of self-evaluation in Romans 12:3. He says that when I take an honest evaluation of myself and my journey then I will be in a position to make decisions in sound judgement and I will be in a position to walk out my journey in the faith that God has given me. That's the Kathryn translation of Romans 12:3 – but it is the truth.

When I know where I am – when I am honest about that place – then I will be in a position to step out in faith with God and in God.

Without that honest evaluation I will always struggle to be bold in pursuit of my unique purpose. I will not grow up boldness for my life if I am not honest about where I am in my life.

I have to be willing to be honest to be extraordinary.

Growing Up Boldness – Two Serious About Change

Becoming all that I know that I am supposed to be requires that I be bold enough to walk down that path. I have to have fearless determination to keep going even when people around me are complaining or fighting or trying to hold me back. Being bold means that I am not dependent on what THEY think or THEY do and I am not hesitating to pursue my purpose.

Not hesitating. I think that has been my biggest problem to date. I mean I WANT my unique life and I can imagine what my unique life will look like and feel like, but I still hold back.

I hold back because I don't want to leave anyone behind or make others feel like less because I am reaching my goals. It may sound silly, but it's true.

I hold back because I worry about what living that life will really look like or feel like or mean for my next step.

I hold back because it is easier to not do it than to deal with what is required to do it.

If I want to live a life in bold purpose then I have to find a way to break through the hesitations that are holding me back. I have to push on even when everything around me is pushing back or purposely tripping me up.

I will not break although caught up in the moment of pressure it sure may feel that way. I will not give in although pressed against the rock and the hard place I sure what to give in. I will never give – never – never – never – never.

Sometimes just saying it makes me stronger – even if I have to say it through tears.

I've been in that place where nothing I could do would be right. If I gave in then I would just have to keep giving in. If I stood strong then something else would have to give – most likely the peace of a relationship.

It was hard and I cried and I still cry occasionally because we will never be as close again as we were before that confrontation. A bold life is not easy but it is the quality of persistence that comes from living bold that allows me to live a life outside of the ordinary. It is that strength that grows up in boldness and from boldness that makes it possible for me to walk out an extraordinary life.

I have to be honest with myself - about where I am and where I am going – if I want to be able to stand bold in those tight or tough moments.

I also have to be serious about the change I am creating – because change comes at a cost. A lackadaisical attitude about change will make it difficult to follow through on the investments that will be required of me. A halfhearted focus on change will make it possible for others to sway me away from my path. An unclear understanding of the change will make it possible for me to put off, avoid, or in other ways hinder the journey.

I must be serious about change if I want to see change become the reality for my life.

To become serious about change I have to be willing to take some serious steps.

1. I have to make time for the actions that are required.
2. I have to take action daily – even when I don't want to.
3. I have to write down my daily actions so that I can hold myself accountable.
4. I have to use my records to measure the actions and the results.
5. I have to invest in personal accountability by meeting with a group, a personal coach, or some other outside force.

I know that when I start stepping into my purposeful life that things are going to start flying in my direction – or I should know it. I have seen it happen often enough to KNOW to expect it.

The world is determined to keep me from walking out my uniqueness. THEY are determined to shove me back in the box. The enemy will do all he can to trip me up or at least slow me down from growing up into all that I am called to be.

I don't have to fall for it or fall into it. I can get there. I can reach my purpose. I can live boldly – if I will. I have to be serious about my change if I want to walk out the path that will be created by that change.

This world needs more smiles and more hope. It is tough out there. It is tough if you are in a comforting environment but it can seem like running uphill in sand if you are in a combative environment.

Most of this world is combative. THEY hurl things – from insults to physical objects. THEY pull the rug right out from under you. THEY demand, decree, and discredit all that you are attempting to do.

That is how it feels for me – on some days. I move along, getting the list checked off, making a difference in my journey, and BAM! Right in the kisser.

It hurts most when it is from someone I trusted. Maybe she was having a bad day or maybe he didn't even see me standing there. For whatever reason, I was hit and sometimes I get knocked down.

I will get up again. I have to get up again. I have to get up again because I want to live out my potential. I have to get up again because I want my children to see what happens when you just keep getting up.

I will keep getting up and getting going when I am serious about change for my life.

1. I have to make time for the actions that will make the way for the change.

I determined that I would read through the Bible in two months – the whole Bible. I had created an outline that would make it possible and the outline included breaking the readings out into different sections of the bible. The idea was to create something that would keep me from feeling like I had to “catch up” if something happened and I missed a day.

It was a perfect plan, only I never followed the plan because I had other things that took the priority. The first of the year I determined that I would do it. I set my clock early and for the next two months I got up at 4 am so that I could go through all of the readings I had on that plan. I made it through the whole Bible in just two months because I set a time that would make a way for me to take the actions to read through the bible.

I learned that it was possible to make the time to take the actions, but after that first time through, I was not quite as determined and other things began to take priority. I still read through sections of the Bible every month, but I have yet to tackle the whole Bible in two months.

Partly because I don't want to do all of that reading every day.

2. If I want to be serious about change then I have to take daily actions towards that change. In 2005, I had an amazing show garden, in part because I volunteered to be a show garden for our regional garden meeting. People would be coming to wander through my flowers from all over North Mississippi and North Alabama.

All of my flower gardens needed to be weeded, pruned, and mulched before the tour. I had two young boys at the time and I made time every day for us to go outside and work in the garden – they did more playing than working but they were out there with me. The change in the garden was INCREDIBLE.

I want my garden to look like that again but I will have to make invest the same daily dedication to make that want a reality.

I have to be willing to do it every day if I want the actions to lead to my change.

3. I need to write down my daily actions so that I can be honest about my daily actions. If I want to be serious about change then I have to be real about what I am doing to get to that change. The first time I kept up with how I was spending, I kept a small notebook with me and I wrote down every single penny that I spent. At the end of the day I was able to see exactly where my money had gone and what I received for the investment.

I have to do the same thing with my actions towards change. I need to write down what I am doing so that I will have a record of where I invested my time and my resources.

I need to know what I am honestly doing if I am going to create change that leads to a bold life.

4. I have to measure the actions I have been taking against the results that are being produced. Despite what I would like to think, I will never be in a position to do it all and I have to be okay with it. If I have my goals and my desired changes firmly set in my mind then I can look at the actions I am taking and see if they are moving me closer to those goals and changes. If they are then I keep going. If they are not then I make the necessary adjustments.

I can only adjust for change if I am measuring my actions and keeping a record of the results.

5. I need to invest in accountability – and that investment can be time or money or both. When I hold up my hand in front of others and declare my change then I take a serious stand for that change. Accountability is VITAL to reaching that bold life – which is why we invested time to learn how to grow up accountability. I need others to support me and encourage me but I also need others to help me get back on track.

I am serious about my change and I am investing in each of these steps not only to show how serious I am but to move me in that direction of change.

I can – and I am.

Foundations for Getting Serious about Change

I am called to be extraordinary – I am called to be peculiar – I am called to live a life that will leave the world looking at me as if I have lost my mind. The world is not supposed to get it or understand it because when I walk out a bold and purposeful life I am walking down a path that the world can't even see.

The best part of my calling is that I am not called to do it alone. Yes – we are called to be in relationships and from those relationships I will find accountability and encouragement.

But God, Himself, promises that I will not be walking this bold walk alone. In Deuteronomy 31 God is speaking to Joshua through Moses – but the words are meant for you and me as well. In 31:6 he says in this reading from the Amplified translation “Be strong and courageous, do not be afraid or tremble in dread before them, for it is the Lord your God who goes with you. He will not fail you or abandon you.”

Be strong AND courageous – from the beginning I shared that boldness is being fearless and daring and courageous. God is calling me out to a bold life – but He is also reminding me that He is walking out this bold life with me.

Jesus addressed the importance of walking out a bold life when He challenged His followers to be like the Master. In Matthew 10:25 Jesus tells His followers “It is enough for the disciple that he be as his master and the servant as the Lord.” Jesus lived a bold life and through that bold life he created change. One man – fully dedicated to His bold life literally changed the way of the world.

Jesus was serious about the change He was walking – so serious that He died for the cause. He knew where He was going and what He was doing and He did it.

That is what it will take for my life as well. I have to know where I am going and what I am doing and I have to do it.

Solomon addressed a heart serious about change as well. In Proverbs 14:22 he says: “Do not those who plot evil go astray? But those who plan what is good find love and faithfulness.” When I get serious about my change – when I plan for what is good – then I find that I live out a bold and purposeful life – on that is overflowing in love and faithfulness.

I am ready for serious change because I have positioned myself to live out my purposeful life. I am taking the steps and actions. I am keeping a record of what I am doing and I am measuring the results of all the steps I take. This keeps me accountable and this keeps me focused and this leads me the place where I can grow up the boldness I know it will take to stand strong against the world.

Growing Up Boldness - Three Willing to be Uncomfortable

I will reach my possible if I keep reaching and moving towards my possible. I just don't always want to move towards my possible. I don't always want to move. I sit down and kick back and just don't.

I have been stuck in don't for a bit. It's almost like I got into a habit of doing nothing and then I didn't know how to get out of that habit.

My oldest son started bringing over friends – to enjoy the pool or hang out and play board games. He usually told me they were coming about five minutes before they arrived – IF he told me.

It turns out that having surprise guests is a great way to infuse some fire in my get up and go. It's not that they guests expected anything from me – it's just that my natural tendency to be hospitable pushed me to at least get up and acknowledge they were there. And while I was up I might as well do something, right. Because the hardest part of getting up and getting going is not the going part but the getting up part.

It came at a perfect time for me because I had gotten to that place where I was just SICK AND tired of not being where I wanted to be. I had thought about a different place. I had planned for a different place. And I was finally to the point that I was going to move to that different place.

The unexpected visitors pushed me to start moving more than I would have likely done on my own. That is one of the reasons that accountability is so powerful – even if the accountability doesn't know they are holding me accountability.

It is not always fun for me – even though I love entertaining and I always wanted people to use and enjoy our home and land. It pushes me outside my comfort zone when I get ready for bed and just outside my door there is a half dozen folks playing games. It is particularly challenging when the game of choice is Trouble.

The noise factor alone made me uncomfortable.

It is what I wanted though and I knew that if they felt like I was uncomfortable they might feel uncomfortable and that is the last thing I wanted. I chose to find a way to get through – first by putting in ear plugs and second by expecting to not get the same type of sleep when things are going according to my plans.

The truth is that opening my home to others is a bold step and anytime I make the bold step it will push me out of my comfort zone. If I want to grow up boldness to live out my purpose in life then I need to expect to be uncomfortable.

Because:

1. Change will require . . . well, change. I will have to move and do and adjust to get out of the rut I have been stuck in. It is impossible to go to my dreams if I am determined to stay where I am right now.
2. Change will be different from what I have and where I am now. It is the only way for change to occur – and the bolder I want to go then the more that difference will show – and a warning about different, the people around you do not always embrace it.
3. Change will take effort and require investment. I have to give to get. If I want to build relationships then I have to give my time to engage others. If I want to have a show garden then I have to give my time (or resources) to have it taken care of.

4. Change will call for sacrifice. I will have to give up what I am currently doing to do something different. Sometimes the sacrifice will be a challenge to my own selfishness, but sometimes the sacrifice may be harder or more painful (like having to get up earlier to make it happen and getting less sleep than normal).

5. Change will push the limits of faith – especially bold change. Change will drive me to step where I haven't been stepping and do move in a way that I haven't been moving and that will try my faith but it will also GROW my faith.

The good news is that the uncomfortable will not be constant and some of the uncomfortable will not even be that bad – just not what I might normally do. There will be some uncomfortable if I am daring to launch into my impossible dreams.

I have not been as comfortable the last few days as I might have preferred. But being in that place of uncomfortable has pushed me to do a little more than I would have done had I been left in my comfort zone. That is a good thing. I needed to be pushed because I had become settled.

Settled is NOT good.

I needed to be challenged – but not in the “I dare you” kind of way. I just needed someone to be watching without an expectation of what I would do. I know it doesn't make sense. It doesn't make sense to me most of the time. But sometimes if I know that others are watching then I do more than I would do if I were on my own – at least until I build up a habit of doing. Once I have a habit of doing then I begin to challenge myself to do and to be more than I am – at least until I slip into the habit of being settled.

It's a cycle for me – which is why I am thankful when the little uncomfortable situations come along that push me to get up and get going.

I want change and I know that change means different and when I have to move out of where I am to where I want to be then it will cause me to be uncomfortable to one degree or another.

1. Change will require that I change. I can remember sitting on the couch watching a weight loss show while eating dry cereal for a snack. I had the thought that it would be nice to lose weight like they were losing weight on the show and then I recognized the irony of the thought. If I want that change then I will have to do things that will create that change – which probably means NOT sitting on the couch eating dry cereal.

Even if I had simply determined that while I was watching the show I would do my own work out – that would have moved me closer to my desires. That regular exercise may have made me feel awkward if others were in the room and it may have made my muscles hurt the next morning, but the uncomfortable would have been temporary and the change would have been longer lasting than the uncomfortable.

2. Change will mean being different than I am right now. I wanted to do more to build up my platform so that I would be in a position to do more speaking engagements and presentations. I

kept saying I needed to record more shows so that I could go daily. I created a clock so it would be easier to produce the show.

To record the show daily, I had to adjust my schedule. I had to do things different and my family had to expect things different – and that was a wee bit uncomfortable for everyone involved.

The uncomfortable different was necessary to help me create the new shows, but we are getting to a place of balance now. Even being different will not lead to a permanent uncomfortable (most of the time).

3. Change will take effort and investment – of my time, my energy, and my resources. If I want to create my show garden once again then I will have to invest in the effort to pull or till out all of the beds. I will have to invest the time, the energy, and the money to put mulch out around those beds. I will have to make a point to maintain the beds all season.

I know from experience that it will be uncomfortable. I have to deal with the heat, and the sun, and the multitude of living things that creep and crawl and fly around my garden. Don't even get me started on the poison ivy that likes to sneak up and slap me. I also know from experience that my temporary discomforts will bring amazing joy – not only to me but to all who visit.

4. Change will call for sacrifice. I have limits on all that I am and all that I have. If I want to move from this point to another point then I will have to give up or sacrifice something else to make it happen. When I committed to reading the Bible all the way through in two months then I knew I would have to carve out time to make it happen. I tried several different slots of time, but ultimately I had to find a time when **NOBODY** would bother me – in person, on the phone, or even online. I had to sacrifice my sleep to make it work. It was uncomfortable the first few days. I got used to the new schedule which meant the discomfort faded –and on the other side was two hours of pure peace and quiet for my enjoyment.

5. Change will push the limits of my Faith. When I step into change I will step out of what I know. It will push me into Faith and with each step into Faith I will grow up my Faith even more so that I can continue to push farther up and farther in. The first time I allowed my words to be printed, I almost got sick. It was not just uncomfortable but it was outright scary.

Each time I shared my words, it got a little less uncomfortable and less scary. There are days that it flashes up, but most of the time I have a peace and calm about the process because with each sharing I have become stronger in my Faith that I am supposed to be doing this.

It will be uncomfortable to change, but when I work through the uncomfortable I begin to discover amazing things on the other side.

Foundations for Being Uncomfortable

I confess that I do not like being uncomfortable – and I like unknown uncomfortables the least of all. I mean, I can suffer through the **KNOWN** uncomfortables if I have to – which is probably

why it can be easy to settle even if I'm not where I wanted to be – because at least I know where I am.

I have been there long enough – in that mess of settled. I am ready to break out and fly – and that will mean I have to be determined and bold in change – and that will mean that I can expect to be uncomfortable – and that terrible unknown uncomfortable that I dislike the most.

I have learned that if I will keep going – even in those uncomfortable moments – the blessings on the other side will make it all worthwhile.

Jesus said that it will be a daily challenge to do what can be uncomfortable – but I need to step out into that if I want to live in the blessing that He offers. In Luke 9:33 Jesus states: “Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross daily and follow me.”

The idea of denying self offers up enough challenge. I know that choosing to do something other than what I WANT or what my mind tells me I deserve will cause a state of discomfort.

Stepping out into the world following Jesus can be even more of a challenge. Jesus was not like the world and the world knew it. The world hated the difference and tried to distract from its own lacking by pointing at Jesus and causing a ruckus over anything. The world caused discomfort – not only for Jesus but for those following Him.

If the world caused discomfort for the followers then I will GUARANTEE you that it will cause discomfort now. When I am walking out my life in Jesus and for Jesus then I will face moments of uncomfortable.

Jesus warned of that very thing in John 16:33. He says “In me you will have perfect peace.” When I have Him at the center of all that I am and all that I'm doing then I have that peace that flow from Him.

He goes on to warn of the world. “In the world you will have tribulation and distress and suffering, but be courageous; I have overcome the world.” Remember that courageous is an element of boldness. For me, Jesus is telling me that despite the uncomfortable moments and situations, I need to continue to be bold because I am walking my path in Him and for Him and He has already won the battle so the uncomfortable will only be temporary.

It is tough walking out change. It is uncomfortable pursuing a bold life of purpose in a world determined to hold me down or crush me into a box it has built. Take heed – there is something amazing on the other side of that uncomfortable.

Isaiah 60: says “Arise, shine: for your light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon you.”

For me that says it all. I have to keep going because on the other side of that uncomfortable I will be basking in my light that has come because the glory of the Lord has risen on me.

I am ready for a new life – a bold life – a courageous life – and I know that I will have to create change and live change to see it happen. It will be uncomfortable walking in change, but it will be worth it when I fly.

Growing Up Boldness – Four Bold First Step

I have been investing a great deal in the hope that is fueling my journey- mostly by sharing with you each day. It amazes me how much it drives me to reveal a piece of my heart to you. It pushes me, usually when I need to be pushed the most.

I do need to be pushed. If I am going to break out into my impossible dreams then I will have to keep pushing. There will be those days when all of the pushing leaves me wondering if I've accomplished anything because the obstacles are still there and I am EXHAUSTED from all of my efforts.

Those are the days I look forward to sharing my words in the hope that the words I share will grow up some hope even if it's only in me. Those are the days that I look around for a smile because I know that a smile makes the way for hope to take root. Those are the days that I refuse to judge my tomorrow by today. I find a way to keep on keeping on even when I don't understand what I'm keeping on.

Leaving out a bold life – growing up the boldness to be extraordinary in my journey – it is not the easy path. It is not easy because it can be uncomfortable (because of what must be done and because of how others react.

It is not easy because living out my boldness requires change and change requires action and action requires investment – those are just not easy on some days.

It is not easy growing up the boldness I need to pursue my impossible dreams because I have to be honest about where I am and sometimes I would prefer to pretend that I'm somewhere else (even though I know I'm not).

It may not be easy – but it is simple. All it takes for me to grow up boldness and to live out my impossible dreams is to take that first step.

Simple – but not always easy. As a matter of fact, it is rarely easy. That first step is the biggest and the hardest and the scariest. That first step declares that I am going for it. That first step is taken by sheer will with no momentum to make it happen.

I have to be willing to take that first step if I am going to live out the impossible for my life.

There are five things I need to understand about that first step so that I can make a way to take that first step.

1. The first step will be the hardest. There is nothing to back up that first step because there is no momentum to fuel it.
2. The first step will be blind. I can have an idea of where I am going but until I step out into the journey I will not be certain (and even in the midst of the journey I may not know as much as I want).
3. The first step will be scary. It is always scary stepping out into the unknown – and by scary I mean adrenaline pumping, heart skipping excitement type of scary – at least that’s what I keep telling myself.
4. The first step will be a challenge. It is a challenge because it is new and it is different and it is the first.
5. The first step will make others look – because I will be coloring outside the lines or dancing to a different drummer or just doing something outside of the ordinary.

Every year, I dip my foot into the pool at the first of the season and then I step back and dive it. It matters little what my toe has to say about it. If I stand there dipping my toe in then I will never brave the water, I will never get wet, and I will never enjoy the refreshment that the clear blue water has to offer.

Taking that first step is a lot like getting into the pool. If I stand around thinking about that first step then I will often end up talking myself out of taking that first step. I need to just step – just close my eyes and not think about how cold the water is. I need to just step – just take a deep breath and plunge right on in. I need to just step – because if I never step then I will never get to where I want to go.

Yes, it is tough and scary and hard, but it is the one thing I have to do if I want to see bold breakthroughs in my life and for my life. If nothing else, I have to step.

Every journey begins with that first step.

I can get there – no matter where my “there” may be and no matter what my “there” may look like. I know I can get there – but I also recognize that I have to step out if I want to go. For me, that first step can be the most difficult thing I do in the journey.

It is hard.

It is scary.

It is a challenge.

It is a blind step.

It makes others look at me weird.

Okay, I’m used to others looking at me weird by now. I have always enjoyed the challenge of doing things just different enough to make others wonder. The fact that I’m comfortable with others looking at me weird does NOT make that first step any easier to take.

When I understand what it is that makes that first step so difficult to take then I will be in a better position to take it – and that first step is REQUIRED if I am going to walk out a bold life.

1. That first step will be the hardest. Sometimes it is the hardest only because it is the first. There is no momentum backing it up. I remember the first time I sent in an article for consideration to be published. I remember that my heart fluttered and my mouth went dry. I remember that I read the submission over and over and fretted that there was no way it would ever be good enough.

I let that first submission sit for days before I finally let it go. I took the first step in my writing dreams – one of many steps. Although I do still get a little anxious when I set my words free to someone who can love or reject them – the steps I take now are NOTHING compared to that first step.

2. The first step will be a blind step. I will not see where I am going and worse it will sometimes feel like there is nothing there to step into. The first time I went repelling, the instructor warned me about that first step. “It will feel like you are falling.” I think he said that or it could have been my imagination. My imagination was coming up with a LOT of things as I was holding on to what felt like a way too thin rope edging my way over what felt like a way to high cliff.

The first step into a new venture or a new opportunity is a blind step. I have to trust in the purpose enough that I take it despite the fact that I don’t see it all.

3. The first step will be scary. This is not necessarily the “monster under your bed” kind of scary – although there was that time that I had to step in front of a microphone in broad day light with around 100 people staring at me that had known me all of my life and they were waiting for me to provide a word of inspiration – that was a little like “monster under your bed” scary.

Most of the time, it is more of a scare as described in the 1844 Webster Dictionary where it means to dishearten or separate – because that’s what happens. I become disheartened about my abilities and I begin to separate from my potential and settle into my now. If I can see the scary for what it really is then I can build up the courage to take that first step.

4. The first step will be a challenge. “We have never done it that way before” causes so many issues because they look at the first step and refuse to move. The first step is not like it has always been done. The first step is different. The weight of that difference can keep you from taking that first step.

I found a new way to lose weight – which was really an old way but it was new to me. The “plan” or the “program” or however you want to define it was so simple it had to be a hoax. There had to be more. “Just chew less” was the first way it was described to me. They expanded on that with “eat when you are hungry and don’t eat when you aren’t hungry.” It was hard for me to step into that concept because I had never done it that way before and I didn’t know anyone that had done it that way before. Once I took that first step, I began to release the weight and live in a way that I never even dreamed possible.

That first step was a challenge because it was different.

5. The first step will make others look. People have certain expectation about what I should do and what I shouldn't do. You would think that after they have known me more than five seconds most people would let go of their expectations – I often just find them a challenge to be overcome. But the great THEY still expect things and when I take a step that is different from those expectations then they look at me weird.

Expect the looks. Embrace the looks. Just keep on stepping.

I want to live the impossible dream. I want to break free and fly. I want to do all that I know I am uniquely designed to do, but I have to be bold enough to take that first step.

Foundations for the Bold First Step

Reaching up and reaching out to all of my possibility will not happen if I stay where I am. I've tried. My possibilities are not prone to tackling me on the couch. It is up to me to go after my dreams. It is up to me to pursue my possibilities.

Like it or not, I will have to take that first step if I am going to get anywhere.

I need to be more like Peter – or I need to start out more like Peter. Just imagine that you are one of the disciples and the wind has been keeping you from taking your boat where you wanted to go. The waves have been tossing you around. It is dark now – as dark as it gets because of the time of the day and the thickness of the clouds.

There, in the midst of it all, you see Jesus walking on water – WALKING ON WATER mind you. The first thing that comes to your mind is not – “hey, those waves could knock him over” or “just how shallow is this part of the sea” or “I must be sleep sailing” – it's “if that's you Jesus then tell me to come to you.”

Jesus said “come” because really what else could he say since it was him after all.

And then Peter just jumped right out of that boat and started walking to Jesus – WALKING ON WATER mind you. Peter leaped, blindly, boldly, and with confident expectation right out of the boat.

This one story should be enough to make me take that first step into my purpose – because Peter WALKED ON WATER because he was willing to take that first step. I want to walk on water. I want to fly. I want to live out and live in all of my potential. I will have to get out of the boat if I truly want to see it happen.

When I am getting ready to step out into my purpose, I should be able to face down the scary thoughts that well up inside – not because I have the power to overcome in me but because I have the Overcome living in me and guiding me. People will look at me weird and may even give me a hard time about the step – but I have to trust that the Overcomer will see me through.

Psalm 37 is one of my favorites to read when I am feeling a bit crushed by the expectations or requirements of the world and the feat that comes from that crushing. It talks about how God sees the actions of the wicked and what God thinks of the actions of the wicked – that He even laughs at them because God knows what is around the corner.

It also reminds me of why I need to take that first step – not because I have the perfect plan to get me to my destination but because God has ordered the steps that I will take if I step out and follow Him. In Psalm 37:23 it reads: “The steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord: and He (the Lord) delights in his way” the way of that good man.

It comforts me to know that God is not only walking along with me and calling out to me to take that step but that God has already ordered the step and that God delights in this journey that I am embarking on.

Another of my strength building verses comes from Luke 11 - you may recognize the words as the ask, seek, knock verses. I realized for the first time the other day that all of the commands require me to take action.

The middle of it is about that first step. Seek, and you will find. If I am going to seek what it is that I desire then I will have to step to make it happen. I seek and then I find – not I might find or I could find, but a definitive “you will find”

That should give me the boldness because I have a promise that when I step out in the directions God is leading me then I WILL FIND what I am seeking.

Growing Up Boldness – Five Consistent and Persistent

I not only believe the possibilities will show up – I expect them to show and I am looking for them and I am actively working towards them. I want to live out my possibilities because I know that I am designed on purpose for a purpose and that purpose is so much more than where I am right now.

I also understand that my purpose will not come to me – it will not tackle me on the couch as I watch yet another marathon of Dr. Who or wrestle into where I’m supposed to be as I play Jewel on my phone.

I have to actively engage my life to begin living out all the possibilities that are waiting for me. I have to take purposeful actions if I want to walk out my unique and purposeful life.

Growing up boldness helps me take the steps necessary to walk out those purposeful actions. The world is chaotic and noisy and full of distraction that so easily can knock me off target. I need to be bold – which is to say that I need to be fearless and daring and more than just a little bit courageous or I will end up hesitating amidst all that noise and chaos.

When I invest in growing up boldness for my journey then I create the elements that will allow me to exceed the ordinary rules. I like exceeding the ordinary rules. Most of my life I found ways to exceed the rules – without breaking any of them of course. I had a teacher who told me that I annoyed the administration so much because I knew how to bend the rules without breaking them so that I did a lot but never enough to land in actual trouble.

I think it's important to remind myself of things like that – about who I was and what I did – because we forget . . . or at least I forget. I am not living in the same environment that I lived back then. I have different responsibilities and different time demands and so I forget of what I did and what I accomplished.

This is one of the main reasons I think that journals can be such a powerful tool for growing up this purposeful life. I can review where I have been and remember some of my super powers that I may have forgotten or I may have allowed to rust with inactivity.

I am rediscovering that rule exceeding ability once again. With the encouragement and support of some new found friends – yes, that would be you Karen – and the challenge that has come from the Morning Mindset Café, my son and his friends, and the rekindled belief that I can do whatever I set my mind to do if I will just do it.

I was talking with Karen the other day and I remember telling her that I always knew that if I could get an interview for a job that I would walk away with a job offer. I went into the interview EXPECTING a job offer and I always came away with the opportunity to pursue that path.

I expected it – but I had to be persistent and consistent in sending out the resumes that would land me the interview opportunities. I had to be consistent and persistent in stepping through the open doors that I found and in kicking open a few.

Somewhere along the way, I lost some of that focus. If I want to break through the walls and launch into my impossible dreams then I will have to rediscover the focus that will allow me to be persistent and consistent in that next step.

- The next step will be a little easier because it has momentum behind it but I have to take that step if I want to continue to build that momentum.

- I will keep the momentum going only by the consistent pursuit of my purpose . . . more of the same ole same ole to get me to my dreams. It is not a one-step journey.

- I need to double down on the next step so that I can develop a persistent pushing that will break through the resistance that will eventually come.

- One more thing will get me one step closer and will also create a habit of doing that will increase my consistent and persistent attitude.

- Expecting a next step – no matter where I am in the journey – can be the most important key to unlocking the consistent and persistent habits that keep me going.

I can. I will. I am.

There will always be an excuse to hold me back. There will usually be a very good reason to keep me from moving on. I have to become so focused, so consistent, and so persistent that nothing will turn my eyes from the prize of my dreams.

I had always thought that I had a closer relationship with procrastination than anything else – until I started reviewing my life. The more I talked about what I did in my past and how I acted in my past the more I realized that being consistent and especially being persistent had provided many opportunities for my life – and more than a little fun and joy along the way.

My husband and I found the perfect plot of land and set out to create a plan for our home. We found a house that was for sale to be moved and I approached the moving company that owned it. The owner told me that the house had been promised to someone else but if the sell fell through then he would let me know.

I called him every day – twice a day – for two weeks until he finally gave in and told me we could have the house.

Persistency was the key to our having the home that we desired.

I have let procrastination convince me that I am better at putting things off than I am at getting things done. I determined last week to break up with procrastination and these little walks down memory lane are not only pushing me past procrastination but they are bringing me back into alignment with the persistent and consistent behavior that served me so well.

Being consistent and persistent in the next step of my bold pursuit is the ONLY way I will reach the end goal. I have to keep on going if I want to arrive.

That next step will be a little easier than the first step because the next step will have the momentum of that first step behind it. Momentum can do a lot for staying persistent and growing consistency.

The first year I had my garden, I did all of the work by hand. I ordered a tractor trailer full of mulch and used my garden wagon to haul that mulch all around the yard – ALL OF IT. I found that getting a wagon full of mulch going was not easy because the weight wanted to hold me back but once I got going it would be a little easier with the momentum helping me.

I also discovered that the more times I filled the wagon, the tougher that first step became. My mind would start telling me all the reasons I should leave the wagon and go into the air conditioned house. It was sheer will – that fundamental persistence I told you I had lived out for long – that drove me to build back up the momentum to get it done.

It is true what that say – that where there is a will, there is a way. If I will do it then I will find a way to get it done.

I have to be persistent and consistent in that next step because I have to keep the momentum going. I may not always want to do it but if I do it then I will be in a better position for the next time.

Several years ago I determined that I wanted a more natural way of keeping our pool crystal blue. I did some research and found that I could eliminate a lot of the chemicals by following a simple plan.

A week later, I was looking at a murky mess. I did some more research and discovered that I needed to be consistent in testing the pool to be able to reach the right balance. Every day for the next week I tested the water every two hours when the sun was up. The consistency of testing and adjusting left me with a crystal blue pool. Now I know how to get there and it is easier to accomplish and maintain – but I had to be diligent in the consistency first.

That next step can be a challenge sometimes – particularly when there has been some level of success. I need to double down on the focus for that next step if I am going to build the persistence I will need to push through the inevitable resistance that will show up or the call of procrastination that becomes a little too loud to ignore despite my demands that we are no longer a couple. I will sometimes need to double down on that next step by being even more persistent and determined than I was with that first step.

And that can happen with I make the investment of one more thing to drive that next step home. One more thing can be something big or it can be something small – but by choosing to do one more thing I quiet the call of procrastination and dull the chaotic noise of the world.

One of the most important ways to maintain my consistent and persistent focus is to expect there to be a next step – no matter how many steps I have already taken. If I start looking for the next break or the next lull then I may end up lulling myself into the trap of “not doing.”

I learned this lesson best with my garden. No matter how much time I spend in my garden I have to keep spending time in my garden to keep things maintained. I learned it yet again when we put in a pool because if I don't keep investing in the care and maintenance of the pool it will revert to that murky mess that nobody can enjoy.

My bold and purposeful life happens when I find the consistent and persistent focus to keep taking that next step.

Foundations to Keep Stepping

I have it in me to be persistent and consistent in my pursuit of purpose. My past proves that I have it in me. For some reason I gave procrastination a LOT of power in my life – even speaking about how much procrastination managed to drive my actions (or more my inactions).

I mentioned the ask, seek, knock Scripture when talking about taking that first step, but it also is a great reminder about being persistent in what you are doing. Luke 11: 9 – 10 reads like this

“Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives, and the one who seeks finds, and to the one who knocks it will be opened.”

Jesus goes on to explain more about persistence in Luke 18: 1 – 8. This is the story of the persistent widow. She approached a judge and asked for him to take rule in her favor, but the judge ignored her. The widow came back to him again asking for him to rule in her favor, but the judge ignored her. This continued until the judge was so tired of her asking that he decided to rule in her favor just so she would stop coming to him. Her justice came about because of her persistence.

If I am willing to keep on keeping on, then most of the time I will get an answer and most of the time that answer will be in my favor because of my persistent diligence in pursuing my purpose.

Jacob's story is another great one for the value of persistence. In Genesis 32 we find Jacob alone in the wilderness because he has sent all that he has ahead of him in an attempt to appease his brother Esau. Now while he is alone, he begins to wrestle with a man and Jacob wrestled with that man all night long. At day break, the man realized he was not going to win and he touched Jacob's hip and the thigh came out of joint – but Jacob continued to wrestle the man anyway. Jacob was persistent even through what had to be some serious pain.

The man asked Jacob to let him go and Jacob said only if he would bless him. So the man gave Jacob the name Israel and said it was because you have struggled with God and with humans and have overcome.”

Because of Jacob's persistence, he became Israel.

The more I think about it, the more I realize the Scripture is filled with stories of persistent and consistent behavior.

Noah built the Ark for 120 years before the floods came and God's prophecy was fulfilled.

Abraham walked in faith for 25 years before the promise God gave him was fulfilled in the birth of Isaac.

Jacob served his father-in-law with consistent actions and persistent determination so that he would be able to marry his love Rachel.

David is anointed by Samuel to be the next king when he is around 12 and then is consistent in his loyalty to God and persistent in his faith of God for the next couple of decades all while trying to avoid being killed by Saul before he finally took the throne as King when he was about 30 years old.

And I complain when I invest a week and all of the dreams have not been fulfilled.

Jesus had the consistent habit of making time to be alone in prayer. In Mark 1:35 it is shared that Jesus was up before daybreak – that would be while it is still dark – and he would go to an isolated place and pray – or talk with God. He shares the secret for powerful faith when he tells his disciples that it is the consistency that allows him to perform the many miracles – this comes from Mark 9:29.

Consistency and persistence are powerful weapons for walking out a bold life. They give me the strength to take that next step and each next step makes it possible for me to move a little closer to that place I know that I am designed to be. I have to keep on stepping if I am going to arrive.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR



Facebook: [theKathrynCLang](#)

Twitter: [@KathrynCLang](#)

YouTube: [TheKathrynCLang](#)

Google Plus: [+KathrynCLang](#)

“Words have power – and I work to share words that ignite hope and possibility in those they encounter.”

Kathryn Lang continues to grow her career as a wordsmith. She shares words in talks, teachings, columns and stories to provide the hearts that hear with some fuel for hope.

Take a moment to visit <http://www.kathrynclang.com> to read more of her writings. You can also contact Kathryn to speak at your next event or conference by emailing her at kathrynclang@kathrynclang.com.

READ MORE FROM KATHRYN C LANG

[BOOKS](#)

Study Guide/Non-fiction:

Practical Proverbs with Study Guide
Building Blocks to Writing Success
The Husband Whisperer

Inspirational:

Reflections – Vol 1, Vol 2, Vol 3, Vol 4, Vol 5

Novels:

RUN
WATCH

Tourism Fiction:

Mystery Rock

[EBOOKS](#)

A Wife Perfected
Building Blocks to Writing Success
Motivate and Inspire Your Writing
Growing Accountability
STAND
Confessions of a Freelance Writer
Growing Up a Radical Life