



CHOOSE COURAGE

**Step Into the
Success You Want**

Building Bridges to Achievement

Ruth M. Schimel, Ph.D.

Choose Courage
Step Into the Success You
Want:

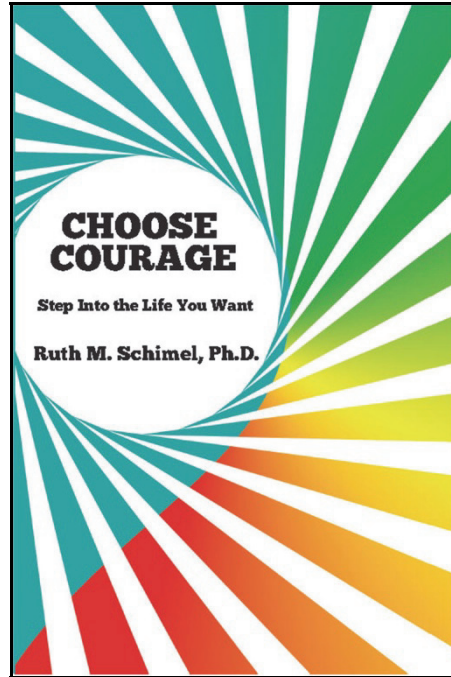
Building Bridges to Achievement

by Ruth M. Schimel, Ph.D.

Career & Life Management Consultant

**DON'T MISS THIS GROUNDBREAKING BOOK THAT
PROVIDES THE FOUNDATION FOR THE HANDBOOKS**

Choose Courage: Step Into the Life You Want



**by Ruth M. Schimel, Ph.D.
Career & Life Management Consultant**

**Available at www.amazon.com or through
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In paperback and Kindle editions

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[Choose Courage: Step Into the Life You Want](#)

ACCLAIM FOR CHOOSE COURAGE

We are in the era where individuals can express who they are, what they believe in, what they seek, and where to move forward as never before across most of the globe.

Technology has enabled and empowered the ability to have a platform to express your opinion (from Tweets to blog posts, to other means). Thus the timely publication of the Dr. Ruth Schimel's new book entitled "Choose Courage: Step Into the Life You Want" is ideal to guide individuals to not only pursue their dreams but also to realize them.

Choose Courage offers a unique set of guidelines that is sensitive to the individual reader and allows everyone to tailor the recommendations to their own set of circumstances. Most "How to Books" dictate with a lofty set of rules and principles to the reader for the pathway to success. Dr. Schimel offers a positive, manageable, and realistic process.

Choose Courage is an outstanding life map that guides a range of individuals from business leaders to elementary teachers to exhibit their courage and to use their respective talents without boundaries, without fear.

Dr. Hubert Glover, Drexel University, Author of Giraffes of Technology: The Making of the 21st Century Leader

USE AND BENEFITS OF CHOOSE COURAGE

***Choose Courage: Step Into the Life You Want* transforms what could be a heroic cliché into concrete ways you can realize your true capacities. Based on doctoral-level research with everyday people, the book provides a 21st century definition of courage. The array of tools and guidance will help you build on your strengths and skills as well as transcend emotional barriers. Photos, art, humor, and poetry will also inspire your continuing action.**

The design of *Choose Courage* echoes the dynamism of life. Like the blended, spontaneous nature of jazz, this interactive book uses a range of disciplines to support fresh ideas and menus of processes; weave them into what you want and need. Since the approach reflects the incremental nature of actual progress, take the small steps in whatever order makes sense to you. Or use the sequence offered. You'll be prompting your own potential and useful contributions from and to others.

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Use your good judgment, intuition, intellect, and common sense as you apply and adapt suggestions and guidance from this handbook.

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DEDICATION

This handbook is offered with appreciation to my clients and readers, as well as to my collaborator and production editor, Kathleen Sindell, Ph.D.
(www.kathleensindell.com)

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INTRODUCTION

BUILDING BRIDGES TO ACHIEVEMENT

If you haven't used the first handbook on success, *Sparkling Your Powers*, essential parts of its Introduction are included here. To further promote your progress, this Introduction to *Building Bridges to Achievement* has significant new aspects and is designed to stand alone.

ALL HANDBOOKS ARE DESIGNED TO COMPLEMENT

CHOOSE COURAGE: STEP INTO THE LIFE YOU WANT

ACCESSIBLE ACTION FOR YOUR SUCCESS

If the word “success” remains seductive, take what’s useful from this Introduction to clarify what it actually means to you. A dictionary definition of success as the accomplishment of a goal may sound bland until you consider how you personally define the second definition: gaining fame or prosperity.

Unsurprisingly, an essential aspect of success is action. You’ll find that cue in the derivation of the word itself. The Latin *sue* and *cedere* relate to what comes next, to follow or pursue something. This shows that success involves both results and processes, or how you go about working for what you want.

Combining your own meanings of success with appreciating the process of creating it can be more inspiring and motivating than relying on external or conventional views. When you start with who you are and what you truly want, you have first say about how to proceed. Given that personal focus, you’ll be likely to be more effective and to enjoy the process itself, which accounts for most of your efforts and time anyway.

Another value in appreciating the Latin derivation of success helps you avoid post-partum blues. When you think of success as something that comes next, you can thwart the “is this all there is” sense that may follow achieving a major goal. Then you’ll feel readier to continue effective action, whether to refine what you’ve accomplished, address a related possibility, or explore a new vision.

You’ll also be better able to continue concrete steps as well as attend to dreams and drop what no longer feels right. You can rejoice in your authentic accomplishments, however modest, and move toward the encouraging surprises in your unfolding future. Let the energy generated by using this dynamic process help you get off your tuffet, a stool that could lower your horizon.

MOVE INTO YOUR BRIGHTER FUTURE

The four short, fresh guides of this second handbook on success will promote your progress. They will also take you to useful perspectives and choices for your personal and professional life. Yet, they will not ensure immediate results. Rather than being magical Ali Baba “open sesame,” the guides will help you sprout the seeds of success already within you.

Your seeds include positive cultural norms and values, genetic strengths, productive attitudes, and encouraging emotions that spark energy and motivation. Keep updating and infusing the learning from educational and other worthwhile sources such as respected colleagues, mentors, sponsors, friends, and family.

The seeds will sprout more readily as you plow and fertilize the soil. That includes the range of trusted relationships you cultivate further. Be alert for new connections with promise that hold mutual benefit.

TRANSCEND COMFORT

In today's world you can cross-pollinate through many means such as the Internet, social networking, activities you enjoy, manageable projects, and professional and community groups. Seek collaborators for fun, creativity, and tangible as well as intangible outcomes.

Innovation is more likely to occur across disciplines, rather than among people of like mind who stick with what they know. Though what you've mastered provides a foundation for confidence and exploration, it's not a sure path to new possibilities. As actor Jeff Bridges asks, *...what's the true cost of our comfort? What are we willing to pay?* Are predictability and recognition based on past accomplishments adequate substitutes for the productive, exciting risks that await as you progress to success?

Going beyond what's comfortable provides another, often promising, catalytic situation that may feel chaotic. It's often bottom up. Nicholas Negroponte of the MIT Media Lab describes this as "demo or die." That differs from MBA models or the logical, analytical approaches typical of many learning, planning, and decision making situations; often they assume direct cause and effect relationships with linear steps versus the dynamic, interactive realities of many creative processes today.

For practical, productive alternatives to linear models and thousands of books, articles, courses, programs, and videos already available, use this low-cost handbook material in any sequence that makes sense to you. Inspiring, focused, and flexible, it's designed to accommodate your unique interests, needs, and potential.

In other words, though logic and predictability have their place, they are not prerequisites for your success. Instead, action is emphasized in various adaptable combinations, such as coasting on a known straightaway for a while, edging sideways like crabs, curling upward like pigs' tails, or leaping forward like grasshoppers. Central, though, is committing to something you value. Over time, that clarity can attract opportunities you may not imagine.

Yet as comic improviser and actor Robin Williams used to say, *you have to fail in order to find the new*. Though such trial and error may not involve the often brilliant, manic, stream-of-consciousness leaps he made, find and enjoy your own brand of improvisation for expressing creativity and honoring your vision.

At the end of each guide, you'll see sources for exploration and continuing development. Learning *how to learn* will likely be more important than *what* you know already. You can always quickly access needed information, formally and informally, by connecting with contacts, Internet sources and articles by experts you respect.

In addition to using search engines, identify related books at www.amazon.com. For more general sources, explore universities, workshops, and MOOCs (massive open online courses) for complementary courses, certificates, and degree programs. They may also provide the names of knowledgeable people for follow up explorations and conversations.

THE POWER OF PURPOSE AND THE PRESENT

The crucial, inside process of building success, or *how you* proceed, is most likely to bloom when you clarify and embrace a purpose that has meaning for you and others who are or can be involved. This includes a vision or idea that reflects your values, hopes, and dreams as well as knowledge and experience.

Allow yourself to continue stretching beyond what's comfortable as you integrate passions, skills, and abilities. Your persistence, openness, and commitment are likely to attract outside expertise, resources, and connections. At the same time, cultivate a Zen-like stance of being in the present, without rigid expectations. That's not only freeing, but also ultimately empowering and appealing to many others because they won't feel the pressure of your expressed or underlying demands and needs.

As Joi Ito of the MIT Media Lab counsels, stop trying to be perfectly prepared or being an actor in a case study. Instead, focus on being a "nowist" by:

- being connected
- always learning
- being fully aware
- staying super present

Then, you hold the cards and choices of how to deal them when your purpose helps focus and prompt action. Decide how you will proceed and with whom you want to collaborate to promote success. In fact, the seeming unknowns and voids that sometimes seem intimidating often signal where to go or at least explore.

YOU CAN MAKE THE MAGIC

As you continue to clarify your purpose to yourself and others as well as follow through with related action, benefit from the mutual trust that evolves. This intangible will be a catalyst for cooperation and progress, not to mention ease and efficiency. Such a rich intangible can make what seems magical flow more naturally.

Some call such flow serendipity or possibly chance happenings. Synchronicity, or the simultaneous occurrence of events that appear related but have no discernible connection, may also occur. But actual power is likely generated by your own authentic action, commitment, passion, and vocation, as you define it. Together, all of them will encourage and empower you and others.

(See Appendices on Courage for Definitions and Cycles and explore what *Choose Courage: Step Into the Life You Want* offers at www.amazon.com).

Scientist Louis Pasteur is supposed to have said some variation of *chance favors the prepared mind*. Luck or fortune sometimes replaces chance in similar quotes. In other words, you'll be creating your own luck most of the time. Just keep bearing in mind there are no simple relationships between what you do and what happens, between cause and effect; there are just too many variables and unknowns. Your power resides in your choices about what you do and why you do it, in how you handle what happens, especially in relationships with others.

As you honor your priorities, pursue your purpose(s), and willingly explore possibilities with common sense, you'll know better when to move forward with your vision or plan, be flexible, and adjust expectations. You'll also feel increasingly confident about using intuition and instincts to know what to embrace and what to let go.

CLARIFY WHAT SUCCESS MEANS TO YOU

When Christine Lagarde, managing director of the International Monetary Fund, talks about inspiring or leading others she says, *It's a question of feeling confident about yourself, being reconciled with your own identity, your own body, actually...You have to first of all be okay with yourself, accept who you are, and not fight against yourself all the time...The second step is about being honest with yourself and telling the truth, not covering up and pretending you are somebody that you are not deep down inside.*

By trusting yourself in this manner or whatever works for you, others are more likely to invest in and with you. Being true to yourself then leads to real comfort and confidence. It lubricates both relationships and action.

With this potential in mind, imagine what a good outcome is or can be in particular situations. Be ready to adjust your assumptions as need be. To improve momentum, just take about five minutes to jot down below your preliminary definition of success as it relates to one personal, professional, or integrated situation. Keep it to two to four sentences that come spontaneously to mind.

If nothing pops up or you want to stretch your ideas of success, use and adapt any of the tangible and intangible examples below. Include specifics to be as clear as possible for now. That concreteness will also encourage the action and responses you want as well as help you define and express your purpose or purposes.

- learning how to do _____ to promote pleasure, meaning, or valuable results
- inspiring others to realize their strengths by _____

- earning \$_____per_____ to support and sustain the quality of life and security I want
- making a difference in or influencing my world by _____
- creating a product, service, or art form such as _____that attracts, engages, or inspires others
- leading a family, group, community, or organization for everyone’s benefit to accomplish _____

Now, see what you want to take away or adapt from American essayist and poet Ralph Waldo Emerson’s definition of success:

To laugh often and much; to win the respect of intelligent people and affection of children; to earn the appreciation of honest critics and endure the betrayal of false friends; to appreciate beauty; to find the best in others; to leave the world a bit better, whether by a healthy child, a garden patch or a redeemed social condition; to know even one life has breathed easier because I have lived. This is to have succeeded.

Neither your adaptations of the bulleted list above nor Ralph Waldo Emerson’s definition mention money as an end in itself. That’s because research shows money alone may not sustain happiness, another measure of success to some.

By now you’ve no doubt learned that little of importance tends to stay static over time, whether money, happiness, health, relationships, work, or success. Each can shift, ebbing and flowing, temporarily satisfying appetites that eventually clamor for the often insatiable four-letter word — more. Or different or better.

YOUR GROWTH MIND SET

You can create momentum, whether or not you start with the level of confidence and expertise you’d like. Sometimes curiosity alone will encourage your initial steps.

Wherever you begin, though, I hope this Introduction to building bridges to achieving the success you want helps you avoid a fixed mind set. According to Carol Dweck, an example would be thinking you have to be born with all the smarts and talents required. Instead, the Stanford University psychologist found just the opposite during three decades of research. People who believe their abilities can expand over time, those with a “growth mind set,” tend to be the most innovative.

They think they can improve their abilities if they try and are willing to seek new strategies rather than succumb to fears of failure or remain in a rut. Such openness and optimism support an attitude you can develop, if you don’t have it already.

But maintaining a constant growth mind set is not automatic or even that easy. There is almost always a new challenge that may make you feel unready, unsteady, or inadequate. At such points, perhaps punt to acting as if you are ready to proceed. That attitude may be your starter yeast for growth. To explore your own mindset, go to: <http://mindsetonline.com/>

BOTTOM LINE

Success will evolve as you're willing to do effective work, express your true self, and continue to learn in the context of a purpose that gives you authentic inspiration. You'll know you're succeeding when you enjoy this process most of the time. As you sustain patience and a sense of humor, you'll be more likely to elicit others' interest and support. As always, take what's useful and leave the rest from this Introduction and the following four short guides.

Henry David Thoreau's thoughts may inspire you further: *If one advances confidently in the direction of his dreams, and endeavors to live the life which he has imagined, he will meet with a success unexpected in common hours.* He was an American author, poet, philosopher, abolitionist, naturalist, tax resister, development critic, and surveyor. Considering his varied choices of vocations, you may want to believe for yourself *it's never too late to be who you might have been*, as author George Eliot, aka Mary Anne Evans, said.

The process of exploring and expressing your authentic self will bring pleasure and strengthen your chances for success that has meaning to you — not to mention promote flow, enjoyment in your life, and contributions to others.