

## BE THE CHANGE - WEEK 1: Dec. 1-7

### Love, Compassion, Bravery & Kindness

The poet and guide, Mark Nepo recounts a story that relates to our first week's focus. He writes, "I had a dream when ill, in which I came to the edge of a forest where the narrow, lighted spaces called to me. I stood there through many opportunities till an ageless woman of great resolve appeared, saying, 'You can't start, I know, and if I were kind, I'd see you halfway in, but I am more than kind. You must enter alone. I will meet you on the other side.'"

And so we start. And for much of this journey through ninety days you will walk forward alone – and I will meet you on the other side of each week with spiritual bread for the journey.



Photo Credit: Ronna J. Biggs  
"Damfino Lakes"

Our first focus must be where all things start. What I know is that we start with a vast Love that has nothing whatsoever to do with romance or sentimentality. This Love is flowing like an underground river in the very depths of your nature. It is the fertile source of all dreams, ideas and aspirations. It has no limit and knows no limit in you. The goal in these ninety days is to return to that flow. To become immersed in your core and true nature. To open the door of your mind and heart to allow the birth of new ideas and inspiration to direct your course.

To make this inward journey requires courage, compassion and loving-kindness. The root of the word courage is "cor" - the Latin word for heart. In one of its earliest forms, the word courage meant "To speak one's mind by telling all one's heart." You are asked to exercise courage as you walk forward in this program. You will also need as your steady twin companions compassion and kindness.

Walk forward – I'll meet you on the other side.  
Andrea

#### **This week's assignments:**

- Do ten minutes or more of spiritual practice six days this week.
- Read "*The Book of Awakening*" starting with the reading for December 1 six days this week. (We are enclosing an attachment that has the first few readings).
- Attend if possible the first spiritual gathering on Sunday, Dec. 4 from Noon-1 PM at CSL Bellingham.
- Watch the TED talk assigned for this week, paying attention to the discussion on courage. [https://www.ted.com/talks/brene\\_brown\\_on\\_vulnerability](https://www.ted.com/talks/brene_brown_on_vulnerability)

Courage is the strength to stand up  
When it's easier to fall down and lose hold.

It is the conviction to explore new horizons  
When it's easier to believe what we've been told.

Courage is the desire to maintain our integrity  
When it's easier to look the other way.

It is feeling happy and alive, and moving forward  
When it's easier to feel sorry for ourselves and stay.

Courage is the will to shape our world  
When it's easier to let someone else do it for us.

It is the recognition that none of us are perfect  
When it's easier to criticize others and fuss.

Courage is the power to step forward and lead  
When it's easier to follow the crowd; their pleas resound.

It is the spirit that places you on top of the mountain  
When it's easier to never leave the ground.

The foundation of courage is solid,  
The rock that doesn't roll.

Courage is the freedom  
Of our mind, body, and soul!

~ [Anonymous](#)