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Self-Help

The Courage Companion: How to Live Life with True Power
Mary Beth Sammons
Nina Lesowitz
978-1-57344-409-5
(September 30, 2010)

> *The ultimate measure of a man is not where he stands in moments of comfort, but where he stands at times of challenge and controversy.—Martin Luther King, Jr.*

This is just one of the many inspiring quotes, accompanied by inspiring meditations and exercises, found in this delightful compendium of real-life success stories designed to encourage and motivate even the most fearful. The more challenging life becomes, the more courage it takes to continue. Nina Lesowitz's and Mary Beth Sammons's follow-up to *Living Life as a Thank You* provides practical guidance on how to find strength within oneself to overcome paralyzing fears and difficult obstacles.

Broken down into chapters that address different types of courage, this book recounts small and easily digestible stories of people who have met challenges ranging from abuse, natural disasters, and political oppression to physical illness, mental deterioration, and job loss. Each story is prefaced by a quote from a well-known historical figure and followed by a mantra exercise which addresses a particular type of courage. Sidebars peppered throughout the book feature people who are model examples of courage or address how to overcome fears and practice courage. In effect, Lesowitz and Sammons have created an accessible how-to guide and source of inspiration for anyone wishing to further a process of self-discovery or self-empowerment.

Even though these accounts run the gamut of tragedy, they all demonstrate the human will to live and thrive. The story of Eli Rosmarin, a Polish Jew imprisoned in a concentration camp during World War II, is a testament to endurance and bravery; Rosmarin manages to survive a death camp, celebrate a fifty-year marriage, and live a long and healthy life. It is difficult not to be awed by the story of Romel Jospeh, a Julliard-trained violinist, who was born

blind and grew up poor in Haiti. During the recent Haitian earthquake, he lost his wife and his leg was crushed when he was trapped under a crumbling building. After being rescued, he rehabilitated himself even as he mourned his wife, and was eventually able to walk again on stage to perform. For those who think that they cannot change their lives, these stories will provide encouragement and hope.

In the face of media focus on the negatives of living everyday life, this book is a welcome and positive take on what lies within us once tragedy strikes. *The Courage Companion* is the perfect antidote to feeling lost in times of chaos and challenge.

Monica Carter