



## PERSONAL MANIFESTO

**Definition of manifesto:** A written statement declaring publicly your intentions, motives, or views.

**Origin of manifesto:** From the Latin *manifestus* – to manifest, to clearly reveal, to make real; first known use was in 1620.

### Why have a manifesto?

- To remind you in one powerful statement of who you really are and how you want to make a difference.
- To help you stay true to your core values and act on them.
- To gain the opportunity to be vulnerable and connect with those you love by sharing your manifesto with them.

Use the inspiration from the videos of this module to help guide you in your manifesto. What has your life taught you about who you want to and need to be? If you could control the narrative or how people see you, what would you want them to see and know? While we know we ultimately can't control perception, your manifesto is a grounding statement that reminds you of your true essence, values, resilience, and direction.

Look at the statements below. Which ones resonate most with you? Fill in those statements and start writing your manifesto. Use action words and strong declarations. Your manifesto can be as short or as long as it needs it to be.

- The values that guide me in my effort to show up and be seen are . . .
- I stand for . . .
- I am most curious about . . .
- I must do something about . . .
- I am most passionate about . . .
- I have the courage to . . .
- I love . . .
- In my heart of hearts, I . . .
- I am on this planet to . . .
- I will love myself by . . .
- I will dare greatly by . . .
- What I know for sure:



Incorporate creative elements into your manifesto when it's done: color, photos, art, or a manifesto anthem can bring it even more to life. Hang it on a wall. Share it with those you trust, and ask for their support.

## Example of a Manifesto written as a Resignation Letter

Dear World,

I'm resigning today.

Resigning from the job I was given to make you happy and comfortable.

I don't remember even applying for this job, but nonetheless, it was handed to me.

Somehow, somewhere, a story was bestowed on me and my fellow females.

That we have a job that is an ever so important one.

That job has many rules and responsibilities.

A short list of the musts:

We must smile.

We must be pretty.

We must be thin.

We must be compliant.

And the must nots:

We must not get angry.

We must not age disgracefully (whatever that means)

We must not use foul language.

We must not show too much cleavage.

We must not share our opinions too forcefully and if we do dare share them, they should not offend anyone nor be disagreeable.

And if we MUST say no, we must explain ourselves, apologize, and do whatever deems necessary to make the other person feel as comfortable as possible with our no.

As I turn in my resignation, I have three words for your rules.

Fuck. That. Shit.

Because I'm done.

These rules have been for you.

These rules have morphed me into an unrecognizable rag doll that serves no purpose except to make you comfortable.

These are not *my rules*.

World, do you know what abiding by these rules has done?

Let me paint you a picture.

When I was 16 I was pinned down on a beach, sand in my hair,

While a boy I was on a date with forced open my pants,

Shoving his hand down my underwear.

When I told him no and to get off of me,

He said he thought that's what I wanted because I had let him kiss me.

I liked him and with his obvious frustration I felt guilty and wrong for my decision to say no.

He took me home and on Monday at school, I heard the boys laughing and "prick tease!" –

Yelled through the hallways at me while people stopped and stared and whispered.

I learned that day if I didn't follow the rules, if I dared say no, there would be consequences.

All in order to make him comfortable and follow the rules.

I knew how it went if I said no.



## Courage Club

Saying yes to men and people and things I didn't want to,  
All in order to please them,  
To make them comfortable,  
To put their feelings before mine.  
To not emasculate them,  
To allow them to use my body as they so pleased.  
And this isn't just about sex.  
It's about everything we're asked to do.  
We all fist pump when we hear "No is a complete sentence",  
But how many of us do it?  
When we're faced with the choices of saying no with no explanation,  
Or saying no while apologizing,  
Thinking how we'll make it up to them,  
Over-explaining our reasons,  
And praying to god they don't get mad at us or have their feelings hurt... we chose the latter.  
Because according to the rules: Just a no isn't good enough.  
According to the rules, Only bitches say no as a complete sentence.  
Well, world.  
I'd rather be a bitch than go against who I am as a human being.  
I'd rather be a bitch than let someone shove my face into their dick.  
I'd rather be a bitch than give in to sex while tears stream down my face and into my ears, Staring at the ceiling, counting to 100 hoping he finishes quickly.  
(Long pause)  
My daughter is 7 years old.  
No one told me when I was growing up that I didn't have to follow those rules.  
No one told me that I could grow up and say no.  
Without apologizing.  
Without agonizing.  
Without explaining.  
Without making up for it.  
And I'll be honest, World,  
It feels weird walking away from this job.  
I've had it my whole life and it feels like trying to wipe my skin off.  
Something that's a part of me that I'm terrified to let go of, but if I keep this job I'll go crazy.  
So, with that, I resign.

-A. OWEN