

Excerpt from Be Brave and Arise: My Life Quest As a Bahá'í Man
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My Life Quest

You are on a quest, the journey of life, and you have a choice of being conscious or unconscious about your goals and your purposes during that journey. A quest is about searching, seeking, and having adventures on the way to a significant outcome.

You live in a world with few and inconsistent moral standards, and most behaviors, at least at the level of media, are portrayed as acceptable. Then you encounter the Bahá'í Faith, which can feel at times like it has an almost impossible number of standards to achieve. You have the ability, consistently a little each day, to build your capacity to live a life in alignment with the Bahá'í teachings, if you choose to:

- Be brave
- Arise and act

You may not know yet the personal satisfaction, self-confidence, and empowerment that comes from striving to achieve personal integrity with clear, purposeful goals. You may not yet have in place people to support your progress lovingly and compassionately. This book will increase your vision for how to achieve these. It's based on the author's current understanding, and it's humbly offered as a light on your journey. All the concepts in this book are evolving with time and research, and you will see how they fit with your life.

No matter in what spiritual state you are now, you can choose to gradually incorporate spiritual principles into your life, form a vision of where you want to go, and begin the journey toward your goals. Making spiritually based choices can empower you to live a life with:

- Purpose
- Happiness
- Material prosperity
- Well-being
- Integrity
- Coherence

As you go through the sections of this book, you will grow in self-understanding and self-respect, as well as make increasingly positive choices for all aspects of your life. This book will accompany you with focused encouragement and support as you seek to understand and empower yourself and as you experience parts of the quest such as:

- Pursuing education and a profession
- Forming a marriage and family
- Building community

It will assist you to build your capacity for living and for serving others based on the Bahá'í teachings:

“When his life is oriented toward service to Bahá'u'lláh, and when every conscious act is performed within this frame of reference, he will not fail to achieve the true purpose of his life.”ⁱ On behalf of the Universal House of Justice

Many men find that spiritual values, a search for truth, and a hunger to belong to something greater than themselves protects them from a natural fear of failure and the difficulties of the world. Bahá'u'lláh says:

“He must search after the truth to the utmost of his ability and exertion, that God may guide him in the paths of His favor and the ways of His mercy. For He, verily, is the best of helpers unto His servants. ... In this journey the seeker becometh witness to a myriad changes and transformations, confluences and divergences. He beholdeth the wonders of Divinity in the mysteries of creation and discovereth the paths of guidance and the ways of His Lord. Such is the station reached by them that search after God, and such are the heights attained by those who hasten unto Him.”ⁱⁱ Bahá'u'lláh

A man provides his thoughts:

“When I hear ‘Be Brave’ I feel empowered and ennobled. It honors the weight of the dark forces I face in the world each day, as we are truly heading out into a horrific and dangerous battlefield. Nothing other than true heroism, self-effacement, fearlessness, and ultimate detachment seem to be called for in this day when the forces of darkness think they are winning the battle of life.

“The call to be brave and arise also tells me that I have great opportunity for heroism, and for achieving our ultimate objective which is nearness to God. I appreciate that someone believes I can handle the raw truth and has faith in my inner strength. It’s a call to arise to something greater than myself, regardless of what I perceive my strengths to be, and it’s a call to nobility. And that empowers me. The content of this book is a call to the Kingdom, a call to pass through this earthly battlefield and come out on the other side, to the other realm, having gained the tools I will need for the rest of a mighty journey.”

Here is Bahá'u'lláh's promise:

“He that hath Me not is bereft of all things. Turn ye away from all that is on earth and seek none else but Me. I am the Sun of Wisdom and the Ocean of Knowledge. I cheer the faint and revive the dead. I am the guiding Light that illumineth the way. I am the royal Falcon on the arm of the Almighty. I unfold the drooping wings of every broken bird and start it on its flight.”ⁱⁱⁱ Bahá'u'lláh

Developing an approach to your life based on the Bahá'í teachings is a process and a journey that calls you to be brave and arise. Welcome to your quest!

ⁱ On behalf of the Universal House of Justice to an individual, February 5, 1992

ⁱⁱ Bahá'u'lláh, *Gems of Divine Mysteries*, #36; #37

ⁱⁱⁱ Bahá'u'lláh, *Tabernacle of Unity*, #1.14