



Showing Up : 32 Ways

Anese Cavanaugh

First, my loves, let's get something straight... You are contagious and you get to decide what that means. You have super powers galore.

It does not matter if you are a student, a doctor, a CEO, a mom, a dad, a kid, a janitor, a florist, a designer, or a fighter pilot; you have super powers and they're yours for the taking to use and conquer the world with. You get this life, this company, this adventure, this family, this culture, to show up for. Show up well.

All sorts of stuff is going to happen. And you have zero control "out there." But what you do have is major control "in here." You have the power to Show Up. People are going to tell you that life happens to you, that your culture happens to you, your bosses, your friends, your horrible boyfriends or girlfriends, all sorts of stuff that sucks. Fair enough... lots of stuff happens.

But what they won't often tell you (unless they're a REALLY good friend or advisor), is that even though this thing has happened, you are a participant, you contributed to crafting it (and if you *really* had nothing to do with it to begin with, you are contributing to crafting what happens NEXT and what you do with it).

YOU choose how you want to interact with life. You choose what you want to change, the attitude you have, how you show up for yourself and others, the accountability you'll take, what you'll learn. You have a choice with what YOU do. And from this place you can turn some seriously negative and crazy stuff into wisdom and growth (and maybe even magic)—or some seriously awesome stuff into even more magic. Those bad relationships, bad bosses, horrible companies, rude people, crappy friends, bad teams, yucky projects, crazy situations that you keep attracting, I mean, that keep *happening to you*? Great news... you're the common denominator. You take yourself with you wherever you go. Whether we're talking about your relationships, your culture, your job, your parenting, your health, or your leadership prowess, your highest point of leverage is always in you. So let's talk about YOU—because YOU are awesome, and you have some big impact to exert on this life.

1 You're contagious. Use that super power for good, not evil. Your energy is contagious, and so is theirs. Be aware of and choose what you put out, and choose what you want to take on. You must be the change you wish to see, and the culture.

2 You need a trifecta. If you're creating impact and killer results, but you're exhausted, burning yourself and your loved ones out, you're missing the boat. If you're taking great care of yourself and people around you, but you're not creating results and impact, that's another boat missed. If you're creating impact and great results and taking really great care of yourself, but you treat people badly, "leaving dead bodies behind you" wherever you go, you're sinking the boat. You need the leadership trifecta: the ability to create impact, exquisite self-care, and the ability to bring people with you so they feel good about being on your boat. Self-care, impact, people. Hop to.

“ You take yourself with you wherever you go. Whether we're talking about your relationships, your culture, your job, your parenting, your health, or your leadership prowess, your highest point of leverage is always in you.

3 Your choices create your reality and you're always having an impact. Your choices, your presence, your regard for others, your attitude in general, even your posture and facial expressions—everything has an impact. And you choose the way you respond to life, what you intend for your life, the choices you make in your life, the attitude and presence you bring into a room, the way you respond to feedback or a difficult conversation, how present you are with another human being, when to “bite your tongue” until you have wiser words and actions. These choices and decisions create your outcomes and reality. And this can be incredibly liberating if you let it be. You choose. Own it, and create it. Easy peasy.

4 A problem is only as big as you make it. (And really there is no problem.) How you “hold” the “problem”—your intention, energy, and how you show up with it—will influence how well you navigate it, how easy it is to find opportunities and solutions, and how the people around you will respond to it. Your mindset and presence here can either create an environment for curiosity and solutions, or fear and drama. Soo... If you don't like it, change it. Hit up curiosity and gratitude, think outside the box, and ask awesome people for help. Your best idea, or your most important life change, may be on the other side of that “problem.”

5 Fear, scarcity, and gloom vs. love, abundance, and joy. These opposing states can't co-exist. Are your thoughts, answers, and actions coming from fear or love? Scarcity or abundance? Gloom or joy? If you take a moment, breathe, and choose, you can influence where they come from, you can choose which path you take, which state you feed, which mindset you build evidence for. So choose.

By the way, be wary of catching other peoples' fear, scarcity, or gloom, as these can be incredibly contagious. And your peeps, even while well intended, will often try to give them to you. Not because they're bad—they often don't even know they're doing it—but because it is so easy to invite people into these states, and it's even easier to join. Breathe and choose.

6 YOU are where it's at. Yes you. There's ONE of you in this whole entire Universe. No other. So let's make sure you're in really good shape. Let's make sure you show up as you. And let's make sure you set yourself up for success to have the best life and the biggest impact possible. Be who you are. Let your quirky freak flag fly. Say what you think (we need you). Be real. Tell the truth. This is all home base stuff. Then, create your vision for where you're going. It's your map. Identify your values and what you stand for. They're your compass. And know your "why" and what's so incredibly important about it. It's your fuel. Intentions, plans, and a strong why help leave legacies. Authentic leaders, showing up in their own skin, help create more leaders. When YOU show up as YOU, and are *responsible for your impact*, we all win.

7 Cultivate your vitality. People aren't lucky to have energy, they generate it. Talk to anyone who has a lot of natural energy and you'll find they do things in their life to nurture it. Eat well. Think well. Intend how you want to feel. Intend how you want to show up. Breathe. Move your body. Use your posture. Live. Expand. Take care of yourself. Be nice to yourself. Your body is the only one you have. It's your vehicle to make things happen. What you put in it will impact your brain, your energy, your outlook, and how you show up. How you talk to yourself, your mental mindset, the hogwash you let in, the drama, gossip, naysaying you entertain, the people you surround yourself with... these all impact your energy. How you take care of yourself is directly related to the amount of impact and joy you can create through your leadership. How people experience you, and the energy you bring to the table, tremendously impacts your influence. Be intentional here. Don't try to be one of the "lucky ones." Create the energy and vitality you desire, and lead.

“People aren't lucky to have energy, they generate it. Talk to anyone who has a lot of natural energy and you'll find they do things in their life to nurture it.”

8 What you surround yourself with impacts your impact. This includes your environment. What state is your closet in? How about your pantry, your car? How about your calendar? (Does your heart sink when you open it?) The people you spend your time with, what you let into your orbit, and what you say “yes” and “no” to—you have a choice in each. Everything you surround yourself with is always either contributing to or detracting from your energy. Look alive! Anything that doesn’t feel good to you, either toss it, tweak it, renegotiate it, or make it right.

9 Be your own best friend, and surround yourself with awesome people. Really. It’s up to you. Love—a lot—and be really, really kind to yourself. Oh! And by the way, when someone is mean to you, rude to you, or just downright funky to you, it’s not about you. It’s their stuff. Assume good. Love ‘em up. Let it go. Stay in your own space. And yes, be your own best friend and continue to surround yourself with awesome.

10 Craft your posse. The people you surround yourself with are having a tremendous impact on your energy, mindset, and your success—and you’re having tremendous impact on theirs. Do you hang out with people who make you feel bigger, real, safe, and seen? Do they inspire you? Do they give you safe space to work your stuff, not know the answers, be a mess, and screw up royally—while then holding space for you to learn, grow, and step up? Or do you feel constricted, dark, unsafe, petty, smaller, and—how shall I say this—simply yucky, in the company you keep?

Take notice. And if your posse is a rock star posse, nurture it. Keep showing up. Love those people up. Tell them thanks. If your posse needs work, change the conversation. Make a request. Name what you're noticing. Show up how you want to be treated. And if this all falls apart, choose new peeps. Your posse to this point has surely served you well in many ways, so thank them and then create an intentional posse. The people you surround yourself with should (if you so choose) elevate you, make you better, and make you want to be better—and vice versa.

11 Be really, really, really good at something. It'll just feel good. Master your craft. Have something you care a ton about getting good at. Doesn't matter what it is. Be devoted to something.

12 Focus on what you WANT not what you DON'T WANT. Enough said.

13 What you DID might be bad, but YOU are NOT bad. Remember this. Your actions, your mistakes, your downright absolute screw-ups do not make you a bad or “less worthy” person. They make you human. Learn from them. Let them make you better. The more you can do this, and really honor yourself in the process, the stronger your resilience in leadership. Feedback for someone? A direct report, a spouse, a child? It applies here, too. Make feedback about the action, not the person's personal value. If you can lead from there, you've created a space for love and learning and growing someone really important.

14 Listen to your parents: their job is to protect and support you. I have to add this one in for my own kids. Pardon me. I hope it serves you, too. Your parents' number one job is to protect, love, and support you—not always in that order. Their job is not to be your best friend or your bud or even to be liked by you (though it's nice if you like them... feels better). Their job is to raise you up in the world knowing that you are cared for. It is to raise you with great integrity so that you can live a life you love, and make a contribution to those you touch and the future of the world. (Yes, I know this is grandiose, but true.) Sometimes they will mess up in that job. Love them. Learn from them. They're in your corner. You'll understand all one day. Maybe. And while we're talking about parents, no matter what your mom did to you (or that mean kid on the playground, or that 4th grade teacher) when you were 6 (or 9 or 44), you are responsible for it now. Don't blame anyone for the choices you make today. It's a waste of time and energy and it gives your power away. You get the gook and the glory, so own it. (Parents: feel free to cut this out, blow it up, and hang it on your kids' ceiling.)

“Don't blame anyone for the choices you make today. It's a waste of time and energy and it gives your power away. You get the gook and the glory, so own it.”

15 PAIR up. The power of your presence lies in your **physicality** (for self-care and body presence), your **awareness** (for wisdom and resiliency), your **intentions** (for the energy behind your actions and what you want to create), and your **regard** (for how you see and treat people). Attend and intend to these, continue to up your facility with each of them, and the rest of your leadership skills and prowess will be that much more powerful.

16 Don't do a job or sell a product you don't believe in. Just don't. If you do, your people are going to feel it, your customers will experience it, and you'll go home at night soul-sucked. Instead, find something that truly aligns with who you are, what you want, and what you believe in. Something that juices you up and ties into why you are here on this beautiful planet. Don't be talked into it. Don't talk yourself into it. Honor that voice inside you, that gut check that says, "Uhuh... this is not for me."

If you must pay the rent, and this right now is the only means to your ends, then well (sorry) do it. And find something about that job or product that you *can* believe in and be grateful for—anything that is true—and lean into that. That little nugget of belief and gratitude will make you that much more powerful and the job that much more pleasurable in an authentic and sustainable way as you move onto your next step.

17 Those people you worry are talking about you, or what they think? Don't. They're not talking about you or thinking about you as much as you might think (if at all). YOU have to live with your personal decisions and choices. You. Not them. Making a big decision? Listen to you. Check in with trusted confidants and advisors and with the people who mean the most to you. Get their thoughts, wisdom, and feedback... and then ultimately make your own decision. Worried about what they'll think, what they'll say, disappointing them, or maybe even being "too big" for your britches? No worries. You're making it all up. (It's all made up.) Show up, be big, make the decisions in your life and business that you know are right for you, and let it roll.

18 Ask for help. Tell people you get help. Thank people for the help. There is power here. Do not compromise the quality of your life, your energy, or the result of a project, or your impact on another human being because you made looking good or knowing it all more important than getting help and doing it well. Just do not. And while we're at it... when you do get help, from a colleague, coach, advisor, teacher, parent, friend, or kid, feel free to let people know you asked for help. And thank those dear people that helped. No need for a parade, a little thank you and acknowledgement of who they were being to help you goes a long, long way (further than a parade). Want an added bonus? Asking for help is a leadership skill. Your modeling and willingness to ask for help invites others to do the same. No one needs a pedestal. (And being Superman or Superwoman is overrated. After all, even they get help.)

19 Trust your gut. Think about the worst decision you've ever made. A relationship gone bad. A miss-hire. A simply bad choice. I'd bet you some big chocolate that on some level, somewhere in your being, if you were listening and sensing, your intuition told you "Hmmm... Uhuh... not right." Our intuition speaks to us all the time. It shows up in our gut, in our heart, behind our right ear. (What? Where's yours?) Listen to it. The more you listen to your intuition and trust your gut, the stronger she gets. But she needs to be honored. We all have it. Intuition is always right, even if our interpretation is off. So listen, trust, get curious, find out what you need to know to serve that intuition and give her more information, and make decisions from there.

20 Your presence is your home base. Bubble up. Right here, right now, nothing else is happening. Even in the midst of crazy chaos, you can come back to presence, back to your breath. Think of your presence as being in the center of a "bubble": it's all around you, it's gorgeous and safe, it's spacious, it's yours, and it gives you a bit of space between you and the rest of the world and any chaos. Breathe into it. Get present. Bubble up. This is your home base. What's real for you right now? What's truly happening? Where is your body? Where are your feet hitting the ground? Where's your bum heating the seat? (Great presencing tool.) How do you really feel in this moment? Not how SHOULD you feel or how does the person in front of you think you should feel, but you? And from here you'll know better what to do.

21 Love your nemesis. He or she is here to teach you great things. The people that give us the greatest challenges in a relationship are often also the ones we can learn the most from. So find gratitude for this person in even the littlest of ways, be honest with yourself about what fires you up with them, consider what you can learn from them, and learn. They may not become your best friend, but you can choose a more peaceful, educational way forward. (Besides, if you don't learn the lessons from your relationship with them, you're likely to just keep attracting more and more people like them into your life to make sure you do eventually get the lesson.) Love it up.

22 You can't control what people say or think about you. Just make sure you approve of you. You'll wipe yourself out trying to manage what other people think about you, what they say about you, or what their unspoken (and often unconscious) expectations are of you. And even with a lot of effort, you won't be able to do it. They're the boss of them. You're the boss of you. So don't worry about it. Make sure you approve of what you say and do and how you show up. Make sure you have integrity with yourself. You can only do your very best to show up *in* your best, most well intended, authentic way, and lead.

“The greater your comfort with discomfort, the greater your access to the good stuff, too.”

23 It's okay if it's hard. Burn in it. Your wisdom and joy are waiting. Things get hard. Painful. Ouch. It'll be tempting to self-medicate. Skip it. Pretend like it's not a big deal. You may even do everything possible to bypass feeling "that" way. Give yourself a hug and stay with it. Burn in it. Let yourself have it. The greater your comfort with discomfort, the greater your access to the good stuff, too. Ask a friend or loved one for support, be really nice to yourself, and stay with it.

24 Intend your impact. On others. On the world. On yourself. What's your plan?

Action makes the world go round. Intentions make sure it goes round well.

25 Eliminate "should" and low vibe agreements, people, and things from your life.

No "should" for you. It always catches up and it's usually disappointing. Make sure YOU actually WANT the thing you're doing or committing to, that it's not a "should" imposed by your mom, partner, brother, teammate, etc. Replace the word "should" with "want" when you're committing to things, and see how that impacts your energy. Is it a "should" or a "want?" Agreements that don't feel good? Complete them or clean them up. People that don't feel good? Get curious, make requests, give feedback, put it all on the table, be responsible for how you're contributing to it, and if that's still no good, set them free. And things? You know what to do.

26 Stop complaining. What are you going to do about it? Your complaints are simply golden nuggets in disguise. Underneath any complaint is simply an un-communicated request, suggestion, or dream. Look for it. Claim it. And go for it. Lots of people complaining to you? Cool. Ask them what they'd like instead. And then ask them what they can do to help make it happen. Give them their power back.

27 You are not busy; you are poorly prioritized. Stop saying you're busy. Nobody cares about how busy you are or how hard it is. Find language that serves you ("richly scheduled," "well used," "on purpose," and "delightfully committed" are a couple frames you can play with.) But stop saying you're busy, unless this energizes you and your people love hearing you talk about it. In my experience, about 99.8% of the population is using this word as a default, as a badge of honor, or simply because they don't know what to do about it. Busy has become the new "fine." We've all got lots to do, let's do it instead of talkin' "busy." Eliminate this word from your vocabulary for one week, be more intentional about how you talk about what you're up to, get present (the antidote to "busy" is "presence"), and see what happens.

28 The size of the container you hold for another and how you regard them speaks louder than anything you do. If you look down on them, they'll feel it. If the “container” you hold for them is small, they'll sense it. You can do all the right things, be brilliant, craft perfect responses, feedback, stories, everything... but if all the time you're doing your thing, you're holding them as small, dumb, insignificant, or a pain in your butt, they know. They may not know what exactly, but they'll sense your regard, and they'll respond to that. Solution? See them as people, as the magnificent human beings they are, find something you can love in them, speak to that, and they'll step in.

29 People do the best they can. Sometimes they just don't succeed—in relationships, at a specific task, on a project, etc. This includes you. Be kind.

“Your complaints are simply golden nuggets in disguise. Underneath any complaint is simply an un-communicated request, suggestion, or dream. Look for it. Claim it. And go for it.”

30 Be fierce, hold boundaries, be kind, and do it all with grace. Love openly, assume good, do your due diligence, and, yes... guard your loins. But start with love.

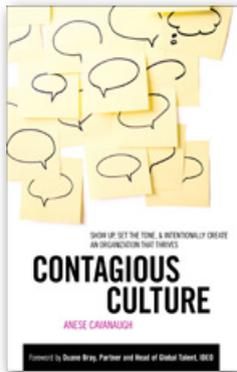
31 Say NO. Say YES. Mean them both. Don't be a ninny. When you say NO, you create space for a real, true, and impactful YES somewhere else in your life. "Yes" when you mean "no" equals resentment. And they'll feel it. And then your attention is in the wrong place. So... "No" when you mean it. "Yes" when you mean it. Clean it up.

32 A mix of presence, contribution, and gratitude is your secret sauce. They're yours, they're free, they have HUGE ROI, and they're some of the most powerful places you can come from, get perspective from, and honor other human beings with.

So there you have it... 32 ways to show up, propel impact, and when needed, get out of your own way. Now go out, do good, feel good, contribute, give, serve, and **be positively contagious.**

XO/ Anese

Info



BUY THE BOOK | Get more details or buy a copy of [Contagious Culture](#).

ABOUT THE AUTHOR | Anese Cavanaugh is devoted to helping people bring their best selves to the table. She is the creator of [the IEP Method®](#) (Intentional Energetic Presence), and an advisor and thinking partner to leaders and organizations around the world. As a leading voice on intention, energy, and presence in leadership and culture, she helps people unlock greater leadership potential, collaborate more inspiringly, create more openly, intuit more bravely, and lead more joyfully and effectively. Top executives in companies like IDEO, Zingerman's, Cooper, Joie de Vivre, Fitbit, and others have engaged with Anese to strengthen team health, maximize leadership impact, and optimize company culture.

→ **SEND THIS** | [Pass along a copy](#) of this manifesto to others.

→ **SUBSCRIBE** | [Sign up for e-news](#) to learn when our latest manifestos are available.

This document was created on January 27, 2016 and is based on the best information available at that time.

The copyright of this work belongs to the author, who is solely responsible for the content. This work is licensed under the Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivs License. To view a copy of this license, visit [Creative Commons](#) or send a letter to Creative Commons, 559 Nathan Abbott Way, Stanford, California 94305, USA.

Cover image from [Veer](#). You are given the unlimited right to print this manifesto and to distribute it electronically (via email, your website, or any other means). You can print out pages and put them in your favorite coffee shop's windows or your doctor's waiting room. You can transcribe the author's words onto the sidewalk, or you can hand out copies to everyone you meet. You may not alter this manifesto in any way, though, and you may not charge for it.

About ChangeThis

ChangeThis is a vehicle, not a publisher. We make it easy for big ideas to spread. While the authors we work with are responsible for their own work, they don't necessarily agree with everything available in ChangeThis format. But you knew that already.

800ceoread

ChangeThis is powered by the love and tender care of 800-CEO-READ. Visit us at 800ceoread.com, and keep up with the latest developments in business books on our review site, [In the Books](#).