



How to harness the power of words remain positive in the face of
adversity

Laura Lane's interview with Kevin Hall

Episode #19, Hope, Strength and Courage Podcast – Full Transcript

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Thank you for tuning into the Hope Strength Courage Podcast. Love and support for parents whose kids are fighting for their lives! A weekly podcast created to support parents and caregivers of children diagnosed with cancer, where you will find resources collected to help you face each day with Hope, Strength and Courage. From interviews with the top experts in their fields: doctors, psychologists, chaplains and inspiring frontline workers in paediatric oncology as they share their best advice, as well as day to day advice collected from other cancer moms and leaders in personal growth and development . From individuals who understand how hard it can be, I hope you will feel better prepared to cope with the day-to-day challenges of caring for your child. Hi, I am Laura Lane, and I am your host. My own daughter Celeste was diagnosed with cancer at the age of 12. In 2015 I wrote about our experiences in the book “Two Mothers One Prayer: Facing your child’s cancer with Hope Strength and Courage”. Since that time, I have dedicated thousands of hours to share with other parents and caregivers the resources, tools, tips, skills and strategies I learned that helped our family to stay happier, healthier and more hopeful. My goal is to share with you my interviews with experts to support you as you care for a child with cancer.

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Today’s episode features my interview with highly sought-after business consultant, speaker and coach Kevin Hall. Kevin is one of my mentors and he generously wrote the foreword to my book Two Mothers One Prayer: Facing your child’s cancer with Hope, Strength & Courage. In this episode Kevin shares with us words that strengthen us as we support our families.

I hope you will enjoy Kevin’s stories and wisdom in this interview as much as I did.

I am pleased to formally introduce you to Kevin Hall. Kevin is a highly sought-after business consultant, speaker, coach and author on the subjects of sales, goal achievement, and living a life of purpose and intention. His international bestselling book *Aspire: Discovering Your Purpose through the Power of Words* is the highest rated personal development book in the history of Amazon and Barnes & Noble.

He has been recognized for his ground-breaking approach to uncovering the hidden, and often secret, meanings of words.



Kevin is also credited with wordsmithing, and trademarking, the original slogan for the 2002 Olympic Winter Games, "Ignite the Fire Within." He has been featured in Forbes Magazine, Worth Magazine, Nation's Restaurant News, Restaurant Business and on the Food Network.

Kevin and his wife Sherry are the proud parents of six children. He enjoys cycling, running, fly-fishing, cooking, and reading.

Kevin Hall: Thanks Laura.

Laura: So, tell us what led you on the path to becoming a wordsmith?

Kevin Hall: You know I took a test. I went to the Johnson O'Conner Research Foundation. They did a test - they have 8 testing centres across the United States - and they told me after a day and a half of testing that I wasn't an engineer; that I shouldn't build tall buildings or expansive bridges, they would collapse. They tested me for tweezer dexterity. I did my very best, and they said out of the hundreds of thousands, of nearly a million people that they'd tested, that I was in the bottom one-tenth of one one hundredth of one percent which means I don't have tweezer dexterity. So, if I your brain surgeon, good things aren't going to happen. But then they gave me a test. They gave me a piece of paper, they gave me a piece of paper like this, and they wrote a word on it and they said right as much as you can write; this was a three minute test, and I filled up that side, filled up the other side of the page; they brought me another paper, four, five and a half papers later they said of all the people who we've tested, you tested out of the very top for a thing called ideaphoria. It was the ability to create words and thoughts around a single word. They said that you will never be fulfilled. You should write, you should speak, you should market, sell. I had done that most of my career, at Franklin and other areas, but they said you'll never be happy until you write. And then I get from that what I call a calling. It's a calling, not a shouting. It'll call at you until you do it. You know, having done your book, you know how hard that is to get that out because when you write a book then people tell you if they like it or not. So that's why most writers write but they don't have it written so that's what I did. I jumped into that book, and it's changed my life.

Laura: It's an incredible book. I love the paragraph from the description of your key note presentations and I'm going to read it: "You will discover and understand that words contain intrinsic power, a force capable of lighting ones path and hope for horizons. Used correctly, words are the first building blocks for success and inner peace. They provide the vision and focus and show the way to growth and contribution. Used incorrectly, they are capable of undermining even the best of intentions. There is a language of success and language of distress. There is a language of progress and a language of regress. Words sell and words repel. Words lead and words impede. Words heal and words kill." What is it that makes words so powerful?



Kevin Hall: Well you've heard me say this as we worked together, you know every thought you think and every word you speak, it creates your future; if you act on what you think and what you say, and we usually do, so just think of that every thought that I think as a man thinking, as a woman thinking so is he or she. And then when we express that word, it really becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy. If I say, "oh I'm so busy there's not enough time, I wish I weren't so busy," well that becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy. Maybe in the future you won't be busy. Maybe people don't want your services. Maybe you know, be careful what you ask for, you might get it. But if you stay instead "oh, I'm blessed," right? Barb Dopp taught me that, if we say I'm blessed instead of I'm busy it takes a totally different shift.

If we say I'm coming from a place of abundance versus a place of scarcity, I want to focus on love, and not on fear ... it's a total shift of what happens in our life, when we focus on those things we really want not on what we don't want.

Laura: Yeah. Well, I know that you know from experience how to live that. One of the reasons I asked you to write the forward for my book is because your own daughter was diagnosed with a benign brain tumor in 2011, which is the same year that Celeste was diagnosed. What was that like for you and your wife, and how did you cope with that devastating news at that time? and what did you do to remain positive and help your daughter and your family remain positive?

Kevin Hall: Well, that you know, when I think of your daughter and I think of our daughter, and it's such an individual situation but it was like, you had like, the wind right knocked literally out of yourselves. We were coming from Deer Valley to watch our two granddaughters in their final soccer game. It was picture day for that year and we're coming down and then we get a call that our daughter's had a brain seizure, and she was just getting ready to turn on the key to drive her kids, and a couple of our kids to this game. Luckily, she hadn't started on the car and later that night, the doctor comes in and she says Summer, that's our oldest daughters name, you have two brain tumors and they're in the centre of your speech centre. They didn't know they were benign then, but it was going to be difficult to get them out because she might never be able to formulate a thought or utter a word again if they caused any damage there. And so, when the doctor said that one was the size of a grape and one was the size of a large pea, there was real cause for concern. Her husband was out of town, so I slept in the hospital that night, and so anyone that's gone through this, you, others, I have a new sense of understanding to a degree, because we were fortunate the way things turned out, but a new sense of empathy and then I went into dad mode, and protector mode. And once we were able to schedule the surgery - we got the best care that you could ever get at the Huntsman Cancer Institute, they're amazing, what they do there, but when people came in to visit our daughter and I would say this for anyone in your community, Laura, that it's important that they're positive, they're upbeat. Because sometimes they're emotional and they want to share all of their concerns. And you've heard



me say this, we would meet people at the door. We'd pull somebody at the door and say are you coming to see Summer? They say yes. Are you in a good frame of mind? Can you be positive? Can you be upbeat? And if they weren't, we would say it's probably not the right day to see Summer. Because you can't have a negative thought and a positive thought in your mind at the same time. And we wanted positivity. You know, it's real and you're going through something devastating so, you can't add to that. And so, we were fortunate that when people came in to visit our daughter they didn't come to share problems, concerns, break down in tears. They came to affirm her, to encourage her, you know, to *encourage* is to add to somebody's heart, so when you breathe life into her, or you add to her heart when you come in. I think that went a long ways for her to being able to recover. And also, you know, I just returned from Vienna, I spent some time with Viktor Frankl and his family, the "Man's Search for Meaning" author. It was important that she knew that her family loved her and that there was something for her to look forward to. And she said, you know, when they cut your skull open no matter how much pain medication, they give you they can't relieve the swelling. When you've been through this, you can't relieve that but for her to hold her little son Miles ... I was just with him two days ago. He's now seven, he would have been oh, three years old then, and she said that she could just hold Miles and that gave her a reason to go on. It gave her, her pain on a scale of 1-10, was about a 9 ½, if that was near death she just would hold Miles and it would help her get through it. I will tell you this. One of the most poignant things I've ever experienced ... the day before that surgery, you know, the family gathered, we had prayers, blessings, expressed our words to each other, and then we went to the hospital and you wait right, you wait and wait and wait.

Laura: That wait. That wait.

Kevin Hall: That wait, you all know, you just can't change that wait. We came back to her home that night, and obviously she was in the hospital for a long time to recover, but she'd written a note to each of her three children, just in case she couldn't utter another ... just in case they hit the speech centre, and something went awry, and she wanted them to know what their gifts were. She wanted them to know how much she loved them. She wasn't saying I'm not going to be able to speak to you anymore, but that was, that was life changing for me, to see a loving mother, as you are with your daughter and your son, you know everything you go through and, you know sometimes your prayers get answered and sometimes they get answered in a different way. Just the courage to go through that. So, yeah, we do share ... , I haven't been down that exact same path as you have but uh, I'll ever be the same.

You know having witnessed her - but I'm grateful for the care, what's out there now, and you know I lost my mother to cancer, and in some ways as difficult as cancers is, it can be very loving. You say well how can cancer be loving? With my mother it, gave us a chance to say goodbye, right? It gave us a chance to say the things that we had maybe left unsaid. It wasn't



like this heart attack, and she was gone. She died way too young, but I was able to have her live at our home before hospice came in and just let her know how much we loved her.

Laura: Yeah, that's wonderful. What words do you suggest to parents that they should focus on or avoid while they are supporting their child through their diagnosis?

Kevin Hall: Boy, that's a good question. Like what word or words, right? Well, I know as a friend, you know this, as a friend or a family member, what you don't want to say is how can I help? Right? How can I help? Because you're in the middle of everything, you just help. You just show up and you do.

So, I'll share a couple of words that bring that to mind: **Passion**. Those with passion do, those without passion try. Passion comes from Christianity. It came from the twelfth century. It means I'm willing - people say, oh passion's love. Yeah, that's part of it. But passion means I'm willing to suffer for what I love. If I were to go back to Vienna in April, in Europe, anywhere, they have a re-enactment of one who suffered for what he loved. They call it passion play. So, whether it's Christianity, Judaism ... Viktor Frankl said what is to give light must endure burning. If you're going to give off light, there's going to be a little bit of burning. So, I would understand passion. Passion says okay, yeah, we're going to suffer for what we love here. We love this child. We love what we're going through. It doesn't help to say why, anyway, right? It doesn't help to say well, how could this happen? Good things - bad things happen to good people all the time. And so, you need to come back and say what matters most? Let me have passion.

Sapere vedere. Know how, see that was Da Vinci's term. **S-A-P-E-R-E vedere.** *Sapere* = knowing. *Vedere* = see. I know how to see.

He could see things three, four, five hundred years ahead of time. And in studying Viktor Frankl's life, I'm working on a legacy project about his life, he felt that those that survived the death camps - he was prisoner 119105, 104 excuse me, and he was in four different death camps. And he was very lucky, to come out of a death camp, only 1 in 26 ever survived but he attributed that to being forward thinking. So, saying, what can I look forward to? So, the other things for parents, is what's ahead, right? Create positive things ahead for you. Just like you've done, you know, with your speaking career, your writing career. You've done some remarkable things as a result of what's happened. And I think of Viktor's words, everything and he meant a man or a woman, everything can be taken from a man but the last of the human freedoms. The ability to choose one's attitude. In any set of circumstances, the ability to choose one's own way.

So, probably the biggest word, and you know what it is cause you're part of our part of our global greats, it's **G-E-N-S-H-A-I**. And that word is like the western word "charity" but maybe even a little deeper if there could be anything deeper than charity. It comes from India. It comes from their sacred writ and means you would never treat another person in a manner



that would make them feel small. You don't do it to somebody else, you don't let somebody do it to you, and above all, you don't do it to yourself. So that's, that's something I would focus on, is practicing genshai because you don't see the world as it is, you see the world as you see yourself, and I use affirmations, right? Our mind isn't here to make us happy, or healthy, or wealthy. It's here to keep us alive, and to avoid things that are painful. So, that's why we use those affirmations, and you know them. You know the five affirmations that I share when I'm coaching somebody, or group coach? I'm not going to put you on the spot but -

Laura: Oh, good, thank you. I do know them, but I would have to take a minute to think of them through.

Kevin Hall: Yeah, you know them, but I will just share them.

You get a negative thought, and you say *I'm worthy*, right? I'm worthy of achieving the things I want to achieve. *I'm capable and grateful*. Gratitude. That's a huge word going through this. Just be grateful for those that come and visit. Those that provide the health care. Grateful that we have the technology that we have. Grateful for the time, however how long or short it might be, with our loved one. I'm capable and grateful. Gratitude comes from grace, and grace means "divine gift". So, express your gifts, serve others with your gifts, we love those we serve. So, when you start serving the pain it doesn't totally go away, but it's painfully sweet. *I forgive*. I forgive who? Myself and others. I forgive myself and I forgive what's happening here. So, you can use the past as a hitching post, or you can use it as a guidepost. I'd rather you use it as a guidepost and not relive those painful things, and then to say *I'm abundant*. Abundance is our birth right. What comes after one wave? Laura, what comes after one wave when you're sitting at the ocean?

Laura: Another one. And another one.

Kevin Hall: And another one, and another one. Attesting to the fact nature gives all and loses nothing. And my favourite is *I trust myself*. I am trusted. I trust that whatever mutually beneficial goal that I go after, that I am capable of achieving it, and if I don't do it somebody's going to, so why not me?

So, I use those and other affirmations. If I get, you know people say do you ever get a negative thought? Of course, I do, we all do, nobody's immune from that, but that's why we need to reprogram our minds. And we do it with words. It very intentional about ... there's one other thing, would be intention. The word intention comes from tent. Think of the middle of a tent. You take out a tent, a piece of fabric, and you stake it, you claim your ground, and you stretch it, and then you put it up and it becomes much bigger. So, you become very intentional about what you want in your life, who you want in your life, who you can serve, who you can love. So, we could do a hundred words but *passion, vision, sapere vedere*. Viktor said when I'm going through a lot of pain, which he obviously knew a lot about



being at Dachau, Auschwitz, Terezin, but be forward thinking, what work is out there? Who can I serve? Who can I love? That kept him going, and it kept him alive.

Laura: When you were mentioning the five and you said forgiveness, I know that for myself something I only just learned this week about forgiveness - that there are times when people, its not just people who have done things to us, but sometimes people fail to be there for us, and we need to forgive that, too. That we may have expectations about what we want people to do, how we want them to help us through difficult times, and they're not there for us. And that was really important for me to learn, that no, I needed to forgive those people who didn't step up like I wanted them to because will, sometimes they don't know how, that forgiveness ... that was an extra part of forgiveness that I had forgotten about that.

Kevin Hall: Oh thanks, thanks for sharing that because it is forgiveness is a gift that you give to yourself. So, if you were to hold onto a grudge, or hold onto an expectation that wasn't met the only person that's going to suffer from that is ...

Laura: is yourself

Kevin Hall: It's us, it would be ourselves. So, when we let that go, remember at our Genshai event, we sang around the fire, pulled out something that we wrote down that we've been holding on to, to let it go, and we just sang, you know, that Frozen song, right? I'm sure you're going to be interviewing Nathan Ogden, and he'll share some of these thoughts about being on Frozen, but yeah, we do need to let it go. And it's a gift that you give to yourself. It doesn't mean that the behaviour of what happened was right. It doesn't make that right. It's just that you choose not to hold onto it and again, it's using your past as a guidepost verses a hitching post. Because you can hitch up to it. We want to be right, and we want to show, well, I'll forgive but I won't forget. Well, then I didn't forgive. Hey, I'll never forget what you did; you let me down; you didn't ... and take the other side of that, Laura. I will say sometimes ... it's not mine, it's been out there from several different sources, but what other people think of you is none of your business, right. What people think of you - we can't control what other people think of us, so maybe that person can't quite control what you are thinking about them or what the expectation was and to let that go is so, so freeing.

Laura: Yeah.

Kevin Hall: And its something we are going to do for the rest of our life. It's part of relationships. It's part of being in a civilized society when we interact with people. And just let it go. And its very freeing to let go of maybe what people's expectations are for you, right? If somebody isn't happy with you, and maybe you haven't done a thing, well what they think of you is none of your business. You just let it go and you go focus on what you need to do. And that's a way of letting those things go. Og Mandino wrote that we sometimes create prisons around ourselves, and you build them up stone by stone, block by block, and one of the best ways and worst ways to do that is to hold onto things. They just, they hurt our heart,



they pain our heart they take us off path. You can't walk your path, again, if you're focusing on something negative when you could be focusing on something positive. It's one or the other.

Laura: Yeah

Kevin Hall: So good for you for letting go.

Laura: Thank you

Kevin Hall: And that could be very painful and hurtful when people let us down, and they're not there, but to let that go is going to serve you much better. So - and you are a very forgiving, very kind person, that's why I'm honoured to be on this call because you're making a difference in people's lives, Laura, and I just congratulate you and I'm honoured to know you and to see you serve people. I was honoured to write the forward to your book and just see all the great things that you're doing. You can, you can choose, as Viktor taught, your attitude, and you've done that and we don't always do that, but you've made conscious and intentional choices, here you are making a difference to people in a community that really needs that.

Laura: Well, thank you so much Kevin, and I appreciate all the things that you've taught me, and I would like to share you with our audience. If you could let us know what website we can direct our audience to so they can learn about you, about your work, about your book, where they could order your book, where would be the best place for them to go?

Kevin Hall: Well, you should be able to get my book hopefully go to Amazon, you can go to Barnes and Noble. If your local bookstore doesn't have it, tell them to carry it and they'll get it in for you. You can get me on social media. And I'm getting back on there. It got so intense, I kind of stepped away but you can go to [Kevin Hall Like](#) that's my like page, or [Kevin Hall Aspire](#) is my personal page, hence the name on my book. Facebook, you can contact me there, and then www.powerofwords.com. If you want to reach out to me go to P-O-W-E-R-O-F-W-O-R-D-S DOT COM. If you want to reach out to me you can go in there, you can email me kevin@powerofwords.com and if there's anything that I can do to serve any of you, it would be my great pleasure.

And I want to finish with just one thought if I can, because you really remind me of this - I was just with a friend um Sunday. Had a dear friend who was coming to go mountain biking, and we were visiting a granddaughter and he crashed on his mountain bike. I would have been with him on that bike ride, and he's now a quadriplegic and very serious - a little more serious, if there could be anything more serious than what Nathan Ogden or Chad Hymus have. He's on a respirator, and he broke, you know, second vertebrae. They call it the Christopher Reeves injury and you know what happened to superman, he wasn't superman after he fell of that horse and landed just wrong. Well, that happened to Dana - his name is Dana Harrison. We've biked thousands of miles together, one of my best friends, one of my



best friends in the whole world. And we spent three hours together Sunday. We watched final stage of the Tour De France, and we laughed. He's been able to control his breathing. He speaks by exhaling and he talked for almost three hours. He just, it was remarkable. And so, I just want to share a paraphrase again, having been in Vienna the last several weeks. I just got home Sunday night, he said this, I'm not paraphrasing his words but when you're no longer able to change the situation, you are then challenged to change yourself. And you know those words because you've lived them. Dana knows those words because he's living them. We all to some degree are going to have challenges, not - I don't think, you know, they're all personal, but you can't compare, right? You can't compare your challenge with somebody else's, you can't start trading them, but there's a point sometimes we say how come this is happening to me? I was doing a coaching call with a private client of mine earlier, and he said I hate that this is the case, and I hate that this is here, and I said you know it just is, what is it is, and you can't change what is. The only thing you can change is yourself. And I wanted to just again congratulate you, you've got so much ahead, Laura. You're going to be making - you are making a difference in so many lives and if there's anyway you need me again, I'll be here. If there's anything I can do for anybody in your community, that would be my great pleasure because my dream is to help people realize their dreams. My goal is to help people realize their goals, and that's what gets me out of bed every morning

Laura: Well, thank you.

Kevin Hall: And then being able to know people like you that go out and serve and make a difference and make the most, you know you can take this adversity, and you can so okay what's happened to me? I'm in a pit. Here I was now I just been knocked down, my whole world's falling around me. You can look at it that way and that's very understandable, or you could say I'm going to harness this adversity, and it's going to become a new launching pad. And now I'm going to be standing on higher ground because of my attitude, so I just congratulate you for doing that, and I hope that maybe today I just hear one thought or idea or principle that could help someone, you know, if I could help you in any way ...

Laura: Well, I I'm going to do... I'd love to finish this off from a quote from your book which is my favorite quote, and it ties in with what you were just saying a moment ago about adversity. It's a quote that you put in your book from Dave Blanchard from the Og Mandino Group and he says: "Our character has been forged in the furnace of adversity. We know what pain feels like. We cannot change the past. However, we can choose to use these reference points as a rich resource to assist us in better understanding and connecting with people. When we use our life experiences in the service of others, we finally find purpose in our suffering, joy in our journey, and much needed healing in our souls."

And I am so grateful that you included that quote in your book. I have used it countless times, shared that with people, and it helped me to realize, to know, we can find purpose in our suffering and joy in our journey, and healing in our own souls, for the things that we've



experienced that when we help others because of the things that we've been through. It makes a huge difference. And thank you Kevin.

Kevin Hall: Thank you, Laura. I think the world of you, it's just exciting to watch you go out and make a difference and again, anything I can do for you or anybody in your community, you let me know and it'll be done. So, thank you for taking the time today.

Laura: Thank you.

What impressed me most about my interview with Kevin, is his brilliant story telling and wisdom that he shares throughout the interview. I could listen to Kevin for hours. In fact, I have listened to him for hours as he has mentored me from a number of years. I am grateful that he talked about Passion and our willingness to suffer for what we love and just like Dr Setton, in our previous episode, he talks about Victor Frankl and most importantly Genshai – never treat another person in a manner that would make them feel small.

To learn more about Kevin Hall and his book *Aspire* please visit his website at <https://powerofwords.com>

Please join me next week for part 1 of my interview with NLP Practitioners Jacquie Nagy and Ed Olvera, as we discuss How to use NLP and Breathing to manage daily stress

Before we end our show today, we have one last segment. Over the last few years, I have asked other cancer moms what advice they wish they had known when their child was first diagnosed. I have compiled that information and will be sharing their advice each week. You can download the top 101 pieces of advice that I put together as a mini-E-book at www.twomothersoneprayer.com

Today's advice comes from Tami. Tami writes:

Ask for help. And don't be shy. And get a family member or friend to coordinate. People will often happily drop off meals or grocery shop for you. And tell people that while you appreciate that they care you will not necessarily be responding because you are exhausted and focused on taking care of your kid and your family.

That's great advice. Setting boundaries while accepting help. Thanks, Tami, for sharing that.

If you have advice you have learned along the way that you wish someone had told you weeks, months or years earlier, I invite you to fill out the contact form on our website <http://www.twomothersoneprayer.com> and I will be sharing your advice with our listeners on future shows.

[Music begins lightly in the back ground]

Thank you for taking time out of your busy schedule today to listen to the Hope, Strength & Courage podcast. I look forward to sharing more experts and advice with you again next Wednesday. Please remember to take a minute to subscribe to the show. Thanks also need



to go out to our Hope, Strength & Courage production team which consists of my wonderful assistant Tracey Ogilvie-McDonald, Andrew Braun at Braun Audio and Audio Geek, music by Fiz Anthony, and graphic design by Amy Hosmer. To learn more about myself, Laura Lane, and to order my book, please visit www.lauralane.ca.

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