

# FEARLESS PERSISTENCE

## Creative Life, Creative Work, and the Ten Laws of Culturenomics

YOUR GUIDE TO PRACTICE  
AND PHILOSOPHY

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### Chapter 10

## Curiosity

If you're not curious about what comes next, perhaps you should ask yourself why.

*Curiosity is the engine that powers long creative careers,*

audience engagement, and the unique relevance of your work. Just as your environment is your private collaborator, curiosity is your internal co-conspirator.

*You can discern this by looking at creatives who have had long careers.*

They continually reinvent themselves to the point where their later-in-life work can feel fresher than their early work. The best film directors with long careers—Agnès Varda, Akira Kurosawa, Steven Spielberg, Ridley Scott, Martin Scorsese, Clint Eastwood—make films into their seventies, eighties, and beyond, with the passion of youth because they are continuously curious, curious about technologies, style, narrative choices. Brilliant cellist Yo-Yo Ma's curiosity has driven him to explore much of the world: He has collaborated with musicians from China, India, Turkey, Iran, Appalachia, Japan, West Africa, and Central Asia, in styles as diverse as jazz, tango, and experimental minimalism. Joe Rogan owes his massive popularity to his insatiable curiosity: His accessible style is always exploring, questioning, seeking answers. Curiosity of the artist drives curiosity of the audience and that's crucial to sales, downloads, word-of-mouth. Curiosity is the reason click-bait works, why Google became a \$2 trillion company, and why people binge-watch:

*We want to know more*

Most importantly for you as a creative, your curiosity will take your work out of what's normal and expected. By which I mean your curiosity will keep your work from being boring. You can't innovate or break new ground until questions drive you.

*Sometimes I cannot feel curious about anything. Whatever I have to say has been said before, whatever I might make has been made before. I feel inanimate, a part of the scenery.*

*How do I recognize what's mediocre?*

Dive deep into something, anything. Free resources for learning abound and learning is infinite. Science reveals that learning and questioning activate the brain's reward system, meaning that the more you do it the more you want to do it.

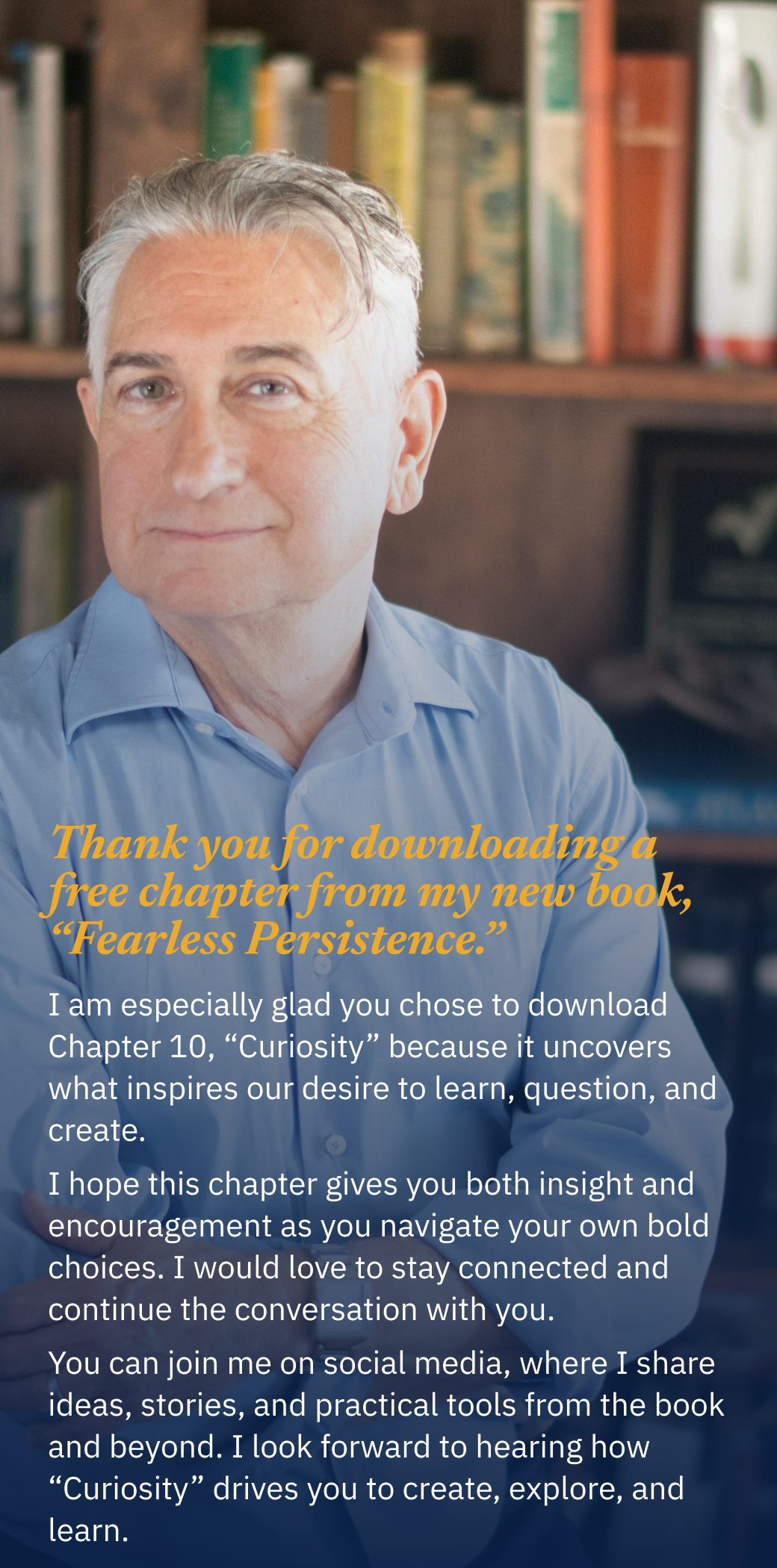
Theodore Sturgeon, a science-fiction writer, was approaching the end of his long career as I was growing up. I met him at a writing convention when I was a teenager. He wore a silver lapel pin: the letter Q with an arrow running through it. "What's that?" I asked. "I had it made," he said.

*"It means, Ask the next Question."*

To provoke your curiosity, do just that. Ask the next question of others, of yourself. What's Next? What if? Why not? Could we? Could I?

**Here's My next Question:**

*Which way should I go?*



*Thank you for downloading a free chapter from my new book, "Fearless Persistence."*

I am especially glad you chose to download Chapter 10, "Curiosity" because it uncovers what inspires our desire to learn, question, and create.

I hope this chapter gives you both insight and encouragement as you navigate your own bold choices. I would love to stay connected and continue the conversation with you.

You can join me on social media, where I share ideas, stories, and practical tools from the book and beyond. I look forward to hearing how "Curiosity" drives you to create, explore, and learn.