

ON EVERYDAY COURAGE



Cathy Lassiter, Education Consultant and Author, writes that Everyday Courage has five key components: it is a willful, intentional act; it is executed after mindful deliberation; it involves objective substantial risk to the actor; it is primarily motivated to bring about a noble good or worthy purpose; and it occurs despite the presence of the emotion of fear.

Mary Daly, a theologian, writes about how we learn courage, "You get it by courageous acts. It's like you learn to swim by swimming. You learn courage by couraging."

And research professor and author Brené Brown, in her book *The Gifts of Imperfection*, wrote:

"Courage originally meant "To speak one's mind by telling all one's heart." Over time, this definition has changed, and today, courage is more synonymous with being heroic. Heroics is important and we certainly need heroes, but I think we've lost touch with the idea that speaking honestly and openly about who we are, about what we're feeling, and about our experiences (good and bad) is the definition of courage. Heroics is often about putting our life on the line. Ordinary courage is about putting our vulnerability on the line. In today's world, that's pretty extraordinary."

Six Types of Everyday Courage Include:

1. Physical
2. Social
3. Moral
4. Emotional
5. Intellectual
6. Spiritual

References/Resources

Everyday Courage for School Leaders, Cathy Lassiter

The Gifts of Imperfection, Brené Brown

<https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/the-playing-field/201108/courage-working-our-way-towards-bravery>

<http://www.lionswhiskers.com/p/six-types-of-courage.html>



Physical Courage

This is the courage most people think of first: bravery at the risk of bodily harm or death. It involves developing physical strength, resiliency, and awareness. To keep going with resiliency, balance, and awareness. Feeling afraid but acting anyway. Remaining steadfast, strategic, and deliberate in the face of inevitable setbacks and failures for the greater good.

"I wanted you to see what real courage is, instead of getting the idea that courage is a man with a gun in his hand. It's when you know you're licked before you begin, but you begin anyway and see it through no matter what."

—Harper Lee, *To Kill a Mockingbird*

"I learned that courage was not the absence of fear, but the triumph over it. The brave man is not he who does not feel afraid, but he who conquers that fear."

—Nelson Mandela



WHO DO I KNOW FROM HISTORY OR MY LIVED EXPERIENCE THAT MODELS THIS TYPE OF COURAGE? HOW DO THEY MODEL IT?

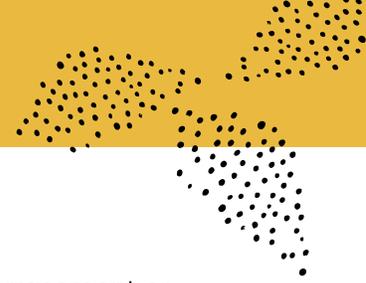


HOW HAVE I EXPERIENCED THIS TYPE OF COURAGE IN THE PAST – PROVIDE ONE OR TWO CONCRETE EXAMPLES.



WHAT WOULD IT LOOK LIKE FOR ME TO PRACTICE THIS TYPE OF COURAGE IN THIS SEASON OF MY LIFE? WHAT WOULD I NEED IN ORDER TO ACCESS THIS COURAGE?

Social Courage



This type of courage is also very familiar to most of us as it involves the risk of social embarrassment or exclusion, unpopularity or rejection. It also involves leadership. To be yourself unapologetically.

“It takes a great deal of bravery to stand up to our enemies, but just as much to stand up to our friends.”

—J.K. Rowling, Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone

“I'm not a social martyr of courage for simply existing happily in my body.”

—Rachel Cargle



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Intellectual Courage



Challenging old assumptions and understandings and acting on new learnings and insights gleaned from experience and/or educational research. Willingness to question our thinking and to risk making mistakes. It means discerning and telling the truth. To learn, relearn, unlearn with an open and flexible mind.

“He who is not courageous enough to take risks will accomplish nothing in life.”

—Muhammad Ali

“We need the compassion and the courage to change the conditions that support our suffering. Those conditions are things like ignorance, bitterness, negligence, clinging, and holding on.”

—Sharon Salzberg



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Moral Courage

This involves doing the right thing, particularly when risks involve shame, opposition, or the disapproval of others. Congruence between word and action or belief and behavior. Standing up and acting when injustices occur, human rights are violated, or when people are treated unfairly.

"Courage is an inner resolution to go forward despite obstacles. Cowardice is submissive surrender to circumstances. Courage breeds creativity; Cowardice represses fear and is mastered by it. Cowardice asks the question, is it safe? Expediency asks the question, is it politic? Vanity asks the question, is it popular? But conscience asks the question, is it right? And there comes a time when we must take a position that is neither safe, nor politic, nor popular, but one must take it because it is right."

—From Martin Luther King Jr.'s autobiography

"Go forward with courage. When you are in doubt, be still, and wait; when doubt no longer exists for you, then go forward with courage. So long as mists envelop you, be still; be still until the sunlight pours through and dispels the mists – as it surely will. Then act with courage."

—Chief White Eagle, Ponca Chief



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Emotional & Empathetic Courage

This type of courage opens us to feeling the full spectrum of positive emotions, at the risk of encountering the negative ones. It is strongly correlated with happiness. Feeling all your emotions (positive and negative) without guilt or attachment. Willingness to suffer challenging consequences for a greater emotional (ie. chance at happiness) pay-off later. Might include the willingness to feel deeply for another human being or acknowledging personal bias and intentionally moving away from it in order to vicariously experience the trials and triumphs of others.

"It takes courage...to endure the sharp pains of self discovery rather than choose to take the dull pain of unconsciousness that would last the rest of our lives."

—Marianne Williamson, A Return to Love

"Courage starts with showing up and letting ourselves be seen."

—Brené Brown



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Spiritual Courage



This fortifies us when we grapple with questions about faith, purpose, and meaning, either in a religious or nonreligious framework. Living with purpose and meaning through a heart-centered approach towards all life and oneself.

“I am convinced that courage is the most important of all the virtues. Because without courage, you cannot practice any other virtue consistently. You can be kind for a while; you can be generous for a while; you can be just for a while, or merciful for a while, even loving for a while. But it is only with courage that you can be persistently and insistently kind and generous and fair.”

—Maya Angelou

“It takes courage to grow up and become who you really are.”

—E.E. Cummings



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