

Courage (vs. Fearfulness)

Overcoming fear by saying and doing what is right.

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Courage in the Little Things

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I'll never be a firefighter storming through a burning building, a SWAT team member exchanging gunfire, a Navy Seal sneaking through enemy territory or the member of the bomb squad that cuts the yellow wire first. These are people who literally put their life on the line in their daily living. It is easy to think of them as courageous.

What about the bullied teen who goes to school day after day in fear, the pregnant mom who carries her disabled child to term and loses him 8 days later, the college graduate who quits a job without first finding the next job because the company doesn't have the right values, the parent who leaves a lucrative career to be a stay-at-home parent, or the couple who foster a child with special needs? These are the courageous things that people in my circle have done in the last several months.

Anytime we step out of our comfort zone we are using our courage. When we make the responsible choice, it sometimes takes courage. When we bring our values to work, it can take courage. When we speak up to defend a value or for someone who can't speak for themselves, it definitely takes courage. To open your heart and be vulnerable so that you are available to others to connect with can take deep courage.

To live life to the fullest requires that we are constantly growing and changing. It takes courage to recognize the need for growth or change and then act. Every day we are presented with opportunities for growth, for change and to act with more courage. When courage is grounded in strong, character-based values it becomes more natural to use. When our growth is organic to our value system, our character-built courage serves it well. Recognizing all the ways we already have used courage in daily living can help give us confidence to use our courage even more.

This month, trust your values, speak your truth and live courageously.

How to Practice Courage:

- Not be afraid to speak the truth
- Keep a clear conscience
- Support others when they are right
- Be willing to stand alone
- Speak with humility

"Courage is being scared to death...and saddling up anyway."

-John Wayne

"Success is not final, failure is not fatal: it is the courage to continue that counts."

-Winston Churchill