

“Courage”

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Courage

Courage: the state or quality of mind or spirit that enables a person to face difficulty, danger, pain or vicissitudes with self-possession without fear. According to the thesaurus dictionary we can also define courage as the mental or moral strength of venture, persevere, and withstand danger, fear, or difficulty. Courage is something we all admire. When asked to describe courage, most people conjure up the image of a character like Batman or Superman and describe it as a state or condition of being a hero. Everybody sees courage differently but when asked to go deeper to really define courage; the only response that comes to my mind is “it’s a beautiful act that only after its finished can you see the beauty”.

Courage comes in different ways. Being courageous can be from surviving through cancer to a child rescuing his dog from a busy street, and also towards people that are judging others by what they do, wear or say. Courage is also doing some brave deed without thinking about what the consequences could be. We have all faced the challenge to be courageous, and being courageous is not always easy because it takes heart to do a courageous act. For example, many people claim President Obama as a courageous person, for having the confidence, determination and faith he possesses, to take courageous decisions like to grant innocent, undocumented youth protection from deportation, according to the *New York Times*. A person that is going through a lot more every single day and anyway is looking forward is a courageous person.

I can share my own experience from the 2010 earthquake in Haiti that completely changed my life. I came from pain and cries, from losing my aunt and from leaving my family and country to come to the US; from living with my mom and my siblings at my aunt's without financial support and not being able to go school for two years. On January 12, 2010, we came from school and were eating dinner when everything started shaking. My mom cried for everybody to get out. We didn't have any idea about what was happening, and when it was over most of Haiti was destroyed. A lot of people didn't have anywhere to go and were still shocked by losing families and everything they worked for in only a few seconds. Our home was still standing; we hosted 30 people in our yard that day. Among them, was a young lady who was trapped by the debris as well as two dead bodies on her leg. One leg was completely messed up, and the other one was sore and she had several gashes on her face. I have seen a lot of children dead on the streets, parents who were going crazy, families of ten people reduced to one. I don't know where I found my courage but when that girl came to the house I felt like I had to do something. I couldn't do anything for those who were laying down on the street, for my aunt who was still under the debris but she, she was there, in pain, but she wanted to live. I took care of her every day, changed her bandages, fed her, and bathed her. People were still afraid of aftershocks and were still hoping to hear about families that didn't appear since the day of the earthquake. It was three days after when everything started again. One day after she came, everything was calm so we had to put her inside because it was chilly at night and we were worried about infection. Everybody was yelling and thought it was the end. I was feeding her inside and my mom was yelling my name to get out of the house, I was going to run because I was panicked but she was crying and was begging me to take her because she couldn't walk. She couldn't move. My mom's voice was hysterical outside and I still couldn't go and leave her. On the mattress, she

was laying on. I grabbed it on each side and pulled until we reached outside. When I think about that, I now ask myself what would have happened if the earthquake had the same effect as the first time while we were inside. After that episode I was really traumatized. According to the Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia, the Haitian government reported that an estimated 316,000 people had died, 300,000 had been injured and also an amount of 250,000 residences collapsed.

When I came to the US, I again faced a lot of difficulties like school and financial issues. I always wanted to be a doctor. I did a lot of research to see if it was possible that somewhere I could find financial aid to go to school, but everywhere I went, there was no financial aid for students who came after the earthquake. One day that girl found me and got my number on Facebook. She called me and she was crying, she was telling me how grateful she was for what I did. The way she sounded made me a difference in my life and gave me determination to pursue my dreams.

What happened to me changed my life forever, in a way that I now know that everything you have can be destroyed in one second and that no matter how hard life can be, if you allow yourself to at least make one step forward, it's an act of courage. I was very satisfied from what I gained from this situation because it was great to feel that I did something that helped save a life. I couldn't save everybody but at least I helped one and that gave me faith to never give up. When I look back, I can see all the beauty of what I did, not only because I helped the girl but also for everything else that I went through, and through courage gained victory. After two years, I am

now doing my second semester with a 3.46 GPA at Queensborough Community College. I am enjoying my college life and still think that my courage will make me a terrific doctor. As Maya Angelou author of "I know why the caged bird sings" stated in one of her quotes "I can be changed by what happens to me but I refuse to be reduced by it"

Courage is an important virtue to practice in life because it leads to many rewards, like success, it gives us strength to act more decisively. Courage is the key to success. It is the answer towards getting the success I have always wanted. Great things are achieved by being courageous and self-confident. If you believe that courage can lead to success you should apply it even in the small decisions that you do in your everyday life. During your lifetime you might meet people that will try to make you think you wrong but being able to stand and say what you exactly think is a courageous act. "Whatever you do, you need courage. Whatever course you decide upon, there is always someone to tell you that you are wrong. There are always difficulties arising that tempt you to believe your critics are right. To map out a course of action and follow it to an end requires some of the same courage that a soldier needs. Peace has its victories, but it takes brave men and women to win them". States Ralph Waldo Emerson.

Based on my knowledge and prior understanding, I believe that doing an act of courage is the greatest feeling ever and only that act can give you faith and determination to accomplish great things. My courage was the spirit that enables me to face the difficulties and pain of life.