

# **Courage**

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09/27/12

## Courage

Courage can be expressed in hundreds of different ways, but no matter how it is expressed, it is always seen as an act of bravery and kindness. To a small boy, an act of courage can be when his daddy checks the closet for the scary monster, or for a new employee, it can be when a colleague takes the blame for something the new hire did. The amount of courage one portrays is dependent on the amount of courage within. There are those who can run into a burning building to save someone and yet can't find the words to end a relationship with their partner. There are some who can put their lives on the line every day but can't make a simple life changing decision. Daily actions can require courage; there are some people who need courage to walk out into the world. All people have their own definition of courage, but no one denies that it is the most important virtue.

Speaking from personal experience, courage is one of the most important virtues I have. My favorite act of courage occurred when my friend and I almost fell into a semi-frozen lake. My friend had dropped her phone down the hill and decided to get it herself. At the end of the hill was a small ledge and then there was the lake, which was not entirely frozen. My friend got stuck at the bottom since it was such a steep incline, so I had to try to help. Our other friends had gone ahead and had already reached home at that point. I went down slowly by holding onto each tree and began to help her climb up the hill. She was consistently slipping, so I made her climb directly in front of me so that if she fell, I would be there to hold her up. There was one really bad slip where I fell as well, but I was still helping keep both of us up. I had my friend

climb by using my body to support her so that she could get to the next branch, and we worked our way to the top. Eventually after a small workout, we both got to the top safely. We were both tired from the strain of climbing, but we knew that it had been a close call. Anything could have happened. My friend was so ecstatic because we were safe and got ourselves out of the situation that she couldn't find the words to express herself. I never had the chance to stop and think about what to do, or be afraid. I felt that it was necessary to climb down and help her, so I did. For me, it was something that had to be done. For her it was an act of courage.

Another personal experience happened on the day of a relative's baptism. The weather was horrendous, with gusts of strong wind and heavy rain. The wind was strong enough that you couldn't keep two solid feet on the ground. My entire family was trying to get from their cars into the restaurant for the reception part of the evening. My brother and I didn't go inside the restaurant until we helped all the kids and older aunts and uncles into the building. The kids had no ability to keep their feet on the ground, so they had to be carried. The cars had to be moved off the street as soon as possible because of broken power lines and falling trees. There were moments when the wind pushed me back quite a bit, but I never let it stop me from getting everyone inside. People were yelling at me because in my family it is not customary for a female to be helping with the protection of the family. By the time my brother and I got inside, we were soaked. I thought I was doing what had to be done, but everyone in the family saw it was an act of courage. To this day, one of my aunts is constantly mentioning how I helped her so much on that day. Courage allowed me to do what was right before giving me the chance to be afraid.

There are times in life where you have to be courageous, but the situation may be too much to handle. When I was 13, my mother had surgery to have a tumor removed. She wasn't

going to be able to take care of herself for two weeks without someone else's help. During the second day of her recovery, we found out that my uncle had passed away. Before I knew it, my father was packing a suitcase for India, and my entire family was at my house saying prayers and getting everything together for my father. My father had no option. He had to go to India because he was the only other male among his siblings, which was an act of courage of his own. I was afraid because I knew that taking care of my mother would be difficult. My brother wasn't able to drive, so it would be even more difficult to manage the home. My father gave us instructions on how to take care of everything in the house and asked us to be brave. He trusted us to do the right thing. My brother and I took the bus through the snow, walked to the grocery stores, and made trips to the bank. I was the one with the responsibility to help my mother. I had to wake up extremely early to take care of her before I had to leave for class, and then the minute I came home I would have a few things to do for her. The entire time I was afraid I was doing the wrong thing, but I've always been taught to keep going. Being afraid wouldn't get me anywhere; I used that fear to help strive towards accomplishing my goals. My mother even recovered faster than scheduled and everything was maintained at home.

I find courage to be of the greatest importance because without it, one can't believe in the other virtues. You need courage to maintain justice, keep faith, have hope, believe in love, continue with charity, and be loyal and honest. I find it the most important because it isn't something that can be explained or taught. There have been times where courage has rewarded me, times when my family acknowledged my courageous acts. And there have been times when my courage has gone unnoticed, but it has never been ineffective. Even without the praise from my family or friends, I know I have done the right thing. Courage isn't something I need to show

others that I have. I know that with my courage, I can proudly say that I am happy with who I am. Courage has proven to be my savior throughout life and will continue to do so in my future.