

47. Courage

Courage is overcoming fear to behave with integrity, being true to our character, values and principles. Courage is being, doing, behaving and relating with integrity, in spite of being afraid.

If we value truth, honesty, transparency, life, nature, health and doing no harm to ourselves or others, and we learn our employer is hiding a practice that's poisoning the environment and making people sick, but we are afraid of retaliation if we reveal the truth, and we reveal the truth to stop the harm anyway, we are acting with courage and behaving with integrity. If we do not, we are being cowardly.

If we value nonviolence, protecting the innocent, love, taking care of each other, and doing no harm, and we see an innocent person being physically attacked, but we are afraid of being harmed ourselves, and we intervene to protect the innocent person anyway, we are demonstrating courage and integrity. If we do not, we are being cowardly.

Courage only exists in relationship to character, integrity, values and principles. Courage is refusing to allow fear to prevent integrity, or being true to character, values and principles.

If we are afraid, because we may be sent to prison, to harm someone and steal his goods, both of which we believe are wrong by our own values, and we overcome fear, harm him and steal his goods anyway, that is not courage. We are acting contrary to our values. That is cowardice, the opposite of courage.

If we are afraid to kill ourselves, from of a natural self-preservation instinct, and we believe it is wrong to abandon our young children to fend for themselves, and we kill ourselves anyway, that is not courage. That's cowardice, because we are not behaving with integrity. We are not being true to our core values.

It is important to have the courage to behave with integrity, overcoming any fear to be true to our own character, values and principles. If we do not, we are cowards. Let's be courageous!