

# Words of Courage: Quotes to Inform & Inspire Your Action

For immediate access to your own courage in just one sentence, try using Ruth Schimel's original, 21<sup>st</sup> century definition below. Based on her doctoral research defining courage as a process of becoming, dramatic acts and special capacities are not necessary. In other words, the process is accessible to most people. For continuing guidance in taking further steps to the life you want, see Ruth's practical, playful book, [Choose Courage: Step Into the Life You Want](#), and related handbooks, all at this link.

***Becoming courageous involves the willingness to realize your true capacities by going through discomfort, fear, anxiety or suffering and taking wholehearted, responsible action.***



## Courage As a Generator of Your Powers

“Courage is rightly esteemed the first of human qualities... because it is the quality which guarantees all others.” [Winston Churchill](#)

“One isn't necessarily born with courage, but one is born with potential. Without courage, we cannot practice any other virtue with consistency. We can't be kind, true, merciful, generous, or honest.” [Maya Angelou](#)

“Life shrinks or expands in proportion to one's courage.” Author [Anais Nin](#)

“Courage is the greatest of all virtues, because if you haven't courage, you may not have an opportunity to use any of the others.” English Writer [Samuel Johnson](#)

“God, give us grace to accept with serenity the things that cannot be changed, courage to change the things which should be changed and the wisdom to distinguish the one from the other.”  
Philosopher [Reinhold Niebuhr](#)

“You may not always have a comfortable life and you will not always be able to solve all of the world's problems at once, but don't ever underestimate the importance you can have because

history has shown us that courage can be contagious and hope can take on a life of its own.”  
[Michelle Obama](#)

## What Ignites Courage

“Efforts and courage are not enough without purpose and direction.” [John F. Kennedy](#)

“Every human being on this earth is born with a tragedy, and it isn’t original sin. He’s born with the tragedy that he has to grow up... a lot of people don’t have the courage to do it.”  
Actress [Helen Hayes](#)

## Courage and Others

“Your time is limited, so don’t waste it living someone else’s life. Don’t be trapped by dogma – which is living with the results of other people’s thinking. Don’t let the noise of others’ opinions drown out your own inner voice. And most important, have the courage to follow your heart and intuition.” [Steve Jobs](#)

“The opposite for courage is not cowardice, it is conformity. Even a dead fish can go with the flow.” Former director of The Metropolitan Museum of Art [Jim Hightower](#)

“The only service a friend can really render is to keep up your courage by holding up to you a mirror in which you can see a noble image of yourself.” [George Bernard Shaw](#)

“From caring comes courage.” Father of Taoism, Ancient Chinese Philosopher: [Lao Tzu](#)

“Being deeply loved by someone gives you strength, while loving someone deeply gives you courage.” [Lao Tzu](#)

“You don’t develop courage by being happy in your relationships every day. You develop it by surviving difficult times and challenging adversity.” Early Greek Philosopher [Epicurus](#)

“Every man has his own courage, and is betrayed because he seeks in himself the courage of other persons.” [Ralph Waldo Emerson](#)

## Move Past Fear

“We gain strength, and courage, and confidence by each experience in which we really stop to look fear in the face... we must do that which we think we cannot.” [Eleanor Roosevelt](#)

“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](#)

“Courage is being scared to death... and saddling up anyway” [John Wayne](#)

“We must build dikes of courage to hold back the flood of fear.” [Martin Luther King, Jr.](#)

“The courage to be is the courage to accept oneself, in spite of being unacceptable.”  
Philosopher [Paul Tillich](#)

## Real Security

“It takes a lot of courage to release the familiar and seemingly secure, to embrace the new. But there is no real security in what is no longer meaningful. There is more security in the adventurous and exciting, for in movement there is life, and in change there is power.”  
Author [Alan Cohen](#)

“The best protection any woman can have... is courage.” Early Women’s Rights Leader  
[Elizabeth Cady Stanton](#)

## Courage Rides with Action

“Inaction breeds doubt and fear. Action breeds confidence and courage. If you want to conquer fear, do not sit home and think about it. Go out and get busy.” [Dale Carnegie](#)

“You will never do anything in this world without courage. It is the greatest quality of the mind next to honor.” [Aristotle](#)

“He who is not courageous enough to take risks will accomplish nothing in life.” [Muhammad Ali](#)

“Courage is not the absence of despair; it is, rather, the capacity to move ahead in spite of despair.” Existential Psychologist [Rollo May](#)

“We must have courage to bet on our ideas, to take the calculated risk, and to act. Everyday living requires courage if life is to be effective and bring happiness.” Psychocyaneticist  
[Maxwell Maltz](#)

“To create one’s world in any of the arts takes courage.” Artist [Georgia O’Keeffe](#)

## Courage and the Risk of Failure

“Failure is unimportant. It takes courage to make a fool of yourself.” [Charlie Chaplin](#)

“How few there are who have courage enough to own their faults, or resolution enough to mend them.” [Benjamin Franklin](#)

“Success is never final, failure is never fatal. It’s courage that counts.” UCLA Basketball Coach  
[John Wooden](#)

“Creativity requires the courage to let go of certainties.” German Social Psychologist and Psychoanalyst [Erich Fromm](#)

“Any intelligent fool can make things bigger and more complex... It takes a touch of genius – and a lot of courage to move in the opposite direction.” Economist [E. F. Schumacher](#)

## **Courage Promotes the Peace of Sleep**

“Have courage for the great sorrows of life and patience for the small ones; and when you have laboriously accomplished your daily task, go to sleep in peace.” French Author [Victor Hugo](#)

## **Courage and Integrity**

“Have the courage to say no. Have the courage to face the truth. Do the right thing because it is right. These are the magic keys to living your life with integrity.” Businessman, Philanthropist and Self-Help Author [W. Clement Stone](#)

“Character contributes to beauty. It fortifies a woman as her youth fades. A mode of conduct, a standard of courage, discipline, fortitude, and integrity can do a great deal to make a woman beautiful.” Actress [Jacqueline Bisset](#)

Copyright 2016, Ruth Schimel, Ph.D., Career & Life Management Consultant  
[202.659.1772](tel:202.659.1772) | [ruth@ruthschimel.com](mailto:ruth@ruthschimel.com) [www.ruthschimel.com](http://www.ruthschimel.com)