



## IN SERENITY, THERE IS COURAGE

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How do you teach a child courage? Basically, the same way you teach a child about success. They say that the best way to teach a child the sweetness of success is to guide him during an experience of defeat or failure. This way, he gets to savor success in all its full-bodied glory. There are many of us who fear failure. Failure is something we try to avoid at all costs. It takes a special man to admit he has failed. But what makes that man more special is how he stands up after he falls. A man of sufficient courage will get up, salvage what life has dealt him with, and move on using the lessons he has learned as guiding beacons.

A man of sufficient courage will not dwell too long on the past, for the past is over. He will not go looking too far into the future, only occasionally to check his course, for the future has not arrived yet. He will focus his energies and capabilities on the present, because the present is here and now. Teaching a child courage can be tricky. It takes judgment and perseverance to be consistently courageous. There will always be situations where mere courage is not enough. Teach a child the Serenity Prayer written by Reinhold Niebuhr instead. It is probably the most effective prayer one can utter in times when courage is needed, but serenity and wisdom will do just as nicely:

God grant me the serenity  
to accept the things I cannot change;  
courage to change the things I can;  
and wisdom to know the difference.  
Living one day at a time;  
Enjoying one moment at a time;  
Accepting hardships as the pathway to peace;  
Taking, as He did, this sinful world  
as it is, not as I would have it;  
Trusting that He will make all things right  
if I surrender to His Will;  
That I may be reasonably happy in this life  
and supremely happy with Him  
Forever in the next.  
Amen.

Teach a child that there will be times when he is utterly defenseless and helpless, but that he should not feel that the entire world has come to an end. Teach him about how the world can be a bitter place, but that doesn't mean he has to become bitter, too. Teach him that life is inherently beautiful, and the ugliness that it occasionally shows may rob him of all reason and courage, but he should never stop living. Teach him to be independent, for there will be times when you cannot be beside him anymore. Teach him to choose his battles, for you cannot always do that for him. Teach him to be responsible for his actions, and only then will you have taught him COURAGE.

### QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION:

1. In these uncertain times, is it ever easy to teach a child about courage? Why or why not?
2. Do you sometimes feel helpless and weak of heart? What particular situations make you fearful?
3. Do you believe that life is inherently beautiful? What are the things that make life ugly and scary?
4. Do you firmly believe that change is possible? How can an ordinary person change the world?
5. Can you be bold enough to change the world? In what way?