



## LIVING LIFE DANGEROUSLY

Kathlyn Q. Barrozo  
Class of 1991, University of Santo Tomas  
B.S. Medical Technology

Referring to the persistency of purpose or simply holding on to something even when things get really rough and tough, tenacity is often synonymous to persistence and perseverance. It's a quality that most of us have, and few of us know how to manage. After all, there can be a certain disadvantage in holding on too tightly when the world's forces dictate that letting go would be a much better proposition, but some things can not be let go so easily.

Consider Rosa Parks' immense courage and determination to hold on to her principles of racial equality in the face of white supremacy. Her fearless tenacity led to the Modern Civil Rights Movement that was launched in answer to the long-standing racial segregation in the United States. Although Rosa Parks was not the first to launch such successful campaigns, she has been acclaimed as the "mother of the freedom movement", paving the way for racial equality in the most powerful nation of the world. What probably set Rosa Parks apart from her predecessors in the civil rights movement was the tenacity with which she pursued her campaign, collaborating with other civil rights leaders and organizing activities that made people sit up and pay heed.

Elsewhere in the world, in today's times, more and more people from different countries have launched movements of their own, all with diverse aims and objectives. Most of those movements have been geared towards toppling governments and evil regimes; some, like the Occupy Movement, have been against certain policies and standards in specific aspects of business or of life. What makes some such movements more successful than others is the tenacity with which their organizers hold on to their ideals—notwithstanding threats to life and limb. Unless movement leaders are tough enough to grit their teeth and endure the rigors of their campaign, they can never hope to see the light at the end of a long and arduous journey.

Some people come out of such experiences with only good things to say. The experience allows them to grow, to improve, and to see their own strengths which they never dreamed they had. These are individuals who see the positive in all the bleakness, the firmness of resolve in all the uncertainty. These people come out richer for the experience of having withstood contradiction and faced down the ills of society as a whole and their individual weaknesses in particular.

On the other side of the spectrum, there are others who come out broken, hating the world and hating themselves. While they go on blaming others for their shortcomings and wretchedness, they cease to see that what probably worked more strongly against them above all other considerations was their absence of tenacity. No firmness, no resolution.

## QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION:

1. Have you ever experienced being at the center of a conflict where your tenacity was put to the test? Talk about your experience.
2. Why do others succeed when numerous others fail in an undertaking?
3. Which do you think can work better—a good decision or the tenacity to pursue something to the very end? Justify your answer.
4. How do you keep your spirits up when faced with endless adversity?
5. What are the consequences of losing tenacity in the middle of organized movements and campaigns? Cite specific examples, as needed.