

The Path of Courage



“Courage doesn’t always roar.” - Mary Anne Radmacher

Monthly Theme Resources
October 2022

UNITARIAN
UNIVERSALIST
CHURCH OF
JACKSON



Calendar Connections: October 2022

Month	LGBTQ History Month
	Breast Cancer Awareness Month
	Bullying Prevention Month (more here)
Oct. 1	First episode of Unitarian Rod Sterling's "Twilight Zone" (1959)
Oct. 2	Birthday of Mohandas Gandhi (1869)
	Thurgood Marshall sworn in as 1 st African American US Supreme Court Justice (1967)
Oct. 4	Feast of St Francis of Assisi (Christian)
	Ruth Bader Ginsburg joins US Supreme Court as 2 nd woman Justice (1993)
Oct. 4-5	Yom Kippur - Jewish Day of Atonement
Oct. 7	World Smile Day
Oct. 8	Mawlid al-Nabi - the birthday of the Prophet Muhammad
Oct. 9	Clergy Appreciation Day
Oct. 9-16	Sukkot : Feast of Tabernacles (Jewish)
Oct. 10	Indigenous Peoples Day / Columbus Day (U.S.) - more here
Oct. 11	NASA launches first peopled mission, Apollo 7 (1968)
	National Coming Out Day
Oct. 14-16	National Observance of Children's Sabbath
Oct. 24	Diwali: Festival of Lights (Hindu)
	United Nations Day
Oct. 26	Intersex Awareness Day
Oct. 27	Michael Servetus burned at the stake in Geneva (more here) (1553)
Oct. 31- (Nov. 2)	Halloween, All Soul's Eve
	Samhain (Wiccan) [more and more]
	Dia de los Muertos
	Martin Luther posts 95 theses (1517)
	Unitarians and Universalists voted to merge. (more here) (1959)

Recommended Resources for Personal Exploration & Reflection

Word Roots & Definitions

Courage is a heart word. The root of the word courage is *cor* - the Latin word for heart. In one of its earliest forms, the word courage meant "To speak one's mind by telling all one's heart." Over time, this definition has changed, and today, we typically associate courage with heroic and brave deeds. But in my opinion, this definition fails to recognize the inner strength and level of commitment required for us to actually speak honestly and openly about who we are and about our experiences -- good and bad.

Brené Brown

Wise Words

Come to the edge.
 We might fall.
 Come to the edge.
 It's too high!
 COME TO THE EDGE!
 And they came
 And he pushed
 And they flew.
[Christopher Logue](#)

Courage is not the absence of fear, but rather the judgment that something else is more important than fear.

Ambrose Redmoon

Don't just resist cynicism — fight it actively, in yourself and in those you love and in the communication with which you shape culture. Cynicism, like all destruction, is easy, it's lazy. There is nothing more difficult yet more gratifying in our society than living with sincere, active, constructive hope for the human spirit. This is the most potent antidote to cynicism, and it is an act of courage and resistance today.

[Maria Popova](#)

Anger can give us the mettle to speak with courage and conviction, but also the venom that blinds us to the views of others.

[James Hoggan](#)

We need the courage to question the powers that be, the courage to be impatient with evil and patient with people.... In many instances we will be stepping out on nothing, and just hoping to land on something. But that's the struggle. To live is to wrestle with despair, yet never allow despair to have the last word.

Cornel West

You can choose courage or you can choose comfort, but you cannot have both.

Brené Brown

Perhaps all the dragons in our lives are princesses who are only waiting to see us act, just once, with beauty and courage. Perhaps everything that frightens us is, in its deepest essence, something helpless that wants our love.

Rainer Maria Rilke

We don't have to be pollyannish, or fatalistic. We can just be human. We can be messy, imperfect, contradictory, broken. We can recognize the difference between hopelessness and helplessness. Because what if we've been doing the equation backward? What if hope isn't what leads to action? What if courage is what leads to action and hope is what comes next?

[Mary Annaise Heglar](#)

Next time, ask: What's the worst that will happen? Then push yourself a little further than you dare. Once you start to speak, people will yell at you. They will interrupt you, put you down and suggest it's personal. And the world won't end. And the speaking will get easier and easier. And you will find you have fallen in love with your own vision, which you may never have realized you had. And you will lose some friends and lovers and realize you don't miss them. And new ones will find you and cherish you... And at last you'll know with surpassing certainty that only one thing is more frightening than speaking your truth. And that is not speaking it.

Audre Lorde

It's a shallow life that doesn't give a person a few scars.

Garrison Keillor

All around you, people will be tiptoeing through life, just to arrive at death safely. But dear children, do not tiptoe. Run, hop, skip, or dance!

Shane Claiborne

White supremacy culture's number one strategy is to make us afraid. When we are afraid, we lose touch with our power and are more easily manipulated by any promise of safety, even as we come to slowly learn that safety dependent on violence is not safe at all.

[Tema Okun](#)

I believe that courage follows love... When I love something, I can be very strong in defense of it, or very brave in pursuit of it. And I think my own courage has come from being loved well enough so that I could love myself and others.

A Soul Matters Member

Anyone can slay a dragon but try waking up every morning and loving the world all over again. That's what takes a real hero.

Brian Andreas

It takes courage ... to endure the sharp pains of self-discovery rather than choose to take the dull pain of unconsciousness that would last the rest of our lives.

Marianne Williamson

I will not die an un-lived life
I will not live in fear
of falling or catching fire.
I choose to inhabit my days,
to allow my living to open me,
to make me less afraid...

Dawna Markova, from [I Will Not Die an Unlived Life](#)

Courage doesn't always roar. Sometimes courage is the quiet voice at the end of the day saying, 'I will try again tomorrow.'

Mary Anne Radmacher

Here is the world. Beautiful and terrible things will happen. Do not be afraid.

Frederick Buechner

Videos & Podcasts

Courage is Born from Struggle, Interview with *Brené Brown*

<https://onbeing.org/programs/1-courage-born-struggle-brene-brown/>

Courage To Live Undivided, *Parker Palmer*

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=o5ZLt4yYrw>

What dangers do you need to courageously bring into view?

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vT_PNKg3v7s

Fearless, *Invisibilia* Podcast

<http://www.npr.org/programs/invisibilia/377515477/fearless?showDate=2015-01-16>

TED Talk: What I learned from 100 days of rejection, *Jia Jiang (must watch!)*

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-vZXgApsPCQ>

TED Talk: We're all hiding something. Let's find the courage to open up

https://www.ted.com/talks/ash_bekham_we_re_all_hiding_something_let_s_find_the_courage_to_open_up

Music

Each month playlists are organized as a journey of sorts; consider listening from beginning to end as a musical meditation. Click for the Spotify playlist on [Courage](#). Click for the YouTube playlist on [Courage](#).

Articles

The Courage to Not Know

Brené Brown

<https://brenebrown.com/articles/2020/02/13/the-courage-to-not-know/>

11 Ways White America Avoids Taking Responsibility for its Racism

Dr. Robin Diangelo

https://www.salon.com/2015/06/16/11_ways_white_america_avoids_taking_responsibility_for_its_racism_partner/

Also:

<https://notesfromanaspiringhumanitarian.com/white-people-increase-your-racial-stamina-take-the-pledge/>

Books

Daring Greatly: How the Courage to Be Vulnerable Transforms the Way We Live, Love, Parent, and Lead

Brené Brown

All We Can Save: Truth, Courage, and Solutions for the Climate Crisis

Edited by Ayana Elizabeth Johnson and Katharine K. Wilkinson

[Things Fall Apart](#)

Chinua Achebe

Movies

<p><u>tick, tick...Boom!</u>: A 2021 American biographical musical drama film directed by Lin-Manuel Miranda in his feature directorial debut. Written by Steven Levenson, who also serves as an executive producer, it is based on the stage musical of the same name by Jonathan Larson, a semi-autobiographical story about Larson writing a musical to enter into the theater industry. It was named one of the best films of 2021 by the American Film Institute and was nominated for numerous awards.</p>	
<p><u>Coda</u>: A 2021 coming-of-age comedy-drama film written and directed by Sian Heder. An English-language remake of the 2014 French-Belgian film <i>La Famille Bélier</i>, it stars Emilia Jones as the titular child of deaf adults (CODA) and only hearing member of a deaf family, who attempts to help her family's struggling fishing business, while pursuing her own aspirations of being a singer. It was named one of the top 10 films of 2021 by the American Film Institute and won numerous awards, including Best Picture.</p>	
<p><u>Nope</u>: A 2022 American neo-Western science fiction horror film directed, written, and co-produced by Jordan Peele. It stars Daniel Kaluuya and Keke Palmer as horse-wrangling siblings attempting to capture evidence of an unidentified flying object. It has received praise for its ambition, performances, themes, cinematography, and direction.</p>	
<p><u>Shut Up and Sing</u>: A 2006 American documentary film produced and directed by Barbara Kopple and Cecilia Peck. The film follows the Dixie Chicks, an all-female Texas-based country music trio, over a three-year period of intense public scrutiny, fan backlash, physical threats, and pressure from both corporate and conservative political elements in the United States after lead singer Natalie Maines publicly criticized then President of the United States George W. Bush during a live 2003 concert in London as part of their Top of the World Tour.</p>	
<p><u>Away From Her</u>: A 2006 Canadian independent drama film written and directed by Sarah Polley and starring Julie Christie and Gordon Pinsent. The film is based on Alice Munro's short story "The Bear Came Over the Mountain", from the 2001 collection <i>Hateship, Friendship, Courtship, Loveship, Marriage</i>. The story centers on a couple whose marriage is tested when the wife begins to develop Alzheimer's and moves into a nursing home, where she loses virtually all memory of her husband and begins to develop a close relationship with another nursing home resident. The film garnered critical acclaim, receiving Academy Awards nominations.</p>	

Chasing Coral: A 2017 American documentary film about a team of divers, scientists and photographers around the world who document the disappearance of coral reefs.



The Call to Courage: A 2019 documentary film directed by Sandra Restrepo. The documentary depicts Brené Brown as she discusses what it takes to choose courage over comfort in today's culture. The film is about how bravery can arise from engaging with our deepest vulnerabilities. Brené Brown has published TED Talks and books earlier about the subject, and this documentary continues exploring the topic.



Reflection Questions

Don't treat these questions like "homework" or try to answer everyone. Instead, make time to meditate on the list and then pick the one question that speaks to you most. The goal is to figure out which question captures the call of your inner voice? Which one contains "your work"? And what is that question trying to get you to notice or acknowledge?

Often it helps to read the list to a friend or loved one and ask them which question they think is the question you need to wrestle with!

1. What fears did your family of origin pass on to you?
2. What is the greatest act of courage that you directly witnessed? And how did it change you?
3. Has bravely not running away ever produced surprising results?
4. Are you being called to bravely not run away today?
5. What do you know now about courage that you didn't know when you were younger?
6. What seems more dangerous these days? Pessimism or optimism?
7. Is life calling you to make a "leap of faith"?
8. How would your life be enriched by bravely forgiving someone? Maybe even yourself?
9. What if Adrienne Maree Brown is right that joy and self-love are among today's most courageous acts of resistance?
10. In resistance to white supremacy culture, what are you courageous enough to stop normalizing? (sonyareneetaylor)
11. Is it time to tell someone how scared you really are?
12. Is safely tiptoeing around "it" making you ill?
13. Where are you saying "yes" when you need to courageously say "no"?
14. What if fear is an indicator of what you deep down long for and want to do?
15. Has comfort led you to forgetting what courage feels like?
16. Instead of standing up and speaking out, is courage now asking you to sit down and listen?
17. **What's your question?** Your question may not be listed above. As always, if the above questions don't include what life is asking from you, spend the month listening to your days to find it.

Meditations, Prayers & Blessings

Meditation on courage and vulnerability, Rev. Douglas Taylor *

Full piece found at

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1s6JZ09oBfmsGhDQ9TPqaJo2JGMCPqYODCir9yQDfF-8/edit?usp=sharing>

“I would have my vulnerability be a choice made from my courage rather than my fear. I would have my vulnerability be my strength.
May my strength be not found as a hard shell of defense or a sharp weapon of attack. May my strength, instead, be found in an open stance of kindness and empathy, like a tree bending gracefully in the wind storm. May my strength be found in a willingness to join in the suffering of others, like a forest of trees together in a storm. May I choose to be receptive rather than protected, sharing rather than shielded...”

Map of the Journey in Progress, Rev. Victoria Safford *

Full piece at <http://www.uua.org/worship/words/meditation/map-journey-progress>

Here is where I found my voice and chose to be brave...

This is the place where I said no, more loudly than I'd thought I ever could...

Here's a time, and here's another, when I laid down my fear and walked right on into it...

Here is where I began to look with my own eyes and listen with my ears and sing my own song, shaky as it is...

The Courage of Patience, Rev. Richard S. Gilbert *

Full piece at <http://www.uua.org/worship/words/meditation/courage-patience>

When life seems a struggle between tedium and apathy
Or frenzy and exhaustion;
When today seems a punishment and tomorrow a torment,
May we find the courage of patience...

All That We Have Been, All That We Will Become, Leslie Ahuvah Fails *

Full piece at <https://www.uua.org/worship/words/meditation/all-we-have-been-all-we-will-become>

We stand at the precipice, arms locked
together like tandem skydivers
working up the courage to jump.
Tell me, friends:
What have we got to lose?...

I pray this day for the courage to be..., Rev. Maureen Killoran

Full piece found in [To Wake, To Rise](#), a UUA meditation manual & Soul Matters “[Common Shelf](#)” Book

Stories For All Ages

Picture Books

Malala Yousafzai: Warrior with Words

A true story of a girl who had the courage to stand up for education for everyone, when girls were not supposed to go to school. She was attacked by fanatics and nearly killed but has gained the respect of the entire world.

- **Book:** [HERE](#)
- **Video:** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yt5otlVcYKk>

I Can Do Hard Things

There are times when we have to muster our personal courage and do something hard for us. This story shares examples of a bunch of hard things.

- **Book:** [HERE](#)
- **Read Aloud:** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CF4kQfEVJLM>

Benny J and the Horrible Halloween

Everyone has different reactions to Halloween. By sharing fears and working out ways to help those fears, we can make a safe place and help each other be courageous in facing fears.

- **Book:** [HERE](#)
- **Video:** https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=m6e_0rtfF1Q

Courage, by Bernard Waber

There are many kinds of courage

- **Book:** [HERE](#)

Peep!: A Little Book About Taking a Leap by Maria van Lieshout

Invite children to act this one out with you, as chicks!

- **Book:** [HERE](#)

Mirette on the High Wire by Emily Arnold McCully

Lay a rope on the floor and pretend to balance on it while telling this story.

- **Book:** [HERE](#)

Wisdom Tales

- **Buddhist Jataka Tales:**
 - [The Wise Teacher's Test](#)
 - [The Frightened Hare](#)
 - [The Way Out Of Fear](#)
- **Ethiopian Tale from Tapestry of Faith, Toolbox of Faith:** [Fire, Water, Truth and Falsehood](#) (Celebrates how being courageous and telling the truth will finally win out. Tell the story with a candle and a cup of water.)
- **Wisdom Tales from “[Doorways to the Soul](#)” by Elisa Davy Pearmain**
 - Story #20 - The Lion's Whisker (courage to persevere)
 - Story #33 - Descent into the Maelstrom by Poe (different people, fears, and courage)
 - Story #52 - The Question (courage to be yourself)