

VOL. 14 NO. 3 | SUMMER 2022 | COURAGE

Courage



PEACE CHRONICLE

THE MAGAZINE OF THE PEACE AND JUSTICE STUDIES
ASSOCIATION

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PEACE CHRONICLE

The Magazine of the Peace and Justice Studies Association

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LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

PUSHPA IYER

Almost a year ago, Wim Laven, Editor in Chief of the Peace Chronicle, and I discussed the theme for the summer 2022 issue, for which I had agreed to be the guest editor. We agreed upon Courage, not knowing that this one word would become the most important word in our heads and hearts starting this third week of June 2022. A week during which the country's highest legislative body, the Supreme Court, handed down three significant decisions that rocked the nation.

The first ruling argued in support of using public funds to pay for tuition assistance programs in private religious schools, which maintain policies against gay and transgender students and staff. The second was a ruling that struck down New York's law requiring applicants to have a 'proper cause' to obtain a license for carrying a gun. Finally, the third ruling in the week overturned the landmark Roe vs. Wade ruling, which strips women of the right to an abortion. In just one week, our vulnerability as women, gay or transgender persons, and as ordinary citizens has increased exponentially. We will all feel the impact of these decisions for years to come.

Courage is what we all need to survive, fight, and thrive in a world where our rights are threatened not by outside forces or enemies but by our own democratic institutions. The task before us is mammoth and overwhelming, but I hope you will, like me, feel hope, get motivated, and experience joy as you read the compelling words written by this issue's contributors. Every story, every research, and every work is a testimony to the strength in us humans to strive for the change we need in our personal, social, cultural, and political lives. The articles also emphasize our interdependence as

humans and systems and the need for solidarity in initiatives and movements. Students, scholars, practitioners, and activists from around the world contributed to this issue. I wanted to retain their unique storytelling and writing styles and keep my editing to the bare minimum.

My dear friend, P.K. McCary, designed the cover art for this issue. P.K. writes about the courage shown in the powerful words of one young woman, poet Amanda Gorman and it is Gorman who P.K. had in mind when designing the cover. However, I believe the person in the picture could be any of us, standing or sitting anywhere, in front of an audience or without an audience, reciting a poem or being silent, leading others or following leaders – and every one of those images of any of us would be a symbol of courage. We need to put ourselves out there, which is all we hope to convey through this issue. Red is the color that symbolizes courage, and we are using shades of this color to introduce each piece.

I want to thank all the contributors for sharing their excellent work, painful stories, and uplifting experiences. To Wim, much gratitude for inviting me to guest edit this issue and for all his support. Many thanks to Emma Lovejoy, our production manager, for taking all the materials I sent them into a beautiful, readable magazine and an easy-to-navigate site.

Enjoy, and keep up the courageous fight to uphold our personal and shared values.

Warmly,
Pushpa Iyer
Guest Editor (Summer Issue) and PJSA Board Member

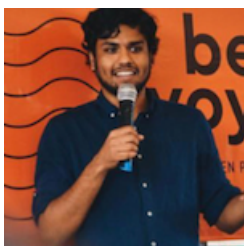
CONTRIBUTORS



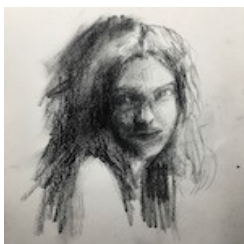
Pushpa Iyer is an activist, practitioner, and scholar in that order. She is passionate about creating a more decolonized world that is more diverse, inclusive, and equitable. She has a Ph.D. in Conflict Analysis and Resolution from the Carter School for Peace and Conflict Resolution and is currently a faculty member of the Middlebury Institute of International Studies. Dr. Iyer is the founding director of the Center for Conflict Studies and the Compassionate Courage initiative.



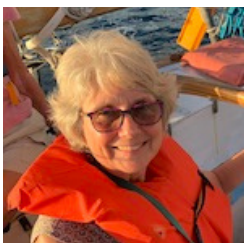
Aanchal Shah is a PYP educator. Shah started her journey in the banking sector after completing her Master's in Business Administration. From being a banker to becoming an educator was a roller coaster ride for her. Shah's love for teaching and lifelong learning made her what she is today. Being a certified IB educator, Microsoft Innovative Educator(MIE), Adobe Creative Educator, and soon to be a UK-Level 6 Certified Educator, she believes in transforming young minds towards creating a better world we all live in. Shah is an explorer, a traveler who loves to visit new places and explore the limitless possibilities that this era offers.



Abhinav Khanal is the Co-Founder & Executive Director at Bean Voyage, a non-profit social enterprise that provides training and market access to smallholder women coffee producers in Costa Rica. He is also the Co-founder & Chief Thought Officer at Little Big Fund which provides tools, networks and funds to social impact Changemakers around the world. Prior to starting his own ventures, he dedicated his time supporting organizations working on early childhood education, sustainable food systems, and youth empowerment. Abhinav has a B.A in Political Science from Earlham College.



Ariana Rastelli Swann is a wanderer and multi-media artist currently based in Manhattan, KS. She works in oil paint, acrylic, collage, ink, and occasionally puts her thoughts into writing. She is a free spirit who has hiked across the United States and traveled to six continents. Her art and writing are byproducts of her relentless pursuit of an underlying truth that she suspects is as restless as she is.



Barbara Leigh Cooney has been a life member of PJSA since the days of COPRED while faculty of Peace Studies at Kobe College, Japan. Her first protest was at age 18 in DC against the Vietnam War alongside returning veterans. Now in Honolulu, she volunteered with the visiting Golden Rule 2019-2021, including bringing local Marshallese community members onboard. She is honored to be a Golden Rule Ambassador.



Helen Jaccard is the Project Manager of the Golden Rule peace boat and a member of the Disarm Committee of Women's International League for Peace & Freedom. She writes about the effects of militarism on health, culture and the environment.



Beryl Anand holds a Ph.D. from the Center for West Asian Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi. Her research interests include political economy of conflict, democracy and social change in the Middle East and South Asia, peace and conflict studies. Anand is currently a faculty at the Center for Gandhian Thought and Peace Studies, School of Social Sciences, Central University of Gujarat where she teaches a course on Introduction to Peace Studies for the doctoral research students. She also teaches a course titled Global Issues in Politics for the post graduate students of Political Science. Anand has previously taught at Sikkim Central University and Jamia Millia Islamia.



Beth Roy, PhD, mediates organizations and communities confronting challenges to diversity. She teaches workshops on ways to talk and listen across differing identities. Her published works include *Some Trouble with Cows: Making Sense of Social Conflict* and *41 Shots...and Counting: What Amado Diallo Teaches Us about Policing, Race, and Justice*. She is a co-founder of the Practitioners Research and Scholarship Institute and co-edited the anthology *Beyond Equity and Inclusion in Conflict Resolution: Recentering the Profession*.



Fr. Cedric Prakash is a Jesuit Priest from Gujarat, India. He is a well-known human rights, reconciliation and peace activist/trainer, focusing on advocacy. He is a prolific writer on justice, peace, environment, contextual spirituality and the Constitution of India. He is currently engaged animating/training several groups on these issues. He is a recipient of several national/international honours; including the Kabir Puraskar from the President of India for promotion of Communal Peace & Harmony and the Legion of Honour from the President of France for life-time commitment to the defense & promotion of Human Rights in India.



Christelle Barakat is a recent Fulbright graduate from the University of North Carolina at Greensboro, holding a M.A. in Peace and Conflict Studies with a concentration on International Peace Development. Prior to that, Christelle graduated with a B.A. in Political Sciences and International Affairs with high distinction from the Lebanese American University where she was also part of the honors program, with 3 minors in Conflict Analysis and Resolution, Gender Studies, and Legal Studies. She was selected by UNODA in New York in 2020 as 1 of 10 UN Youth Champions for Disarmament, and, more recently, in 2022, as 1 of 25 Leaders 4 Tomorrow.



Daniel Rothbart is professor of conflict analysis and resolution at the Jimmy and Rosalynn Carter School for Peace and Conflict Resolution, George Mason University. He specializes in prevention of mass violence, ethnic conflicts, power and conflict, the ethics of conflict resolution and the psycho-politics of conflict. In addition to serving as co-director of the Program on Prevention of Mass Violence, he directs the peace lab called Transforming the Mind for Peace. Professor Rothbart's academic writings include more than sixty articles and chapters in professional journals and books. Among his ten authored or edited books, he published *State Domination and the Psycho-Politics of Conflict* (2019).



Edna Kilusu is an international student from Tanzania. She is currently a senior studying Psychology, Anthropology and Writing at Gettysburg College, Pennsylvania, USA.



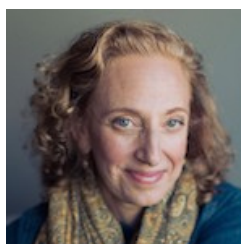
Simon Emmanuel is an Orkeeswa graduate and the Founder of Nadumu Maasai Women (NMW), an organization that works to empower Maasai women in rural Tanzania.



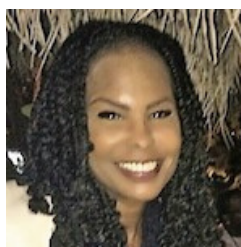
Enrico E. Manalo is a conflict management and racial equity practitioner based in Oakland, California. Manalo holds an MA in Conflict Resolution from the University of Massachusetts Boston, where he wrote a thesis on how conflict is handled in organizations with deep commitments to Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion. His research interests include Organizational Silence, Employee Voice, and Everyday Resistance. In addition to consulting work, Manalo is also a podcaster, heading both the "Intentionally Act Live" podcast for All Aces, Inc., as well as the "DEI is:" podcast for DiVerity PBC. He also has a dog named Chunk.



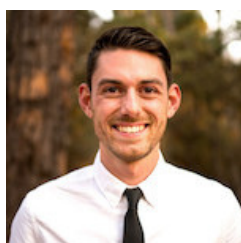
Evan Harrel is the Co-founder and Chief Operating Officer of the Center for Compassionate Leadership. He leads the Center's thought leadership efforts, the integration of scientific and business research into the work of the Center, and the development and delivery of the Center's leadership training programs. He was awarded a MBA, with distinction, from Harvard Business School and a Bachelor of Arts, cum laude, from Princeton University.



Laura Berland is the Founder and Executive Director of the Center for Compassionate Leadership. She has developed a new model for these turbulent times that melds evidence-based principles of modern leadership and the latest scientific research with the wisdom of contemplative and embodiment practices. Laura has extensive experience working with executives, entrepreneurs, graduate students, military veterans, and yoga/meditation teachers. She is an alumna of Cornell University and New York University.



Dr. Imani Michelle Scott is a scholar and consultant in the areas of human communication, conflict analysis and peacebuilding. She has worked fervently for over two decades to advance the causes of peace, social justice and equity throughout the world. In 2022, she was awarded a Fulbright Scholarship to become a Research Chair at McMaster University in Ontario/Hamilton, CA.



Jacob Dwyer is a design, monitoring, evaluation and learning specialist at the National Democratic Institute (NDI) based in Washington, DC. He is also an associate of Compassionate Courage, an intervention approach that ensures systemic change and reduces divisions caused by identity-based conflicts. During his graduate studies at the Middlebury Institute of International Studies, Jacob was a member of the Allies at MIIS Initiative led by Dr. Pushpa Iyer, which motivated staff, faculty and students to become better allies for racial equity.



Kathy Komaroff Goodman is an experienced mediator with a deep interest in the role that emotional and cultural intelligence plays in a mediator's ability to address the underlying needs. She mediates privately and in the courts. Kathy specializes in family business, start-ups, and partnerships disputes. She is a founding Principal at ACCORD, a collaborative of conflict management and resolution specialists serving individuals, families and businesses. Kathy is the founder and CEO of a family business, Katherine Komaroff Fine Arts, Inc and former vice president of the James Goodman Gallery. She is a graduate of the Masters of Science program in Negotiation and Conflict Resolution from Columbia University.



Laura Finley is a former high school social studies teacher and currently Professor of Sociology & Criminology at Barry University in Miami Shores, Florida. She is author, co-author or editor of more than 30 books as well as numerous journal articles and book chapters. Dr. Finley is also a contributor to PeaceVoice and is actively involved with a number of peace and justice efforts, including serving as Co-Chair of the PJSA Board of Directors.



Michael Hylen currently serves as a professor and Coordinator of the Education Department at Southern Wesleyan University. I also served at Louisiana State University and Asbury University. Additionally, Michael is active in his community, serving in leadership roles when possible. He has published research on social emotional learning, servant leadership and at-risk students, as well as a book on Cultivating Emotional Intelligence. Previously, Michael enjoyed a 25-year career in k-12 education. His most extensive work was as an alternative high school principal for students who struggled academically, emotionally and behaviorally. Michael earned his Ph.D. from the University of Missouri – St. Louis.



Nashay Lowe is a Ph.D. student in the International Conflict Management program at Kennesaw State University. Her research interests and passions are human rights, social identity, trauma-informed care, and global solidarity.



Nina Riaz (she/her) is a member of the Missouri Bar, a graduate of St. Louis University School of Law, and she also holds Master's degrees in International Relations from Webster University and in Philosophy and Religion from California Institute of Integral Studies. She served the public as legislative staff for Senator Claire McCaskill (D-MO) at the United States Senate and as an outreach worker in Oakland, California and St. Louis, Missouri. She has a private grief and loss practice, St. Louis Grief Recovery, where she guides people through the process of letting go.



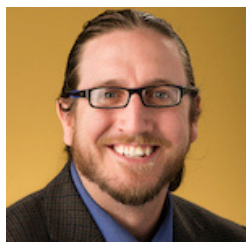
P. K. McCary, Houston artist, educator, and social activist, works tirelessly to cultivate relationships across racial, gender, generational, and cultural aisles. Mama PK, as she is affectionately called, is a certified mediator, an anti-racism facilitator, and a mentor to artists and activists whose desire it is to make the world a better place in which to live.



Rebecca Donaldson is a doctoral student in Positive Developmental Psychology at Claremont Graduate University. Her research interests include the bio-ecological model of human development, resilience, mentorship, and narrative identity. Specifically, Rebecca is interested in understanding the resilience of individuals exposed to developmental complex trauma in different contexts around the world. She is passionate about understanding how we can buffer the negative effects of such experiences and/or support healing through intervention work by considering the various systems shaping the person and finding ways to help them flourish through mentorship and other means.



Todd Stoll is a poet devoted to social justice. He believes in the importance of finding courage to stand up for the rights of all. His first demonstration for women's rights was the 1979 March on Washington, and he has been marching since. He hopes my words will move you to act, too.



Wim Laven, Ph.D, instructor of peace studies, political science, and conflict resolution, focuses his research on forgiveness and reconciliation, which he relates to his wide range of work and research experiences. His experience in the field spans 4 continents and includes many processes from mediating disputes in small claims court, to interventions during complex humanitarian disasters. He is on the executive boards of the International Peace Research Association and the Peace and Justice Studies Association, and is the Editor in Chief of the Peace Chronicle.

BE COURAGEOUS TO ACKNOWLEDGE COURAGE

AANCHAL SHAL

What is Courage? Is it being strong? Is it being firm? It is nothing except acknowledgement of change!
My baby showed courage when she took her first breath in this world of uncertainty,
Leaving the comfort of mommy's warm cozy womb,
she opened her eyes to a new life of unpredictability.
Her first step without seeking support showed how courageous she is,
The twinkling in her eyes displayed what an achiever she is!
The first day at the park, her first take at riding a cycle, her first night out with grandparents,
the first day at school and the first time at everything was possible because her courage is bliss.

COVID-19 pandemic taught the world the acceptance of the change.
Where doctors were warriors in the battle, thousands lost lives,
millions were saved, and people came closer like never before.
Showing mercy and maintaining peace, holding hands,
The world experienced the courage to forego conflicts.

Where children showed resilience, risk-taking by staying indoors,
Schools were courageous in setting up online schools.
Soldiers at the border made sure to stand alert,
While the citizens were fighting a war within.
My old school mother developed a growth mindset,
Found YouTube, podcasts, google maps and WhatsApp resourceful.

We have courageous people all around,
We just need the courage to accept that they are courageous.
Where some decide to get married, and some choose to stay single.
Where a couple decides to start a family, some opt for adoption to raise a child as a single parent.

When people decide to migrate, when an entrepreneur decides to start a business,
when a person decides to mortgage property, when parents decide to marry their children, when the
young minds decide to follow their passion, their courage becomes their strength whole and sole.

When people face old age, the courage will still be shown in the little ways,
Accepting that it's winter, spring has passed.
Seeking forgiveness, accepting the value of the time that is left.
When death knocks at the door, leaving loved ones behind demands courage,
The ones left behind move on with the hope of a better spring next time with courage!

THE JOURNEY FROM DAVID TO GOLIATH

ABHINAV KHANAL

What do we think of when we hear the story of “David Vs. Goliath”? It is the story of the victory of good over evil, the small versus the behemoth, and the weak over the powerful. However, it is also a story of courage versus control. Goliath is hungry for control of power, and David has the courage to stand up when no one else will. However, something that has kept me up late is the question, “when does one transition from being a David to a Goliath?”

I am a 29-year old social entrepreneur, originally from Kathmandu, Nepal, but raised and brought in many countries. When I was in university, I co-founded a social venture called [Bean Voyage](#), with a mission to ensure thriving income for smallholder women coffee farmers. Through a bundle of services consisting of training, financing, and market access, we take smallholder women coffee farmers through a “Voyage” that spans three years, and at the end of the program, farmers generally fetch 200% higher prices for their coffee than the commodity market. They go from being subsistence farmers to micro-business owners, and sometimes, even commercial farmers.

We started Bean Voyage with one producer partner, Ericka Mora, whose story inspired a person from Nepal and South Korea to drop everything out of college and move to Costa Rica to build an

organization from scratch. Ericka and her family were third generation farmers, but lacked the market linkages to make their coffee business sustainable. In fact, when asked “what does coffee mean to you”, farmers like Ericka would often say “form of life” meaning that it was part of their lives, but never seen as something that could break the vicious cycle of poverty that farmers often face. Sunghee (my co-founder) and I didn’t have the coffee know how to support Ericka’s farm, but had the inspiration to learn, and test out different solutions. We co-developed various ideas: from an initial market platform that sourced roasted coffee directly from Ericka, to developing a 12-week training program focused on improvising yield and quality, we tested various ideas, and eventually scaled the ideas that worked to reach 534 farmers (in 2021).

Reading my story, you must be imagining the David vs. Goliath story, and this story could be an ideal case of a couple of passionate social entrepreneurs tackling a massive industry, and building a sustainable value chain — one farmer at a time. From living off of \$50 a month “salary” in our Year 1, to now employing a dozen community based youth as local field officers, we have had to take courageous steps to get this farm, and we are very proud of this journey.

However, as we enter our fifth year of operation, we are also reminded of the journey that social entrepreneurs tend to make from being the "David" to the "Goliath." What do I mean? Just like the overconfidence and the desire for control led to the eventual downfall of Goliath, social entrepreneurs can fall prey to the celebrity that often surrounds this work. Ever since social entrepreneurship became a term that was widely known, thanks to organizations like Ashoka, and Echoing Green, and a number of college-based accelerator/incubator programs, there is a rising tide of good intentioned people wanting to become social entrepreneurs, and often times, in the excitement of becoming an entrepreneur, one can fall prey to also wanting more control, and eventually being the Goliath of their own story.

As a result, our team started a process in 2022 to design a succession plan for the founders. We have led the organizations for the first five years of operation, and going forward, we will put our energy and passion to propel the organization towards greater impact. However, we also recognize the urgent need to seed power to the communities that is at the heart of this organization: coffee

farming communities. As a result, we are building out a playbook, operational documents, and knowledge transfer documents so that when the time is right (and we are committed to publishing a deadline by which this will happen), we have already prepared and trained a new generation of proximate leaders to lead Bean Voyage and its programs towards greater impact.

When we started the succession planning process, we felt very uncomfortable. The sudden loss of control can feel frustrating, and often the idea that we will not be operating the organization at some point in the future, can feel scary. What if all goes to waste, and the organization ceases to operate? Indeed these are real fears that we are still working with, and perhaps it is the same courage that led us to start Bean Voyage can help us usher it towards a new, more sustainable future.



THE RIGHT TIME: LESSONS FROM MY MISCARRIAGE

ARIANA SWANN

I got married in February of 2020, and a few weeks later when I rolled over, panting beside my husband, I knew we had conceived. I tapped my chest, and told the life that would soon start inside me, you were conceived today, with an uncanny certainty. About a year later, I made a collage from cardstock and acrylic paint. The cardstock was sourced from my own greeting card company, because I had printed 150 baby shower invitations for an order that was eventually canceled. I cut up the cards and positioned them over the canvas, slowly forming a self-portrait of me naked in a storm, with a fetus outside my body struck by lightning. When I finished the work, I observed it calmly, realizing I had moved a ball of pain outside my body into visibility, transmuted into a form that could be seen and understood by others.

Two years ago, I had a miscarriage. Miscarriages are common; the end of 10 to 15% of all known pregnancies. More often than not they are kept secret, hidden in an impossibly fragile corner of the personal and collective mind. I kept my experience between me and my closest family members for a long time, even as I knew that I searched frantically for the comfort of other women's words in my time of need. It has become undeniable to me that it is time to talk publicly about my miscarriage, even if I am met with vitriol or indifference.

The Supreme Court recently decided, "Dobbs v.

Jackson Women's Health Organization," overturning Roe v. Wade, and allowing individual states to restrict abortion access. I had access to medically necessary, affordable care for my miscarriage which may disappear in many states, including the state where I lived at the time – Georgia. There was no scandal: I was married, 27 years old, employed, and I needed the services of an abortion clinic. It is normal for a woman to need access to women's healthcare.

I needed healthcare long before I miscarried. My pregnancy was unplanned. I hadn't been taking birth control because I had just moved and didn't have a doctor, although I did ask two different healthcare providers with no luck. We tried condoms for a while, but grew less diligent over time. I crossed my fingers, hoping fertility awareness and the pull-out method would be enough. They weren't. In my darkest moments, when I first found out I was pregnant, I wished for a miscarriage. After I cried for a few days, I came around and eventually I made the prenatal appointments, I took the vitamins, and bought the books.

I drove to my first appointment and told my doctor I was having some spotting. It could be perfectly normal; we'd just have an ultrasound to be sure. An ultrasound tech named Gina joined me in the exam room and prepped me. I popped my

feet into stirrups and waited as my eyes roved around the office, alighting with interest, but not understanding, on the ultrasound image on the screen in front of me. I hoped hearing the baby's heartbeat would make me feel connected. I hoped I would fall in love.

"The doctor will come speak to you," Gina said suddenly.

"Can you tell if –"

"-The doctor will come speak to you," she cut me off.

The doctor came into the examination room. I don't remember most of what he said except, "but what we don't see..."

"The heartbeat," I said, looking at the ultrasound again.

"Yes."

I had four ultrasounds over the next month and a half that revealed my baby had stopped growing at about 7 weeks; it was now 13 weeks. I was diagnosed with a "missed miscarriage." These were the options: first was to continue to wait for the miscarriage to resolve on its own, but over a month had passed and I simply wouldn't wait anymore. The second option was to take medication to speed up the process of a natural miscarriage. I was prescribed Cytotek, an ulcer medication, in the hope that it would cause uterine contractions. There is better medication on the market for this purpose colloquially called the "abortion pill," but in Northwest Georgia, my OBGYN wasn't willing to prescribe it lest they be known as an abortion clinic. Perhaps predictably, nothing happened when I took the Cytotek.

The third option was a Dilatation and Curettage. This is a simple operation that does not involve cutting, but rather the emptying of the uterus by opening the cervix and using vacuum pressure. It is

the same procedure used to perform abortions. I had been carrying a dead baby for almost two months; I decided to get the D and C. I asked every single professional I spoke with for two days how much it would cost. Finally, I got the answer from a representative at the surgical center: \$14,000, not including the surgeon and anesthesiologist's fees. With insurance I would pay between \$500 and \$1000, plus fees.

I sat back. Fourteen thousand dollars. The price of a car. A decent car, not a beater. What if I hadn't had insurance? What then? I was incensed. I knew that the procedure I needed was offered by a local abortion clinic, so I made an appointment with them on the force of principle alone. I had worked in healthcare for years, and I was not willing to contribute to the problem of a bloated, overpriced system.

My husband drove me to the clinic. As we stepped out of the car, protestors called out words that my husband tried to physically shield me from. Even though they did not directly apply – I was not aborting a viable pregnancy – I felt the force of their hatred. The violence of the words reverberated in me. I wondered how anyone could ever believe it was right to spew hatred at a woman on the worst day of her life. It occurred to me that these protestors probably thought they were brave to harass me and the other women at the clinic.

It is interesting for me to meditate on, because I do agree that it is brave to stand up for one's convictions. I have this courage. I know because I have consistently refused to back down from hardship. I know that I can trust myself to be brave when the chips are down; this is the gift that suffering has given me. It took courage for me to tell my husband I was pregnant. It took courage for me to go to doctor's appointment after doctor's

appointment alone because of COVID restrictions. It took courage for me to look for affordable healthcare, instead of going into debt to remain “respectable.” It took courage for me to go to therapy afterwards and admit that I was depressed. Having this unique experience, I believe I am just in saying it was cowardly for the OBGYN clinic not to offer me the abortion pill to treat my miscarriage. It was cowardly for protestors to torment the women at the abortion clinic without bothering to hear their stories. They did not bother to ask me why I was there; they did not care to know that the healthcare system had failed me, and that they could have easily been in my same position.

I entered the clinic alone. I sat on a chair with a small piece of tape on the floor in front to mark that it was at least 6 feet apart from the closest woman. Eventually my name was called, and after I got another ultrasound, was blood-typed, prescribed birth control, and donned a gown and booties, a nurse led me into the operating area. There was a half-length table in the operating room. Too small, it seemed like, with imposing black stirrups at the foot of the bed.

“Put the blanket under your head,” said the nurse. “Lay down until your butt is almost sliding off the bed, and put your legs in the stirrups.”

I complied slowly. Above my head, in place of a few of the normal ceiling tiles, were transparent tiles with clouds. *That’s nice*, I thought.

“Okay, you should start going to sleep now. It’s very fast,” said the anesthetist.

I came back as though rising through water. They sat me up and my brain lagged behind, still in the ocean beyond time.

“Are you okay?” someone asked.

“Yes, it just hurts,” I said.

They placed a heating pad on my abdomen which I clutched desperately. The pain, though not severe, carried with it three months of incremental loss, fear, and bleeding. I fixated on another set of decorative ceiling tiles above my head, these ones were flowers. I had just painted flowers like those – azaleas.

After a time, an attendant helped me gather myself. I had to grab the pad underneath me and pull it up to keep blood from falling to the floor. I hobbled into the bathroom and peed mostly red blood. I put on a pad the clinic provided and wondered how much the hospital would have charged for a pad. Over the next few days, I spiked a high fever. I wondered if I had an infection or COVID, but neither was true. Physically, I was fine in a few weeks. Mentally, I think there are still some echoes of this series of events. My husband was also shattered by the loss, and suffered a long bout of depression following the miscarriage.

I came away from this experience changed, and with the firsthand knowledge that it **MUST** be easier for women who don’t want to get pregnant to access birth control. I was only prescribed birth control after I had already gotten pregnant, despite asking at multiple locations, and multiple providers for a simple pill. I learned from experience that abortion clinics are essential and save lives every day. Perhaps most unexpectedly of all, I also came away with an understanding of the pro-life argument. I am pro-choice. I always have been and always will be. If a woman does not want to face the risks of pregnancy, she must not be forced to by a domineering government; I stand by this conviction. What I wasn’t prepared for was the bond between me and my unborn child that was formed even before I recognized it. I will always wonder who that person might have been. I can’t imagine that many women escape this uncertainty

when they face the premature end of a pregnancy, whether they chose that end or not. If this is a pain that you are facing, dear sister, know that I have been there too, and you will survive. For me, it helped to see a therapist, and make artwork. Abortion is not good or bad, it just is. It is a procedure that should be legal, should be affordable, should be considered very carefully, and talked about compassionately.

Abortion and miscarriage are not things I think about every day, or even every week, but following my experience I do think about the cycle of life and death often. It is early summer where I live, and there are songbirds learning to fly all around me.

I have found four dead fledglings in the grass in my backyard. It was a sad thing to find small, broken beings that could have been beautiful lying dead on the ground. When I found them, I thought about the child I lost. I did not curse the skies; I did not curse the momma bird who did not stop the baby birds from falling; I did not curse some deity for the suffering in the world. I buried the birds, and I sat quietly with them for a moment. I felt the grass under my hands; I watched adult birds flit in and out of the trees above me. Finally, after a long time, I got up and went on with my day, imagining myself as one of the survivors, one of the birds that jumped from the nest to be borne aloft by the wind.

GOLDEN RULE PEACE BOAT: COURAGEOUS ATTEMPT TO HALT NUCLEAR TESTING IN 1958 INSPIRES CONTEMPORARY ACTIVISM

BARBARA LEIGH COONEY
AND HELEN JACCARD

Legacy!

Driven by a perceived need for military superiority and global dominance immediately after WWII, the US government took control of many Pacific island countries, including the Marshall Islands. From 1946 to 1958 the US dropped 67 nuclear bombs on the Marshalls, contaminating and displacing the indigenous population and throwing Strontium-90 and other radioactive isotopes high in the stratosphere. "Mankind was unconsulted, powerless in the face of these tests (Bigelow 1959, 23). Activists in the US and elsewhere were frustrated after years of writing, speaking, and protesting against nuclear weapons tests to no avail, so four Quakers fearlessly attempted to sail into the US nuclear test zone in the Marshall Islands in 1958. The idea was to risk their health and lives by getting in the way of the weapons tests, living and demonstrating Gandhian nonviolent truth to power.

The captain, Albert Bigelow, had gallantly quit his commission as a Navy Commander, one month prior to becoming eligible for his pension, to protest the nuclear bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. As captain of the *Golden Rule*, he was charged with leading a difficult ocean crossing in a small 30-foot vessel that was not designed for

ocean crossings. The boat had no modern communication, navigation, or satellite weather forecasting equipment. Indeed, the first time they sailed out of Los Angeles, 700 miles offshore a gale broke the mainsail's top boom and forced their return to California. In addition to limitations of the vessel, most challenging was aligning the crew with compassionate courage and a commitment to

"...an ever-conscious awareness of the meaning of nonviolence. It meant that we must be instruments of nonviolence, tenderly and sensitively tuned to the feelings of others. We would have to practice our principles, live our principles, be our principles. We'd have to follow the golden rule" (Bigelow 1959, 37).

On that first attempt, original crew David Gale remained seasick for so long, he barely survived. He was replaced by Orion Sherwood, and along with First Mate Bill Huntington, George Willoughby, and Captain Bigelow, set sail again with repairs completed, fortified with daring determination to accomplish their mission.

The *Golden Rule* arrived in Ala Wai Harbor in Honolulu to great fanfare. This well-publicized mission was being supported by hundreds of

people devoted to the cause. The stop in Honolulu was half way to their destination, so the crew re-supplied and headed back out towards the Marshall Islands. However, the Coast Guard brought them back and arrested Bigelow on felony conspiracy charges. An injunction had hastily been passed against US citizens entering the test zone. Undaunted, Bigelow embraced the high moral ground and refused to be released on his own recognizance, living his truth to power.

Bigelow was still in jail when Bill Huntington returned from a trip to the mainland. Within minutes of his arrival at the Golden Rule, he, Sherwood, Willoughby, and long-time activist Jim Peck made another attempt to fulfill their mission to the Marshalls, this time unannounced. Despite making it to international waters, the Coast Guard again forced them back to Honolulu. Although acknowledging a "daring and gallant try", Bigelow felt that departing spontaneously without notification to power was going against their Gandhian commitment to act "openly and in a spirit of love and nonviolence... to guard against the appeal, justification, and contamination of ends. The means are the ends" (1959, 199). Bill Huntington was immediately apprehended and pleaded guilty. George Willoughby bravely demanded to also be arrested, and his wish came true when he and Sherwood were also incarcerated. Bigelow and his crew spent nine weeks practicing the tenets of nonviolence while held in the dilapidated Honolulu Jail. Jim Peck protested weekly with community supporters at the Federal Building.

Another sailboat was docked at the Ala Wai Harbor while the crew was jailed. Earle Reynolds, an anthropologist who had been in Hiroshima since 1951 studying the effects of radiation on children, captained the Phoenix of Hiroshima. Reynolds, his family, and crew soon learned about the Golden

Rule and attended the trial of the crew. Inspired by the bravery and character of these men, the Reynolds' became Quakers and decided to take the baton and sail into the testing zone themselves, fulfilling the Golden Rule's mission. When they reached the perimeter of the forbidden zone, they announced their intention by radio. At 65 miles into the testing area, the Coast Guard arrested Earle Reynolds.

Was the Golden Rule mission a success? Did the courage of all participants—crew and supporters around the world—successfully face the power of US politicians and its military industrial complex, as well as those of the other two nuclear powers, Russia and England? Reynolds states that the Phoenix had become the Golden Rule and thus achieved its goal (Bigelow 1959, 258). Bigelow muses, "The government had its way, made up a law, and jailed us with it. The dismal tests went on to their dreary conclusion." But there was a shift, with the politicians in all three powers realizing the will of the people: no more "atrocious atomic antics" (259). Reflecting humbly, Bigelow states the Golden Rule and Phoenix did not change the course of history, but they brought awareness to the need for change. He opined that he and the crews were not especially courageous or heroic—others would have done the same. After all, we all are taught to stand up for our principles. He continues,

"It is very important to realize that the slight sacrifice we made or the full sacrifice we were willing to make was not an uncommon human experience. Indeed, it is the human experience: to stand for a principle is what it is to be a human... Men, women—yes, and children, too, are being courageous, valiant for truth, in every continent on earth... abused for principle, tortured for principle, and killed for principle" (1959, 262).

Bigelow clarifies that the idea is important; the people are not. The lesson learned is to "dare to be

true, to know what it is you are doing, tell the truth about it, and tell it in a plain and simple way. 'Right action is its own propaganda,' said Gandhi" (1959, 267)

Despite Bigelow's modesty, the voyage of the Golden Rule and the arrest of the crew sparked protests across the globe to 'Free the Crew of the Golden Rule' and 'Stop Nuclear Tests'. A growing world-wide anti-nuclear movement convinced President Kennedy to sign the Limited Test Ban Treaty of 1963, along with the UK and Russia. The strategy of boldly sailing a vessel for protest later inspired the founding of Greenpeace. The Golden Rule was sold into private hands in Honolulu, and the small spirited sailboat disappeared from public consciousness.

Restoration!

In 2010 the Golden Rule was re-discovered by peace activists in Northern California. The sad sailboat was in deplorable condition with no mast or engine, and after sinking in a gale, Leroy Zerlang dragged its skeleton into his boatyard for a bonfire. His friend Chuck Dewitt, a Veteran for Peace, got the local chapter involved when they researched the boat's history. Golden Rule had just escaped a watery grave, then a fiery grave! Zerlang became project director, and Dewitt was the Restoration Coordinator. For five long years, a few professionals and dozens of volunteers worked to bring the peace boat back to life. Veterans for Peace, Quakers, and wooden boat lovers dared to accomplish a nearly impossible feat: 95% of boat rebuild projects are never completed!

Restored Mission!

The resurrected Golden Rule 'splashed down' in June 2015 and since then has been sailing for peace and disarmament on the West Coast and in Hawai'i

as a project of Veterans for Peace. New crew learn the boat's storied history, perhaps read Bigelow's book, and get inspired to take bold actions for peace. Reaching beyond the choir in these days of extreme political division is not for the faint of heart!

Now Veterans for Peace is preparing for one of the most important actions of our time—to bring this inspiring little boat to central and eastern US and sail for peace in this time of war! Retired Colonel Ann Wright, board member of the Golden Rule Project, commented,

"Now, with the threat and awareness of nuclear war greater than ever, is the time to bring this boat—an icon of peace—to the rest of the country and give people hope by taking action. Let's show people what they can do to stop the possibility of nuclear war!" (2021)

Golden Rule will soon begin an epic 15-month 11,000 mile voyage throughout the eastern half of the US. In September 2022 the boat will arrive by truck to Minneapolis and sail down the Mississippi River, along the Gulf Coast and East Coast, around the Great Lakes, and down inland rivers (The Great Loop). The journey will end in the Gulf of Mexico in December 2023 and likely return to California via the Panama Canal.

Gerry Condon, President of the Golden Rule Steering Committee and former National President of Veterans for Peace commented,

"We will have events in 28 big cities and 68 smaller towns along the way. Dozens of people are volunteering, as organizers and crew. People are excited to host the Golden Rule peace boat and to spread her message of nuclear disarmament, peace, and sustainability" (2022).

The Golden Rule Project advocates for the UN Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons and

supports local initiatives to press the US government to join the 86 countries that have either signed or ratified the treaty. The Golden Rule Project supports a negotiated plan for multilateral, time-bound, verifiable, and irreversible elimination of nuclear weapons.

Great Loop Programs!

At each port-of-call, Golden Rule Ambassadors pair with local organizers to plan events and actions. There are plans for peace poles, city resolutions in favor of nuclear disarmament, petitions, articles, and letters to the editor.

There will be opportunities to schedule presentations, potlucks, gala dinners, music, dancing, poetry, day sails, and boat tours for any group that would like to participate.

Volunteer Opportunities!

"There's lots of excitement about this next phase of the storied history of the Golden Rule," Condon continued. "This is a positive-energy communal effort—just what we need at this time" (2022).

View the sailing schedule of the Golden Rule's epic voyage around the Great Loop and Volunteer as an organizer or crew on Golden Rule.

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COURAGE IN RECONCILIATION

BERYL ANAND

Peacebuilding through reconciliation is an approach to conflict resolution taken by the parties to a conflict after a settlement. Years of antagonism and hatred may lie buried in a conflict. In some situations, the case may be like a regime that had inflicted cruelties on its own population like Nazi Germany or South Africa in the twentieth century. In some others, like the settler colonies of Australia, United States of America, and Canada, indigenous populations were traumatised as they were forcefully assimilated into the ideas upheld by the settlers. In 1998, the Canadian Government formally apologized to its 1.3 million indigenous people for 150 years of what Indian groups have charged were paternalistic assistance programs and racist schools that devastated their communities as any war or disease. Along with the formal apology, the Government promised to establish a \$245 million "healing fund" for the thousands of Indians who were taken from their home. (New York Times, 1998). Other settler colonial states have tried similar approaches to resolve issues that concern indigenous populations.

Kevin Rudd, the Australian Prime Minister tendered a public apology in 2008 for the crimes committed against the aboriginals of the country. In 2021, Australia's Prime Minister Scott Morrison announced a reparations fund. Recognising the bond between healing, dignity and wellbeing, he offered to pay reparations to the "Stolen

Generations" because of Australia's forced policy of assimilation and took responsibility for the same. (Al Jazeera, 2021)

A debate is unfolding in the United States of America after the mobilisation of the Black Lives Matter movement and growing atrocities against the Black community. There have been calls made for the setting up of a Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) on the likes of South African TRC. The removal of confederate monuments sparked violence in the USA given its complicated history of racism and slavery. Schools began debating race and history in schools. Governors in the USA ordered Confederate monuments to be brought down, and corporations like Walmart announced that it would stop selling Confederate memorabilia. Debates on the confederate monuments intensified after nine black churchgoers were massacred in Charleston, South Carolina, in 2015.

As recently as 2019, Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, a Congress woman, referred to migrant detention camps at the U.S. border as concentration camps. A similar complicated relationship exists with the indigenous community in the USA given its history of settler colonialism. White America's inability to face up to its past, and to the crimes it has committed against African Americans and Native

Americans might be the reason for much of the backlash.

Past lies heavily on the present. In South Asia, India, Sri Lanka, and Myanmar have witnessed crimes against ethnic religious minorities on the rise. All the above-mentioned states were ruled by the British and have been fiercely anti-colonial. The non-violent nature of the majority religions make their followers claim to be peace loving and against violence of any form. Yet, India has seen an increase in hate crimes and hate speeches against the Muslim community. Communal violence has become a regular feature in Indian politics since the Bhagalpur riots in Uttar Pradesh. The Gujarat communal pogrom in 2002 is the worst example of a massacre of members of a community. The Sri Krishna Commission set up to investigate the killings gave a clean chit to the political leadership in the state. The Special Investigation Team set up by the Gujarat government has also given a clean chit to the political party that was in power during the violence in the state. After the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) rise to the national level with the election of Prime Minister, Narendra Modi there has been no respite from hate speeches and instigation of violence. Despite the widespread fact of state complicity, there continues to be a stubborn denial on the part of the middle classes and political leadership. (Mander, 2007). There is no attempt made by the leadership for a political reconciliation of the two warring communities. There exists fear that any move of that nature might alienate the Sangh Parivar and the ruling party might lose Hindu votes. Commendable efforts to bring the communities together have been attempted by private initiatives and religious groups throughout the state. One such example is the Karawan e Mohabat. However, there is denial though complicity is a well-known fact in the violence.

War crimes and crimes against humanity during Eelam War IV in Sri Lanka are well documented . International Crisis Group (2010) reported that torture and shelling, enforced disappearances had resulted in civilian casualties. The Lessons Learnt and Reconciliation Commission (LLRC) appointed by the Sri Lankan government after its victory in Eelam War IV was inadequate in seeking the redressal of the grievances of the victims. There is no acceptance of the fact that if international humanitarian law would have been upheld, casualties could have been avoided. After their widely claimed victory over terrorism, the Sri Lankan way of fighting terrorism attracted much attention in other countries as a model to emulate! However, no mention of the Tamil grievances or post conflict reconstruction became real in the State. There was no acceptance of the damage done to the Sri Lankan Tamils during this conflict. Most of the Reconciliation initiatives were taken by the international global community to rebuild lives after the War ended.

Myanmar is a classic case of the lack of courage shown by the leaders who fought for democracy in the country for decades. The military junta took power overthrowing the democratically elected government in the years after Burma's independence from Britain. In 2016, Aung Sang Suu Kyi's National League for Democracy (NLD) was elected to office amidst great hopes for a changed Myanmar. Violence broke out between the Arakan Rohingya Salvation Army (ARSA) and the Myanmar military during a counter-insurgency operation. In the clashes that ensued, the Myanmar Army burnt villages with a "genocidal intent" that led to millions of Rohingyas fleeing their homes and taking refuge in neighbouring Bangladesh. (Statement of UN's special rapporteur for human rights in Myanmar, Yanghee Lee). In her numerous interviews, Aung San Suu Kyi stuck to her position that fear and

anger exists on both sides, referring to the Rohingyas and Rakhine Buddhists. This led to calls for the Nobel Peace Prize to be withdrawn. The world was outraged at her statements about the Rakhine Buddhists whom she sought to defend brushing aside years of discrimination and denial of citizenship to the Rohingyas. (The Guardian, 2018)

National historians in these countries are content to stop at exposing the consequences of British rule as a reason for their current problems. Colonialism is a widely researched topic around universities in the world. Myanmar, India, and Sri Lanka are examples in South Asia which have seen internecine tensions among ethnic groups in the past decade which may have roots in colonialism. However, the commissions and committees appointed to investigate violent events indicate that no genuine reconciliation measures were attempted. What could be the reason? The leadership lacks courage to admit to mistakes and violence by the majority who have elected them to power. More than a decade after communal violence had wrecked Gujarat that killed three thousand people, no genuine reconciliatory measures have been taken up. Most of the leaders charged with inciting communal hatred are free and victims still languish in relief camps. (Amnesty, 2012).

The German example is a long, complicated path and a historic achievement. The first step in dealing with the past was acknowledgement, of society recognizing the truth of what happened. Courage is all about acceptance of error. Susan Neiman (2019) says "Reconciliation is a source of strength and not weakness. That really helps us to reckon with the past." In her book *Learning from the Germans*, she calls America's fixation on the Holocaust "a form of displacement for what we don't want to know about our own national crimes." She makes the point that during her field visit to Germany, she met

people who said, "We are ashamed and upset about our parents being Nazis". How did this happen? The most important was "civil engagement" by the German public, beginning in the nineteen-sixties. This led to the acceptance and resolve to correct historical injustices like complicity in the Nazi crimes. This process of uncovering the past and talking about it was started by German leaders starting with Willy Brandt. Societies struggling with reconciliation and not able to bring about any genuine healing among communities are those who make excuses for it and think of themselves as innocent victims. South Asian leaders might do well by learning from the Germans, the Canadians and the Australians.

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THE COURAGE TO DISOBEY

BETH ROY

James Scott, one of my favorite social science authors, arrived in an unfamiliar town in Germany late one night. Embedded in a small crowd of fellow passengers, he came to a street bordering the station and stopped to wait for the traffic light to change from red to green. The group of pedestrians silently waited. And waited. And waited. James looked to the right: no traffic in sight. He looked to the left: a totally barren road. As he waited, he asked himself a forbidden question: "Why are we waiting?" Taking courage in hand, he stepped off the curb and crossed the road. Looking back, he saw the small crowd of pedestrians, gaze averted, still stoically stationary.

To disobey a rule takes courage. To do so publicly, to leave the crowd distinguishing yourself as someone who defies an unspoken consensus, takes even more courage. Whether people follow you across the street or not, you have broken two layered rules: obey traffic signals, and don't think about any alternative to obeying traffic signals. Collective consent to a rule slides into collective consent to forget we have decided to obey that rule. To break the first rule is to induce consciousness of other rules onlookers have consented to obey and then forgotten they ever had a choice. That is revolutionary action. Stepping off that curb into the vacant street was more disruptive than immediately apparent.

As he walked on, James Scott coined a phrase that acknowledged the import of his behavior: "insurrectionary calisthenics". If we don't practice small acts of resistance to rules that are nonsensical, will we then be prepared to disobey unjust rules that cry out for disobedience? Civil disobedience is a method of collective protest. Unified with a crowd of fellow objectors, I am fully prepared to take the consequences. But individual disobedience is harder. Why are we so thoroughly socialized to concede our agency to rules and actions that we may abhor even while we consent to them? Mass acts of disobedience happen only occasionally. But opportunities for individual disobedience test our courage openly to declare our values daily.

I am an old white woman. Often in my long lifetime I've witnessed casual acts of disrespect by other white people toward people of color, by men toward women, by adults toward children, by humans toward other animals. Do I speak up? Will I draw animosity to myself? Will I embarrass the person who has transgressed? How do I do it without resorting to comparable hatefulness? Will the person harmed, thank or resent me for calling attention to a wrong done to them? All these fears reflect unspoken rules: be polite, don't stand out, never reveal your feelings so deeply that you are angered. Compounded, these value-laden rules

create a conflict averse culture. So we don't speak, and our silence not only fails to support someone who has been hurt but also deprives onlookers of awareness of harm done. No one learns anything, and the person harmed adds one more injury to a lifetime of them. Insurrectionary calisthenics, on the other hand, suggests that we need to take those small steps if we are ever to learn how to craft more humane relationships, steps along the way to building an equitable culture. Practice makes perfect.

The more we speak out, the more comfortable it becomes. Scott's calisthenics are truly about unlearning a collective silence that serves to buttress our unjust society. Training to obey starts early and continues with a vengeance. Have you heard yourself or someone else say to a child, "We don't do that." The child throws food off her highchair tray: "We eat our food; we don't play with it." That "we" is a powerful whip to enforce obedience. Most toddlers love to throw things from a height over and over again. Not only do they experience the power of altering physical reality, but they're little Newtons, joyfully retesting the reality of gravity. To intervene saves grown-up backs from the repeated act of retrieval. But the injunction to stop contains multiple lessons. Neatness matters more than critical thinking. Adults are entitled to enforce their wishes on smaller people. There is a moral lesson behind the "we" in the sentence; it singles the child out. It suggests that everyone else knows and obeys the rule, and now this new human must conform or be ruled out of the collective "we". Today's adults rarely explicitly call a child "bad", but we imply that moral judgment in manifold ways.

One might think the logical extension of my advocacy of disobedience is anarchy; I don't mean to wander into a discussion of the pros and cons. Be

assured that what I advocate is not willy-nilly defiance of every rule. When we look at the persistent causes of ills like racism, we roam back and forth between the interpersonal and the systemic. If every white person unlearned racism, our society would still suffer severe inequities in well-being among communities of different races. Intentional acts of discrimination ride the surface of inequities of income, housing, education, healthcare – and just about every other resource of society one can name. However determined we who enjoy the privileges of an unequal system might be to avoid participation in unjust systems, we cannot. Where we live, how we eat, where we get our food, how we care for our bodies: every banal act of daily living involves us in systems we may hate but cannot escape.

To cross the road when the light is red does not transform the world. But Scott's tongue-in-cheek concept of insurrectionary calisthenics implies a certain hopefulness. He does not claim that his departure from the curbside crowd in Germany was itself a revolutionary act. What he argues is that such small acts of defiance prepare us for the big ones, the ones that really will count toward changing the world. He suggests that we nurture our world-changing capabilities in small ways in order to be ready when the big ones present themselves, which implies that there will be a big one. George Floyd's murder was one such moment. Repeated mass killings headline the newspaper as I write. When will these big moments build to an intensity that truly challenges injustice at its core?

We live in a society built on the unequal distribution of resources. Material things matter more than humanity. When money rules, the rules protect those who possess money. Society is also built on the consent of those who don't. For the most part, the American state does not use raw violence to

enforce laws – the exceptions being the killing of Black people by armed police and capital punishment. How distorted has that system of consent become when citizens themselves feel the need to carry weapons for protection or for the assertion of rights? To be armed in the time the Second Amendment was written was to encourage civilian militias to defend the autonomy of the new republic. What a different meaning it has in today's world.

On a recent trip through the hinterland, we needed courage to walk into a grocery store, side by side with men carrying handguns in hip-riding holsters. No police were present to “serve and protect”. Soon afterward, pointedly racial mass murder happened in a grocery store in Buffalo. All values in a stratified society are conditional. The amount of courage I needed to walk into a store beside customers’ showing arms is of lesser intensity than the courage it takes for a Black woman of my age to walk into a grocery store today in Buffalo. There are no absolute values when life-stakes are so varied. Scott’s injunction to practice insurrectionary calisthenics must be tailored to the risks incurred by people of different races, ages, genders, classes, abilities. Nonetheless, although moments of actual insurrection may be scarce, moments when opportunities present to interrupt hegemonic consent to unjust social arrangements occur often. Consider your risks and build your insurrectionary muscles when you can.

One last comment on the paradox of writing about the courage to disrupt in a journal about peace. No justice, no peace has become a familiar slogan. Translated into day-to-day choices and actions, however, it becomes a mantra to live by. Be judicious about when you step off that curb, but be prepared.

IT TAKES COURAGE TO ANSWER A CALL!

FR. CEDRIC PRAKASH

On 2 June 2022, the Martin Ennals Awards 2022 were given in Geneva Switzerland to four courageous persons from different parts of the world. They were Dr. Daouda Diallo from Burkina Faso, a fearless activist who documents human rights abuses committed in the cross- fires of Burkina Faso's violent conflict; Ms. Pham Doan Trang from Vietnam, a leading journalist and champion of freedom of expression who inspires others to speak up; and Mr. Abdul-Hadi Al-Khawaja from Bahrain, a champion of human rights and justice who has galvanized a new generation of activists in the Gulf region. The Martin Ennals foundation, this year, in an unprecedented move also honoured Jesuit Father Stan Swamy from India, who died whilst still in police custody on 5 July 2021. Stan was posthumously honoured during the ceremony, for his exceptional work in accompanying the indigenous people (Adivasis) of India in the struggles in the defense of their legitimate rights.

Every year the 'Martin Ennals Award', celebrates exceptional human rights defenders who are leading architects of the human rights movement. The award, like the Nobel Prize, is never given posthumously. The award which is often referred to as the 'Nobel prize' for human rights is named after Martin Ennals who was a British human rights activist and served as the Secretary General of 'Amnesty International' from 1968 to 1980. Ennals also co-founded the human rights organizations ARTICLE 19, International Alert and HURIDOCs.

All four: Daouda, Pham, Abdul-Hadi and Stan are(were) persons of unflinching courage: sheer grit and great determination. They do not (did not) hesitate in raising their voices for justice and truth. They do so (did so) at great risk and have gone through much suffering. Two of them Abdul-Hadi and Pham are still languishing in jails today.

There are several other amazing persons, who epitomise courage today! They do so in the face of seemingly insurmountable challenges; they possess an indomitable spirit which motivates them to enter domains which even the bravest dared not go! They did so and triumphed! These include Rose Mapendo, a Congolese human rights advocate, an example of courage and grace, who rose above the gruesomeness of war and violence and suffered greatly because of her ethnicity. In 2010, a powerful film 'Pushing the Elephants', was made on her life as mother, widow, victim, refugee – she now reaches out to help others. Then there is Ahed Tamimi, a 21-year-old Palestinian, is a living icon today for the cause of her people; some years ago, she was also jailed by the Israeli authorities for her unequivocal stand. Irena Sendlerowa, was a remarkable Polish woman and is regarded as a hero of World War II. She defied the Nazi regime and saved over 2,500 Jewish children by smuggling them out of the Warsaw Ghetto, between 1942 and 1943 to safe hiding places. She provided them with false identity documents, found non-Jewish families to adopt them and saved them from the holocaust.

Rigoberta Menchu, is a Guatemalan human rights activist, who began campaigning for human rights as a teenager. She has since dedicated her life to fighting for the rights of indigenous people and for justice for all the victims (mainly indigenous women) of the brutal Guatemalan civil war. In 1980, Menchu was forced to flee Mexico because of her activism; in 1992, she won the Nobel Peace Prize for her work to protect social justice and respect for the rights of indigenous people. Another Nobel laureate, Malala Yousafzai, from Pakistan is today legendary for demanding that the girl child must be educated; she says, "our books and our pens are our most powerful weapons". Who has not heard of Greta Thunberg of her courageous commitment to the environment and her 'Fridays for Future' movement, which addresses the endemic causes of climate change? The list is endless!

These are the more known names: persons of tremendous courage, who are deservedly recognised and honoured. Our world definitely needs such stalwarts, who because of their courage are a source of inspiration and motivation to many others to do much more at different levels.

There is also the incontrovertible fact that there are millions of other women and men everywhere, unknown, faceless, who will never be recognised or honoured, who personify courage today. They are ordinary people, many even uneducated perhaps living in villages or shanties. These are people who have no second thoughts in plunging into a street brawl and stopping it; jumping into raging waters to save a drowning child; refusing to pay a bribe to a corrupt official, knowing fully well that the consequences for not doing so would be disastrous; standing up to powerful vested interests (even politicians!) who exploit people, situations and resources. These are extraordinary women and men who are unsung- but they do make a difference. They become the change; they want to see it take place in their society! The world does have many

such courageous persons! They need to be recognised and their acts of exemplary and selfless courage need to be told and retold!

'Courage' therefore, is a value which cannot be confined to a text book definition. It has several interrelated yet complementing dimensions; these includes an awareness of the reality, the readiness to do bring about change; the willingness to engage in risk -taking behaviour regardless of whether the consequences are unknown or possibly adverse and above all, the determination if needed, to take on the most powerful: institutions or persons; to walk alone and pay the ultimate price if needed! Mahatma Gandhi gave the world the twin doctrine of ahimsa(nonviolence) and satyagraha (the force of truth). He was convinced that one needed the moral courage to internalise and actualise these. "*Courage*", Gandhi said, "*is the strength to stand alone!*"

It is not easy though! Our world today is rife with war and conflict, xenophobia and jingoism, exclusion and exploitation, divisiveness and discrimination. We need many more women and men, who will internalize and put into practice this popular song that was part of my childhood:

*It takes courage to answer a call.
It takes courage to give to all.
It takes courage to risk your name.
It takes courage to be true.
It takes courage to dare- what no other will share.
To be standing alone with whom no one will.
To be ready to stake for another man's sake.
It takes courage to be true.
It takes courage to say what no other will pay.
To give each man his share.
Though there will be less to spare.
To be seeking no more than the neighbour next door.
It takes courage to be true.*

Our world today desperately needs more people, who have the courage to listen and say "yes" to that call!

INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION: A PRACTICE IN COURAGE AND ADULTHOOD

CHRISTELLE BARAKAT

"God, grant me the grace to accept with serenity the things I cannot change, Courage to change the things I can, and wisdom to know the difference." – Reinhold Niebuhr

When I think of courage, the quote above directly comes to mind. It gives me a sense of peace whilst being imbued with a spirit of activism because change requires action and courage.

Overall, courage can take on different meanings based on individual perceptions and realities. For a toddler, courage might be taking the first physical steps or uttering the first words. For a teenager, courage could be speaking in front of an audience or choosing a major that does not meet parental and societal expectations. For a refugee, it is leaving one's country in search of a better future and quality of life, knowing that the journey will be tough but that it will make the coming decades easier for one's family; courage, then, becomes a selfless act of love.

As human beings, we share some similar experiences to being courageous and then there are other experiences in which we diverge in our

understanding of courage. Allow me to explain. We all go through toddler and teenager moments; however, not all of us might be put in situations like those of refugees or individuals living in war-torn countries. Nonetheless, that does not mean that our experiences are less meaningful.

During the last two years of my life, I have had the privilege of being in the United States to pursue my master's program up until I recently graduated and went back to my home country, Lebanon. I say privilege because this experience has opened my eyes to the privileges in my life including the ability of seeking international education and intercultural learning. This was simultaneously one of the most courageous things I have done so far in my life. I have gone back and forth with the idea of writing about it because I have always felt that it cannot possibly be compared with other individuals' life stories and the atrocities that they have had to face. Truth be told, I was right about one thing: it cannot and should not be compared with other individuals' life stories and the atrocities that they have had to face. Indeed, it is my reality and whilst it might not resonate with many, it will resonate with some. In a way, I am writing the reassuring

words I would have liked to read and the reflection that would have given me courage even prior to being in the United States.

I went to school for my undergraduate degree back home in Lebanon. In my home country, it is common practice for adults to keep living with their parents until they meet a significant other, get married, and move out. Some individuals even get married and continue living within the same house as their parents (different rooms, different stories in the same building, and many other configurations). In my country, the age of adulthood is mostly subjective, but many would agree that adulthood is reached once one hits the age of 18, as they are graduating from high school and transitioning to college. I used to think the same way; however, whilst my responsibilities increased in terms of studying and working during my undergraduate years, I never fully felt that I “adulted” or became an adult. Going into my third year of college, I was a finalist for a Fulbright scholarship that would allow me to pursue a M.A. in Peace and Conflict Studies in the United States. Mind you, this would not be my first visit to the United States; however, it would be my longest duration of consecutive stay, on my own. Before that, I had visited on week-long conferences and as part of a SUSI program on Religious Pluralism and Democracy which lasted for 5 weeks. Nonetheless, during all those visits including the SUSI program, I was somewhat taken care of in the sense that other individuals had planned out a schedule and were ready to assist on site with anything and everything needed. Through Fulbright (yes, I ended up getting the scholarship!), I had a support net, but it was an email away and out-of-state which gave me more room to grow, discover things for myself, and pushed me to rely on myself to find solutions to many challenges.

Fast-forwarding a few months into my master’s degree as I was sitting in the living room of my apartment waiting on the washer to beep signaling that the laundry was done and the water on the stovetop to boil. I sat thinking about life, as one does in such moments, and it was then that it dawned on me: somewhere in between renting out an apartment, paying the bills, studying, working, doing the laundry, and cooking (among other tasks), I finally felt like an adult. In that moment, I realized that adulthood was not an age to be reached, but rather a feeling and a series of moments, tasks, and actions that propel us into life. In many ways, I was (and am) the same on the inside, but different; a good different.

You see, courage, for me, was taking a leap of faith by going to a country where I did not have any family members (in the strict sense of the word) and to a state (North Carolina) where I knew no one at the very beginning. Initially, when I got the call about my scholarship, part of me was elated and the other part was downright panicking because I kept thinking to myself that I knew no one in North Carolina. As luck would have it, my journey in the United States would begin a few days after the Beirut explosion and would coincide with a global pandemic. Furthermore, I had always thought I would opt to live on campus, but ended up choosing to live off campus, close to it. It would also take my mom about 1.5 years before being able to secure a visa to visit, but she made it. It was her first ever flight and it took her 30 hours to arrive. She saw me graduate. She, too, showed tremendous courage and adaptability as well as open-mindedness in terms of allowing herself to explore the United States and its culture which was different in many ways.

A friend once told me many years ago: “courage is not the absence of fear, but rather the knowledge t

hat there is something greater than fear" [waiting for you on the other side]. This is a variation on prior quotes by Franklin D. Roosevelt and Nelson Mandela. Somewhere, deep down, when I got that call for my Fulbright program from the US Embassy in Beirut, I felt that something great awaited in North Carolina - if I dared take a chance on it. I am happy to report back that my hunch was right on the money.

Going back to the beginning, change is not easy; it requires action, courage, and open-mindedness. Nonetheless, if we open ourselves to change, we can potentially gain so much more than what we originally put in. If you are still reading this, I hope it inspires you to either reach out to a friend studying abroad or to an international student nearby, or to even begin your own journey into international education!

THE EMOTIONAL LIFE OF CONFLICT ACTORS: THE PSYCHOLOGY OF COMPASSION IN PEACEBUILDING

DANIEL ROTHBART

Courageous compassion among conflict actors? This seems like an incongruous juxtaposition of moral emotions (1). Courage tends to be clustered with fearlessness, bravery, and feelings of strength, all of which are typical for a warrior's character traits. By contrast, compassion tends to be clustered with experiences of empathy, caring and sympathy for the suffering of others, exhibited routinely in the practices of health care professionals. Yet, this juxtaposition of seemingly incongruous emotions is experienced by many peace activists in response to mass violence. The courage in confronting the protagonists of such violence is motivated in part by compassion for the suffering of those targeted by militants. Consider the courageous compassion of the Madres de Plaza de Mayo in Argentina in the 1970s or that of the activists inspired by the brave leadership of Leymah Gbowee in Liberia in the late 1990s and early 2000s. In 2019, the peaceful protesters seeking justice in Sudan courageously confronted the military forces of the central government of Sudan. Such protests led to the downfall of Sudan's President, Omar al-Bashir.

One category of activists who exhibit this combination of courage and compassion are those brave souls who seek to save potential victims of mass atrocity. These activists are rescuers who risk

their lives by offering sanctuary, a degree of security and comfort to those who are targeted by murderers. For example, when confronted with the genocidal violence perpetrated by Hutu militants in Rwanda in 1994, an unknown number of Hutu civilians opened their homes, offered food, or directed Tutsis to relatively safe locations to avoid the murderous attacks by Interahamwe. In some cases, the rescuers physically assaulted the Hutu militants as they approached homes where Tutsis were hiding. An unknown number of rescuers were killed in the process. According to studies of these rescuers, their fear of being killed by the militants was overridden by their moral concern for the suffering of Tutsis. According to one rescuer, "The charity I got from my parents gave me the heart of growing up and loving others and wanting to take care of others who are in need" (Rothbart and Cooley 2016).

The cases of courageous compassion cited above represent a retrospective reflection of the past. Could we treat these cases as exemplars for future practices designed to replace negative emotions that conflict actors feel about their adversaries with positive sentiments as a basis for long-term transformation of relations? Specially, could conflict actors be induced, convinced, or prompted to convert their rage to courageous compassion as a

basis for reconciling with those living in the enemy camp? To be sure, such a conversion may seem utopian, especially for those conflict actors whose enmity towards their enemy is grounded in the ethos of their conflict-ridden society. However, the aspiration for such a transition in the affect of conflict actors does have empirical support from the psychological sciences. Recent empirical findings show that, under certain conditions, almost any individual can undergo a change in their emotional responses to life's events.

In the pages below, I summarize the psychologists' discoveries that are relevant directly to possible practices for such transformation. This invocation to the psychological sciences is essential to avoid utopian modes of practice. Three themes from psychology are critical for transforming the emotional life of conflict actors. First, like all social emotion, compassion is inseparable from cognitive understanding of events, encounters and experiences. Compassion is a cognitive-moral-emotional response to the suffering of others and the hope for their relief of such suffering. Such a response rests on the moral judgment that their suffering is undeserved, as if representing an injustice. While compassion shows affinities to empathy, there is a difference. Empathy includes a feeling of vicariously sharing in the experiences of others such as their suffering. Compassion does not require such a vicariously participation in the suffering of others. Nevertheless, both emotions center on a moral concern for the well-being of another person or group.

Second, the public display of an emotion (either positive or negative) tends to be contagious, in that, witnesses to emotional charged behavior can 'catch' the same emotion of others. Intense joy, happiness, glee, and compassion can prompt observers to mimic behavior that they observe in

others, such as facile expressions, speech patterns or tone of voice. With such mimicry, some observers can experience the same emotion that they observe in others (Hatfield et al., 1994; Cacioppo's, Tassinari and Fridlunch, 1990). Importantly, such emotional mimicry is central to the development of ingroup identity and outgroup difference. According to intergroup emotions theory, emotions are inseparable from an individual's sense of commonality to their identity group, as well as their tendency to behave as their compatriots do (Brewer 2001; Wohl and Halperin 2019). An individual's attachment to an affiliated identity group—nationalistic, religious, racial or ethnic—is charged with emotions.

Such mimicry can impact the formation and strategy of social movements. For example, under the leadership of Black Lives Matters, the emotionally charged peaceful protests erupted over the killing of George Floyd in May, 2020 were clearly motivated by compassion. By November, 2021, these protests extended to 140 cities across the United States (Taylor, 2021). The intensity of the protesters' outrage revealed their deep moral sense of caring for the suffering of African Americans, past, present and future. The emotional plane of their demands for justice centers on the sympathetic understanding of suffering and the hope for their well-being.

Third, compassion is a learned skill that can be enhanced with practice (Ozawa-de Silva, Didson-Lavell, Raison and Negi, 2012). For example, cognitively based compassion-training has been shown to promote a higher rate of compassion responses among those who engaged in such training compassion to those who were not trained (Fredrickson, Cohn, Coffey, Pek, and Finkel 2008). This capacity for enhancing one's compassion-response to observed suffering has been confirmed

through neurological studies (Klimecki 2015). When individuals experience compassion, certain portions of the brain, called anterior insula and anterior middle cingulate cortex, are activated. In one study, research subjects who were given compassion-enhancing exercises exhibited activation of these portions of the brain associated with compassion (Lutz, et al., 2008). Yet, one's capacity to feel compassion is not fixed. In fact, the tendency for these neuro-structures to be activated by certain experiences is subject to change with certain enhanced practices, such as meditation (DeSteno, 2015, p. 82). Such enhancement illustrates a characteristics called neuro-plasticity, which indicates the brain's capacity to change as a result of new experiences, understandings or practices (Klimecki 2015).

In summary, underpinning the possible transformation of intergroup emotions among conflict actors is the discovery that almost everyone has the potential to show compassion to some people under certain conditions. Compassion (1) rests on the moral cognition about someone's suffering and about the hope that such suffering will be diminished, (2) can spread from one individual to others through a mechanism of emotional contagion, and (3) can be enhanced through certain modes of practice. All of which offers insight into the possibility of prompting, activating or inducing courageous compassion among conflict actors in the context of protracted mass violence. Central to such a possibility is the fluidity of emotions, that is, the capacity for individuals to change the kinds and intensity of their emotional responses to life's events.

Endnotes

- In general, emotions tend to be clustered, in that they tend to be experiences in conjunction with other emotions almost simultaneously in reaction to certain events (Haidt, 2003, p. 855).

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SIMON'S STORY "AS TOLD TO" EDNA

EDNA KILUSU
AND SIMON EMMANUEL

I was in 6th grade when my mom, Namnyak, got sick. We did not have enough money for her treatment. She was referred to Mount Meru Hospital in Arusha where she got admitted. My stepsister, Bigrose, and I were on the way to see her. On our way, we ran into one of our neighbors, and he told us that my mom was feeling better, and she was on her way back home. He lied. When we got home, we found people crying. I knew it. I knew she died. I was confused. I felt like I was paralyzed or going crazy. I did not believe it until the funeral day. I was just there, but I can't remember anything. After the funeral, I was afraid to sleep in our house. When I closed my eyes, I would see her laughing. She always joked with me. I used to joke with her that one day I could change her life.

"You can do better next time," she used to tell me. She couldn't read or write, but she would check my exams. When she saw a lot of cross marks, instead of being mad at me, she encouraged me. My dad left my mom and my stepmom and married another woman in town when I was in primary school. My mom would wake up at 5 a.m in the morning and go to town to work at a building construction site carrying bricks on her head. It was the only job she could find that paid cash on the spot.

She would welcome us with a smile when we got home from school. She did not want us to see that she was tired and struggling, but I could tell. She was only able to earn enough to buy one kilogram of cornflower, which wasn't enough for me and my six siblings. When our neighbors came to our *boma*, they would make comments like, "look at these kids, you can count their ribs." Yes, it was true you could count our ribs. We ate *ugali* every day, once a day, in the evenings. We were malnourished. People disrespected us especially because our father left us. It was painful for me. I wanted to make a difference and I promised my mom one day that I would make her proud.

I saw her as someone different. I saw her as a visionary leader. She was strong, kind, and resilient. Because of my mom, I know how to treat people. Once when she was sick, she asked me to milk the goats. Instead, I let all the baby goats be breastfed. How can a man milk goats? We did not have any other means of getting milk that day, but she did not show me that she was mad at me. Because of my mom, I know that gender roles do not really matter. Then, I was afraid that other boys would shame me for milking goats. What kind of man is this milking goats? Are you a woman? I felt bad for doing that to my mom. I now milk goats or cows without even being asked.

I was raised in a loving family. When my stepmom got a job at Orkeeswa School, our lives got better. She worked closely together with my mom to raise me, my siblings, and my half-siblings. At the end of the month when she got paid, she bought groceries, like cooking oil and cornflower, and divided them in half for her family and my mom. My mom started staying at home to take care of the livestock and prepare food for both families. When we got home from school, there was food ready for us.

When she passed away, my stepmother had to take care of all the responsibilities at home. When she went to work, there was no one at home to do chores and take care of the livestock. In the evening when she came back from work exhausted, she had to do everything and prepare us dinner. She started doing the chores at night before she went to bed. She rarely slept. Just like my mom, my stepmother is strong and resilient. From her, I learned how hard work pays. She coped with our life situation, and she was able to rear all 12 of us. I got inspired even more.

I had one vision; to learn the English language. I speak Maasai and Swahili, but I thought English was an international language. I could share my story with the rest of the world, and it would change things for us. One time, I was playing with students from the Groton school in the US. They came to our *boma* with Bigrose who was a student at Orkeeswa. I wished I could converse with them. I wanted to learn about their backgrounds and tell them about mine. We were in the forest, and it was getting dark. I didn't know how to tell them it was time to go home, so I would touch one on the shoulder and run, hoping they could all follow me, but they didn't. I came back and poked another one, and ran towards home, but only that one chased me. "I am

to sleep," I said. My sister then came and told them in English it was time to go home.

They made me want to learn English even more. And I knew I could do that at Orkeeswa, but when I finished 6th grade I was not selected to join. Bigrose was a student at the school and only one family member could attend at a time. Instead, I took a gap year and grazed. I was asked to join the following year. I don't know why.

At Orkeeswa, I found my fellow students had more proficiency in the English language. I didn't understand much. I would make mistakes in my sentences and others would laugh at me, but I did not mind. Instead, I remembered my mother telling me that the more mistakes I make, the more I learn. At school, when asked who would like to give a morning speech at the all-school assembly, I always raised my hand first. My English improved. I became a good student. I was learning so much.

After I graduated from Orkeeswa, I attended a Pan-Africa Leadership Program remotely for three weeks. It was supposed to be in Washington D.C., but because of the pandemic, we had to do it online from our home countries. I learned about ways to solve community challenges, and how to create a good team to work with. I knew what project I wanted to do. I started thinking about it in 11th grade.

With help from a community member that I shared my goal with, we launched the Nadumu Maasai Women Organization. Its goal is to empower women, so they won't have to go through what my family did. In our organization, we put together a group of women from my home village, Orkeeswa. With a grant I got from the US Embassy, we bought agricultural tools, such as shovels, hoes, water cans,

and trees then started working on vegetable gardens. Last week, we planted a thousand trees around the *bomas*.

In ten years, I would like to have covered seven villages with projects and workshops. I envision equality and women running their own businesses to support their families. I would like to see more girls in schools, empowered and well-educated on women's health.

So far, there has been progress. Now when the elders see me in the village, they respect me. When

I meet a group of elders, they even keep quiet and listen to me. Instead of neighbors laughing at me and my family for being malnourished, they now come to me to ask for advice. Once, an elder came to me asking what he should do because one of his sons does not want to go to school. I talked to his son. Even though my mom is not here to witness it, it is because of her that I am going to do whatever I can to change the lives of other women in my community.



COURAGE IS: HUMILITY - PERCEPTION - A CHOICE

ENRICO MANALO

For many years, I considered myself a coward.

When my good friend from high-school, L., was raped, I should have done something to the rapists (who have never been caught) and done more for L. and her boyfriend H. (whom I had to call that night because L. hadn't), rather than picking up and leaving to live my own life. When that new teacher, A., was run over by a passenger van when I worked in Vietnam, I should have made the decision to transfer him faster; I should have pointed out to my colleagues how fucked up it was that our employer put me in a position where I had to pay for A.'s medical treatment out of pocket, or else A. would have been taken off life support and left to die. I should have pointed that out no later than when our employer asked A.'s family to pay me back in cash at A.'s funeral in front of everyone. Later on in Vietnam, when my business partner Robert died, I should have advocated for the school that we intended on opening, should have fought for the funding that would have created a tangible legacy in his name for helping those many Vietnamese refugees during the American war. When I became aware of how the broader push for racial and social justice in society and in the professional waters in which I swim were destabilizing democracy, I should have joined efforts to stop that destabilization rather than joining another DEI startup and starting another DEI-focused podcast. I didn't.

For all of these things, I labeled myself a coward. It became my identity.

Identity is a fascinating thing. As a conflict resolution and racial equity practitioner, identity is central to a lot of the work I do, figuring into theories and frameworks for understanding human behavior and its dynamics. One of the most easily forgotten aspects of identity is that it is not only ourselves who construct identity, but it is something that we construct internally and is also externally formed at the same time. That is, we see ourselves one way, but family, friends, the public, and any other individuals or groups we encounter experience us in other ways, often as different people. Frequently, these views overlap. But not always.

Part of identity is therefore perspective. If we accept the identity of "brave" or "courageous", we also accept to one degree or another, the value judgments of others. It's common enough to see on the news one human calling another a "hero" and that person so-named, will often demure, brushing aside that attribution with something humble or uncomfortable, like "I was just doing my job" or "anyone else would have done the same in my position". But the truth is, someone else wasn't in that position, so they couldn't have done the same, even if privately, they feel that they should if in fact they do find themselves in a similar situation.

While I have often considered myself a coward, others have not, much to my surprise. My good friend from high-school, L. wrote me a letter in the days and weeks following her rape. On the envelope was my name followed by “my hero”. It took me a long time to open that letter. Even today, almost twenty years later, when I read it I feel so many things. I feel the burning shame of my cowardice; my heart still aches for L., for H., for L.’s mother, her brother, our friends. I wonder, if in those many years in between then and now, L. has resented me for not keeping in touch, if my being there for her would somehow have helped make things better. I don’t know. I can’t. That’s not what happened and even if I were to ask, it would all be supposition anyway.

What still strikes me is that every word L. wrote resonates still. It’s clear that when she wrote it, I was her hero. And on some level, I have to accept that even if it didn’t feel that way at that time, or on any of the days since. To deny her identification of me in that way would in some sense, be another example of a man exerting his will over a woman’s—not “rape” per se, but the kind of thing that rape is an embodiment of. It is an imposition. It is violence in the way that Galtung describes; it limits true human potential. Such a denial dehumanizes and in that process, it’s not only L. that would be (again) dehumanized, but me too.

That new teacher I met while working in Vietnam, A., well, no one called me a hero for that one and I don’t fault them. But what people did say is that I didn’t have to stick it out the way I did. I disagree. I ended up in that situation because a bartender at the spot I was slated to meet my best friend at, told me that I needed to go to the hospital because he’d been hit by a car, realizing only after I’d accepted responsibility for medical treatment that the new teacher and my best friend shared the

same first name, and that I’d only known the new teacher only by his nickname. Friends and colleagues told me that they wouldn’t have been able to make the decision I had to at all; that at least I’d tried. I still have to sit with that sometimes. I’ve wracked my brain over and over again and yeah, if by some stroke of divine intervention, the stars had aligned and I’d done everything perfectly, there would still have been no guarantee of A.’s survival.

In that light, as a flawed human, I have to look at that imperfection in the face and accept it as my own, as the face that I present to the world. My other choices were to be perfect (which I am not) or to do nothing, which would have haunted me forever. In embracing that identity, as “imperfect”, as “human”, I do not become stronger, but I do recognize my own resilience. As over-hyped as it is, resilience is deeply important to achieving peace and to advancing racial equity, but it is not courage. Courage is a choice, on one side of the coin. On the other side of the coin, the choice is too horrible not to make and so one makes it, often feeling coerced by one’s own morality and hopes for the best. To me, this is where I’ve most often found myself. What does take courage is making the choice to continue to try to understand and to do what is best, what is right, what is good. And failing, over, and over, and over again, knowing full-well that the chances of success for anything may be slim. Maybe even none.

There is also a certain measure of courage in self-preservation. Yes, culturally, we do consider it to be heroic to die for others, but the most difficult part of any disaster is the aftermath, not the event. When Robert died, I realized that I was burnt out; both from dashed dreams and from unrelenting culture shock that never fully faded into the

background. I realized that I needed to go home, or else risk losing myself to a world that wasn't mine. I uprooted my life and embarked on a career change that took seven years and all of my meager savings to accomplish. To let who I saw myself as emerge and live, I had to let a version of myself dictated by others, die. And that was a painful thing. It still hurts sometimes and man, I do miss Robert. But it had to be done.

One thing I've learned as a conflict resolution and racial equity practitioner is that if I'm not doing well (physically, mentally, emotionally, spiritually, etc.), I'm in no position to help and support others to do better and in fact, can make things worse. This is why rather than joining efforts to combat the harms to democracy that the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion field has wrought, or joining direct efforts to stabilize democracy, I've joined DiVerity PBC as their Community Engagement Lead in an attempt to create space for conversations around that idea within the DEI professional community. By addressing the inequities that DEI consultants face, DiVerity has the potential to serve as a community where DEI professionals can develop ways of advancing racial equity that do not destabilize democracy. As professionals, we have the capacity to be outwardly brave, to perform courageously even, but how much harder is it for those whose social and professional status stems from helping and supporting others for financial gain, to help and to support other professionals like themselves so that we can collectively show up to model for organizations, our communities, and our societies how we can lean into difficult conversations, hard choices, and brutal realities especially when it doesn't guarantee greater profits or a solid, predictable return on investment?

In addition to being a choice, courage is a practice. It is also a skill. Unfortunately, it is not the kind of

practice or skill that follows a predictable schedule for most of us. It is the kind of thing we need when we are backed into corners—and so much of human civilization is dedicated to ensuring that the majority of us never find ourselves in such situations to begin with. To knowingly be vulnerable to uncertainty, to knowingly walk without a safety net, has meaning. It is humility. But, if we don't have the courage to be humble, it can be hard to choose to be courageous, or to enter the practice of being courageous. The practice of intentionally not doing nothing, even when success is a far-off horizon, is courage. It is this prolonged effort that allows us to develop courage as a skill, but not until then.

By not idealizing courage, by not making courage and bravery the purview of heroes, we can help others to see the everyday courage that is happening all around us; the mother that forgoes meals to feed her children, the passerby who checks to see if the passed-out person sleeping on a park bench is still breathing, the person who picks up the phone in the small hours of the morning when the person on the other end of the line couldn't possibly have good news. We can understand that those who display courage are often those who need our help, whose hands would welcome others to make light work of impossible burdens.

The dividends of courage are not always great; sometimes, there is no financial reward. Sometimes, there is just a note, handwritten, folded, and addressed (if we're lucky) with great care. Sometimes, part of that note will read as follows:

"I can't figure out why I called you first, though I am so glad that I did. Maybe somehow I knew how helpful you would be to me. Somehow I realized how much you cared. You came when I called. You held my hand. These things alone helped me in

ways you might never know. I have always respected you, but I just never realized how much. I've been talking with H., and he feels the same way. We are both so appreciative for everything you have done."

In my current line of work, there is the very real danger of being canceled. In the conflict resolution and peacebuilding field, we know very well that decrying abuses and murder of Palestinians publicly will provoke a slew of accusations of anti-semitism. In the DEI and social and racial justice worlds, the idea that efforts to advance racial equity could somehow have a negative impact on democracy could easily result in me being branded a racist, a GOP apologist, or worse. In my experience, doing the brave or courageous thing often gets little to no attention, usually, not even a note. When it does capture attention, when people start coming out of the woodwork to jump on the bandwagon or to express their support, doing that thing again—the thing that took courage in the first place—doesn't take as much courage anymore.

Yes, it may still take some courage, but a safety net arises and sometimes that safety becomes all-encompassing. It easily becomes a forcefield, an echo chamber. Even a tomb. The dead don't need courage. The status quo doesn't need courage. It needs maintenance, to keep those who have become powerful through doing that initially courageous thing, in power. Jumping on the bandwagon, it must be made clear, is never an act of courage, even if it is to try to silence something that may be dangerous to a cause that we personally hold to be just, moral, and good. The brave thing, the courageous thing may just be to listen, process, and (with respect) question, challenge, or. But to cancel? That is an act of the deepest cowardice. It is pulling the blankets of our own comfort over our heads in a way that is utterly

lacking in reflection, introspection, and yes, humility. And that, that can never contribute to peace. Courage does not cancel. It enables.

To be truly courageous, it is not enough to be brave in one episode or another, or even across episodes. True courage comes from continuing to choose to do what we think or know to the best of our abilities, is right and good. Not just for ourselves, but for everyone. This means not falling into the trap of establishing our own status quo, of resting on our own laurels. It means challenging what we know to be right and good, continuing to grapple with hard questions and stark realities, and doing the best we can with what we have, not just in the moment, but over time.

So, pick up the phone when it rings. Especially if it's late. Go to where you are called, even if you're afraid. Hold the hand that needs comfort. Be there through the horror, the misery, the pain. Again and again, and again. That's courage. But don't forget; once things are "ok enough", taking care of yourself—even if it feels like cowardice—can be courageous too. If we don't have the courage to do that, to be intentional about showing up as our best-selves when others call, can we really take care of ourselves and each other? If we can't do that, is peace achievable? If so, at what cost? It may very well be that the cost of peace—a peace that is proactive, adaptive, centered on humanity and human potential—is humility, is resilience, is courage. Peace is ours to choose, but in that choice we will have to grapple with complexity and navigate it.

The inner peace (if one will permit me to separate the phrase from connotations of Eastern spirituality and practice) that I have built for myself has come from sitting with complexity. I am a coward, yes. I am also a hero to at least one person. I am

someone whose choices led to the death of another. I am a failed business owner. I am a racial equity practitioner who acknowledges that some racial equity efforts have fed into dynamics that destabilize the fragile peace that exists in the US. I am all of these things, but above all I am someone who continually tries to understand my impact and what else I could be doing to create the kind of peace that serves the greatest proportion of humanity possible, in spite of everything. I am someone who makes choices and lives with them. And I'm hoping that with others who are of similar bent, that we can continue to choose courageous ways forward.

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COURAGEOUSLY CHANGING THE WORLD WITH COMPASSION

EVAN HARREL AND LAURA BERLAND

Courage is an active word, with a focus on the strength to “do something” that is intimidating or fear inducing. It also takes great courage to set the stage for “doing something” or to respond to what happens after we have “done something.” In a world hungering for peace, we offer a call to courageous compassion at the heart of and at the edges of the field of conflict: courage to accept yourself, courage to view the other as worthy of your understanding, courage to be willing to act without being attached to the result, and courage to be patient.

Compassion is the awareness of the suffering of another combined with the desire to help relieve that suffering (Goetz JL et al, 2020). When compassion is offered to relieve suffering on its arising, but fails to address the root cause of that suffering, the suffering will return again and again. Peacebuilding, social justice, and social change require us to address the systemic issues underlying and causing suffering to bring about sustainable shifts. Systems change is where courage and compassion come together to make a difference in our challenged world.

Courageous self-acceptance

Courageous social change begins with the courage to accept yourself just as you are right now. Seeking to bring forth change brings resistance of

many kinds, including personal attacks on your motives and legitimacy to advocate for change. When you have accepted yourself exactly as you are, personal attacks that cut too close to the bone will be less likely to trigger a defensive response. With acceptance, you can take yourself out of the middle, and focus the dialogue on what needs changing.

To do this, you must be comfortable in your own skin. Changing the world starts with changing ourselves. We won't find inner peace by only pursuing peace in the outer world, but we will increase our effectiveness by anchoring ourselves on a solid foundation of self-acceptance.

This takes time, work, and courage. Self-examination requires courage. Self-love requires courage. Committing to change requires courage. And each of these increase the likelihood for success in the pursuit of social justice.

Courageously accepting the other

From a place of self-acceptance and non-judgment, we learn to find an acceptance of the other in our work. This is still an extremely challenging task, especially when the other is responsible for direct harm or the creation of systems and structures that harm others. We must remember that the harm we see is just the tip of

the iceberg. It takes courage and compassion to look more deeply and recognize that the root of the visible harm is often multi-generational and stubbornly persistent. The unseen part of the iceberg involves all humanity, all societies, and connects to more than one person or one group of people.

When you are courageous enough to lean into challenging circumstances to get to the deeper places, you begin to see the one creating harm as a vulnerable human just like you. You can find understanding for the causes behind negative behavior without approving of the harmful acts themselves. Recognizing the causes requires great courage and will lead to more appropriate responses.

The bullies in our world act from a place of fear. Can you imagine what the world would be like if violent individuals felt safe? But yet, it feels a betrayal to wish well for those who are bringing forth great harm in the world. It takes courage to offer lovingkindness and say, "May Vladimir Putin feel safe. May Vladimir Putin be free from suffering." If that prayer were to come true, everyone within his domain of power would also be safer and would suffer less. Have the courage to recognize the common humanity of those who may be perceived as your enemies.

The courage to let go of expectations

When we ground ourselves in self-acceptance and self-love, and then approach the other as someone worthy of our attention, we find ourselves at the place of action. While the courage required to act is something well understood, there is another courage that is required as our work unfolds, and that is the courage to persist patiently without expectation of immediate results or personal rewards.

The temptation to attach to a desired outcome is very strong, especially in goal-oriented cultures. In our highly complex, and often random world, the difference between a good action and a good outcome can be challenging to discern. There is so much more beyond our control than within it. Every action we take offers an opportunity to learn about what may be done better, and what was done well and is worthy of repeating. Rather than centering our attention on how close the outcome is to our desires, focus on what can be learned from the experience.

The courage to act with patience

It is difficult to know the timeframe for change. Consider the fall of the Berlin Wall. Decades of resistance converged with dramatic change that unfolded in what seemed like the blink of an eye. Predicting how change will unfold is usually only accurate in hindsight, therefore, allow yourself to flow with a flexible, patient timetable.

As the late Irish poet John O'Donohue wrote "The beauty of nature insists on taking its time. Everything is prepared. Nothing is rushed. The rhythm of emergence is a gradual slow beat always inching its way forward; change remains faithful to itself until the new unfolds in the full confidence of true arrival" (O'Donohue, 2008).

We are impatient for resolution, and yet, emergent change takes time. Courage is required to maintain the consistent "slow beat always inching its way forward," especially when incremental progress can be so hard to recognize. It takes courage to do our best without the affirmation of visible change. Stay the course, with an open heart. Persist. You never know when your intention or action will begin to bear fruit and ripple out into the world.

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REFLECTIONS ON 10TH STREET: HONORING 10 COURAGEOUS AFRICAN AMERICANS

IMANI MICHELE SCOTT

In the early 1970s when I was a young girl growing up in Jacksonville, Florida, my brothers and I were delighted when one autumn afternoon we arrived at my grandparent's new home on West 10th Street for a sleepover. There was a big, white, two-story antebellum-style home with large pillars out front, a living room fireplace, a winding staircase, and a wrap-around porch featuring a swing set and humongous (to us) rocking chairs. To our young eyes, the home looked like a mansion, and we were thrilled to be joining them for their first night's stay. But when we awoke the next morning, our thrill and delight turned quickly to horror and tears when we saw that the letters "KKK" had been burned into their front yard – just a few feet from the swing set and rocking chairs we had played on the night before. We were old enough to know that what we saw were not "just letters"; we knew they were symbols for something dark, vile, and threatening.

Despite our terror, as children we had little-to-no sway or say in convincing our grandparents that they needed to move away, immediately, from their new home. The threat of evil that we felt did not seem to frighten or discourage them, and if it did, they never showed those feelings to us.

Instead, I remember my grandmother simply smiling, showing us her pistol, and assuring us of her capability to use it if she needed to. Simultaneously, I recall my grandfather proudly and purposely sitting on that porch for hours that day, despite the summer's heat. With an unwavering tenacity, he was determined to show whoever burned those letters in his yard that he was not intimidated or afraid. And they both literally stood their ground for the next 23 years that they would occupy that home. I thank God for the courage of these two larger-than-life loved ones who taught me to draw on audacity, resilience, and resoluteness in the face of fear and threat; these values are foundational to how I live my life today.

Though it was ages ago, that 10th Street-experience has never left me. Nor have I forgotten the contrasting realities of what cowardly evil ones do in the dark of night, and how the bold fearlessness of daring and courage can be used to snub their efforts to harm. Truth be told, those three letters, KKK, are symbols of things dark and vile that have for too long haunted this country: racism and hate fueled by warped beliefs in white supremacy.

As the U.S. continues to grapple with racism, racist hatred, burgeoning membership in white supremacist groups, and increasing protests against teaching historical truths about this nation's centuries-long history of deep-seated racial conflict, more must be done to document, share, teach and preserve the stories of the many courageous souls whose bravery and valor led them to risk their lives for their rights -- and ours, to live and be free on 10th Streets everywhere.

This article shares brief profiles 10 African American men and women who – most of whom were born into slavery, who endured perilous threats to life and liberty during one of the most tumultuous periods in U.S. history: the Civil War. They are among the true, and too frequently unacknowledged American heroes and heroines. With amazing boldness, they each withstood terrifying risks, and refused to back down in the face of torture and death so that one day, all would live free from threat and harm because of the color of their skin and the neighborhood they moved into.

As this nation prepares for its 2nd observance of Juneteenth as a federal holiday, and as I reflect on that day on 10th Street, I am honored and blessed to share these stories of the courageous ten.

- **Sergeant Powhatan Beaty (American Hero, Civil War Hero, born into slavery)**



Powhatan Beaty initially joined an unarmed, voluntary unit of men who fought against the Confederate. Eventually, Beaty enlisted in the Union

army, became a Sergeant, and commanded over 40 men. He received the Congressional Medal of Honor after demonstrating immense courage when he ran into enemy fire to retrieve and hoist the U.S. Flag during the Battle of Chaffin's Farm.

- **Captain Andre Cailloux (American Hero, Civil War Hero, born into slavery)**



Andre Cailloux was one of the first African American Captains to be killed in combat against the Confederates. In May 1863, he led the 1st Regiment's "Colored Company" into battle during what would become the Union's devastating defeat at Post Hudson in Louisiana. Despite the defeat, Cailloux's exhibition of brave and courageous leadership would become legendary and serve to bolster widespread confidence in the readiness of blacks for war against the treasonous ones who were their would-be captors.

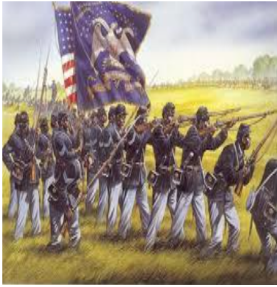
- **William H. Carney (American Hero, Civil War Hero, born into slavery)**



After escaping to freedom from slavery through the Underground Railroad, William H. Carney joined the Union army where he repeatedly demonstrated intense courage, resilience and loyalty. Carney's heroism to fight and save the Union's flag during the

Battle of Fort Wagner would lead him to become the *first* African American to earn the Congressional Medal of Honor.

- **Corporal Decatur Dorsey (American Hero, Civil War Hero, born into slavery)**



As a Corporal in the 39th Colored Infantry, Decatur Dorsey's valor during what would become known as "The Battle of the Crater" would become legendary. As the Battle progressed, Dorsey would lead his troops twice into combat against Confederate forces. Eventually, his 39th Infantry would engage in hand-to-hand combat to capture nearly 200 prisoners. Dorsey was awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor for his heroism.

- **Sergeant James Daniel Gardiner (American Hero, Civil War Hero)**



James Daniel Gardiner enlisted as a private in the 36th Colored Regiment, but he was promoted to Sergeant following his heroism during the renowned Battle of Chaffin's Farm. Determined to fight the enemies to the death, Gardiner engaged a Confederate officer in lethal hand-to-hand combat after shooting him. His heroics would earn him the Congressional Medal of Honor.

- **William A. Jackson (American Hero, Civil War Hero, born into slavery)**



Prior to his escape from slavery in 1861 and during a period when blacks were not allowed to serve in the war, William A. Jackson used his place in the home of Confederate President Jefferson Davis to serve as a spy for the Union. After escaping slavery, Jackson met with Union commanders to share critical intelligence on the military strategies and tactics of the Confederates.

- **Corporal Miles James (American Hero, Civil War Hero)**



Miles James was serving as a Corporal in the Colored 36th Union battalion when he was seriously wounded during the Battle of Chaffin's Farm. Despite his severe injuries, the brave soldier continued to fight and support the Union's victory. James was awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor.

- **Robert Smalls (American Hero, Civil War Hero, born into slavery)**



After being forced to pilot a Confederate ship, Robert Smalls accomplished a miracle. He cast the ship away from the coastline while Confederate officers lay asleep onshore, disguised himself as the ship's captain, successfully passed through five Confederate ports, and steered the vessel into the arms of Union soldiers. Once in Union hands, Smalls gave them a codebook to support their defense against the Confederates. Smalls would later meet and persuade President Lincoln to admit blacks into the Union army; ultimately, he would become a U.S. Congressman.

- **Susie King Taylor (American Heroine, Civil War Heroine, born into slavery)**



One of the few slaves who knew how to read and write, Susie King Taylor initially established a school for former slaves on St. Simon's Island Georgia. Later, she would go on to support one of the first black regiments in the Union army as a nurse. Taylor is considered the 1st black woman to serve as an army nurse. By virtue of tending the wounded amongst the troops, on a daily basis Taylor risked her life as surely as each soldier risked his own.

- **Harriet Tubman (American Heroine, Civil War Heroine, born into slavery)**



Most widely known for her heroic missions to help enslaved blacks travel the tumultuous journey of the Underground Railroad to secure their freedom, Harriet Tubman was also a spy for the Union Army, and an Army nurse. And despite enduring lifelong physical ailments due to a traumatic head injury suffered at the hands of one of her former slave owners, Tubman remained an outspoken abolitionist who repeatedly risked her life for others.

The above, courageous individuals are only a few among the many true American heroes and heroines who deserve to be recognized in every state of the U.S., and in every History classroom in this nation; without them, there may never have been a Juneteenth.

Let us never forget them.

Facts:

- Over 179,000 black soldiers served in the Union Army.
- Thousands of black men voluntarily formed unofficial regiments to support Union forces prior to their official admittance into the military in 1863.
- 16 Black soldiers were awarded Congressional Medals of Honor for heroism the United States of America during the Civil War.
- To be black and fight against the Confederacy took extraordinary courage, and it meant risking "execution on the spot" if captured (e.g., The Fort Pillow Massacre).

#Whatcouragelookslike #blackAMERICANheroes
#Juneteenth

MY JOURNEY TO COURAGE: GETTING TO RAISING MY VOICE IN IDENTITY BASED CONFLICTS

JACOB DWYER

If you had asked me five years ago “What is your relationship with conflict?” I would have told you that I’m conflict averse. I avoided conflict, if at all possible, thinking there was nothing that could be gained from it. Instead, I saw myself as a mediator, standing outside of and above conflict, whose objective eye could determine a beneficial path forward for all.

But what does that same conflict aversion look like when I am involved in the conflict, especially when it is identity-based and spurred by systematic forms of oppression? It meant avoiding the situation altogether. It meant leveraging the privileges I hold to justify my aversion by saying I “didn’t want to get involved” or “felt it wasn’t my place.” It meant waiting for an objective analysis of the situation, when the subjective was all that existed. And it meant that I lacked the courage to be the ally I had thought I was.

In order to stand up for my values I needed to develop courage. However, developing courage cannot be done in a vacuum. My aversion to putting myself out there for others was rooted in social dynamics, and so, in order to foster courage in myself, I needed to develop courage through social dynamics. I needed to learn the cues for oppression, from the blatant to the

microaggression, and gain the perspectives of the oppressed through scholarship and discussion in order to determine when to step in, or stand by. I needed to note when I failed, when I did well, and learn from my actions. I needed to gain a deeper understanding of myself in order to use my emotional responses to my benefit.

I understand that courage is not something we all have inherently. Some of us need to work at it. However, we cannot say we are allies, advocates or changemakers without it. While everyone may have a different path to fostering courage, here are some of the methods through which I continue to foster courage for social justice.

Reframing Conflict and Discomfort

When you view conflict through a negative lens, it is easy to disassociate yourself from a situation. This negatively-framed perspective to conflict was where my preference for ‘conflict aversion’ arose. However, in thinking about moments where an individual is oppressed, the opposite of engaging in that conflict is apathy. A quick look through the history of activism shows that little has been gained by waiting it out. Conflict has been a driving force in movements for centuries. Conflict drives activists to push against the status quo and achieve change. Without the conflict of perspectives, values, and

understandings, the human rights that I enjoy today would not exist. Seeing conflict as the opposite of stagnation, but rather as a place for growth and a signal to recognize that change is needed, was a necessary first step.

Simultaneously I needed to look at my feelings toward discomfort. These two were closely interlinked in my mind, with discomfort immediately arising when I ran into conflict. Sitting in this discomfort was originally debilitating, driving me to inaction or to leave the scene. A majority of my discomfort arose from an aversion to 'rocking the boat.' However, upon self-reflection, it turned out this was too simple. Instead, my aversion was a mixed fear of potentially feeding fuel to the fire with an inappropriate intervention and of risking social ramifications for taking a side. Hiding behind my identity as conflict averse, I had used my ability to leverage privilege and move on from identity-based conflicts to avoid these risks and move forward. Recognizing this approach was incongruent with the ally I aspired to be, I needed to learn to embrace this discomfort to grow. After learning more about the power in discomfort, especially watching Bill Eckstrom's TED Talk, I named discomfort as a place for growth, rather than a sign to disengage, in order to begin the process of re-learning and practicing my courage.

Engaging in Learning and Self Reflection

Understanding that uncertainty was a root for my inaction, I engaged in learning both to better understand the perspectives of others and to better understand myself. While I knew the basics of oppression, I found that my privilege had made me blind to many methods through which people are oppressed in the everyday world around me. It was easy for me to acknowledge blatant forms of oppression, and even easier when they had been called out and explained by others, but what about

those moments where the lines are blurrier? My friends mentioned moments where they had felt discriminated against that I had not even recognized. Because power dynamics are constantly shifting, the intersecting dynamics of the multiple identities we all hold create 'gray' (as opposed to black-and-white) situations that are much more common, but also more difficult to analyze. I needed to understand from people themselves what these experiences looked like and how they felt in them to better understand how I could engage with them. On my graduate school campus, I joined an initiative founded and led by faculty member, Dr. Pushpa Iyer, which brought together a group of motivated community members to work on being better allies to each other. In the Allies initiative, we discussed books, scholarly articles, blog posts, and news articles. We broadened our understanding of systemic racism, patriarchy and classism and avoided focusing solely on the experiences of our own identities.

In parallel, I needed to better understand myself, particularly my reactions, feelings and emotions when it came to engaging in conflict. Recognizing my instincts allowed me to practice subverting them. The shaking hands, the pit in the stomach, the widening eyes became signals for me to engage, rather than leave. Reflecting upon instances of oppression allowed me to identify the signals that I read about and apply them to my own life. Sharing my analysis with the group allowed me to refine my understanding of the dynamics experienced by people with identities different from my own. Together we brainstormed approaches that could work or not. Through the self-reflection process, I was able to apply the vague academic notions of racism, patriarchy and classism to my own life, allowing me to identify the real ramifications my action or inaction had on the people around me.

Spaces of Accountability

It was in this Allies initiative, after shifting my frameworks, filling gaps in my understanding, and applying my self-reflection to better channel my reactions, that I could even begin practicing courage in my everyday life. This was feasible through a space of accountability, which the initiative had fostered through its deep self-reflection and vulnerability. When we came across an instance of discrimination or oppression, we shared what we did or did not do. Through the group I began developing approaches that worked for me. When I came across similar instances, I used these approaches. I checked in with myself and with the group to assess how I did. When I failed to speak up, I shared with the group to hold myself accountable. Through weekly meetings I fostered the courage to act in identity conflicts, while also incorporating evidence-based and tested approaches to my personal 'toolkit.'

Since finishing my graduate program, I have found that these spaces of accountability are vital for me to continue growing in my allyship. In letting go of some of my pride, I have fostered accountability by sharing instances of what I did, or did not do, with friends and loved ones to keep me accountable. These spaces keep me practicing my values and, in turn, developing the courage I need to be an ally.

COURAGE AND NOT BEING STUCK

KATHY GOODMAN

Here is the poem "Autobiography In Five Chapters" by Portia Nelson, taken from "The Tibetan Book of Living and Dying" by Sogyal Rinpoche.

I walk down the street.
There is a deep hole in the sidewalk.
I fall in.
I am lost. I am hopeless.
It isn't my fault.
It takes forever to find a way out.

I walk down the same street.
There is a deep hole in the sidewalk.
I pretend I don't see it.
I fall in again.
I can't believe I'm in the same place.
But it isn't my fault.
It still takes a long time to get out.

I walk down the same street.
There is a deep hole in the sidewalk.
I see it there.
I still fall in. It's a habit.
My eyes are open.
I know where I am.
It is my fault.
I get out immediately.

I walk down the same street.
There is a deep hole in the sidewalk.
I walk around it.

I walk down another street.

Strive for courage. The first step might be to acknowledge any fear that blocks your fulfillment, any repeated patterns you do that waste your time - that spin your wheels in mud. Do not burn up energy going nowhere. Do not try to back your car

into a too small parking space. It will not work. Try not to repeat the same mistakes over and over. If you find yourself doing that, at least see that you still haven't learned and forgive yourself. Stop, when "stuck" and regroup by quietly reflecting on a simple question "what do I need to do to move forward?" I have always asked this question most successfully while retreating to a warm bath and dimming the lights. You may have to back up, change courses or simply wait. Sometimes there are no "solutions" at hand and the best plan is to stop seeking solutions and just stay open to opportunities. Try not to play the "blame game" of it being someone else's fault and you are the "victim"...this is, in my experience, a total waste of time and weakens you, diminishes you. It is likely you are responsible, since it is your perception of the situation. In the meanwhile, life itself is passing you by. Just remain "awake" to life itself and not your little momentary problem. Do not get becalmed. Catch the wind in your sail: if there is no wind, wait for it and enjoy the view. Everything changes all the time, it's the nature of life itself.

Sometimes it is the exact same thing in my work as a conflict resolution professional. In my field, we need to be first and foremost, courageous and unafraid. We need to truly want to help. Simply put: we don't want to find ourselves repeating fruitless patterns with our clients. If, at the moment, there is no apparent solution, sometimes we just have to take a break and wait...wait for the wind to change

and fill our sails. Or wait for a change in the mood in the room, a shift in the relationship of the disputants. A different day!

Sometimes I go about pitying myself

and all the time

I am being carried on great winds across the sky.

- Ojibwe Dream Song

I present the following little tale because it fits in with the topic of courage and not getting stuck. It is also about motivation and being clear on intentions.

From the novel, *SIDESHOW* by Sheri S. Tepper:

Once upon a time, there was a turtle who lived in a pond: gray reeds and gray mud and gray moonlight falling, which was what turtles see who cannot see color* Not for her the glory of the sunset or the wonder of the dawn. Not for her the flash of a hummingbird's throat or a butterfly's wings. For her the liquid sounds of water moving, the slosh and murmur of the stream, the wind in the trees; for her the difference between shadow and darkness. She was content, as turtles are content, to be deliberate in her habits and slow in her pace, to eat leaves and the ends of worms and suchlike fodder, and to think long, slow thoughts on a log with her fellows, where she knew the sunlight was warm though she did not know it was yellow.

But a time came on an autumn evening, gray leaf and gray thorn and gray mist rising, when she sat overlong on the log after the sun was well down, and the swallows came to drink and hunt on the surface of the pond, dipping and dancing above the ripples, swerving and swooping with consummate grace, so that the turtle saw them as silver and black and beautiful, and all at once, with an urgency she had never known before, she longed for wings.

"Oh, I wish I could see them more clearly," she murmured to the bullfrog on the bank. "That I might learn to fly."

"If you would see them clearly, you must go to the secret sanctuary of the birds," said the bullfrog in a careless voice, as though he did not take the matter seriously.

And when the turtle asked where that was, the bullfrog pointed westward, to the towering mountains and told the turtle the sanctuary was there, among the crags and abysses, where the birds held their secret convocations and granted wings to certain petitioners. And this made the turtle think how wonderful it would be to go there and come back to tell the bullfrog all about it.

And on the next night, she asked again where the birds went when they left the pond, and the owl pointed westward with its talon, telling her of towering peaks and break-back chasms in a calm and dismissive voice. And again she thought of making the journey and returning, and of the wonder the bullfrog would feel, and the owl, to hear of it when she came back.

On the third night, she asked yet again, and this time it was the bat who answered, squeaking as it darted hither and yon, telling of immeasurable heights and bottomless canyons. "No one dares go there," the bat squeaked, and the turtle told herself that he dared even if no one else could.

So, for three nights the turtle had watched, each night her longing growing. And at midnight on the third night, when the bat had spoken and the swallows had departed, the turtle went after them without telling anyone good-bye, slowly dragging herself toward the great mountains to the west.

She went by long ways and rough ways and hard ways always, first across the desert, where she would have died of thirst had not a desert tortoise showed her how to get moisture from the fruits of a cactus. And then across the stone, where she would have died of hunger had a wandering rabbit not given her green leaves to eat, and then into the mountains themselves where she would have given up and died many times except for her vision of herself going back to the pond to tell the creature there of this marvelous and quite surpassing quest.

"They didn't know," the turtle told herself. "They had no idea what it would be like. They made it sound easy, but when I go back to tell them what it was really like..." And she dreamed the cold nights away

visualizing herself telling her story to her kindred turtles on the sunlit log, and to the bullfrog among the reeds, and to the owl and the bat, all of whom would be admiring and astonished at her bravery and her perseverance.

And so, sustained by this ambition, she went higher and higher yet, gray stone and gray cliff and gray rain falling, year after year, until she came at last to the place the swallows danced in the air above the bottomless void.

When they saw her, they stopped dancing to perch beside her on the stone, and when she saw them there, silver and black, beautiful as a night lit with stars, she was possessed once again by a great longing, and she told them of her desire for wings.

"Perhaps you may have wings, but you must give up your shell," they cried. And even as they told her she might have wings, she seemed to hear in their voices some of the carelessness she had heard in the voice of the owl and the bat and the bullfrog, who had told her where to go without telling her the dangers of the way. She heard them rightly, for the winged gods have a divine indifference toward those who seek flight. They will not entice and they will not promise and they will not make the way easy, for those who wish to soar must do so out of their heart's desire and their mind's consent and not for any other reason.

And the turtle struggled with herself, wanting wings but not wanting wings, for if she had wings, they told her, she would no longer be interested in going back to the pond to tell the creatures there of her journey - that comfortable telling, the anticipation of which had been, perhaps, more important to her than the wings themselves. So, she struggled, wanting and not wanting...

No one knows the end of this little story. The message is that it's hard to not want wings if all you have is a shell. Having wings and not knowing where they will take you has its own problems. If the "telling of the journey" is the whole reason for the journey, then wings are beside the point. My message is understand your own intentions before setting out on a journey for the wrong reasons. When we make a decision, we need to be clear on why we are making that choice. That requires courage on our part. Courage to look more deeply into ourselves.

THE MURDER OF GEORGE FLOYD, COURAGEOUS BLM ACTIVISM, AND BACKLASH AGAINST IT

LAURA FINLEY

Although it existed prior to police officer Derek Chauvin's murder of George Floyd on May 25, 2020, the Black Lives Matter (BLM) movement gained significant influence thereafter. Formed in 2013 by three Black organizers, Alicia Garza, Patrisse Cullers and Opal Tometi, BLM today includes more than 50 different organizations. The murder, which was captured on video, prompted the largest racial justice protests in the United States since the civil rights movement and inspired action in many other countries as well, including the UK, New Zealand, France, and Colombia (Silverstein, 2021).

Like the Occupy Wall Street movement, BLM is characterized by a rejection of hierarchy, favoring a "leaderless" approach, and its inclusivity. Scholars have noted that BLM is far more interracial than previous movements (Sugrue, 2020). A hallmark of BLM has been dialogue with political leadership (Rickford, 2015). BLM is also different from so many civil and political rights movements before it due to the ubiquitous use of technology and social media as a tool for organizing. BLM has used many classic techniques of nonviolent direct action in conjunction with protests, including creative slogans, organizing vigils, meeting with police leaders and legislators, and more. Media outlets

dubbed 2020 "the year of the protest" due to the BLM protests. Social media has been particularly important in engaging the public about police abuse and killings of people of color. Research has shown that digital platforms are now an essential part of social movements (Freemon, McIlwain & Clark, 2016). Social movements utilizing social media have been found to be more inclusive, larger, and quicker to mobilize (Bennett & Segerberg, 2012). Mundt, Ross and Burnett (2018) found that BLM's use of social media helped it to build connections, mobilize participants and resources, engage in coalition building and control the narrative about its activities. An analysis of 50 million Twitter posts between January 28, 2013 and April 30, 2021 found that the hashtag #BlackLivesMatter was used far more frequently after Floyd's murder, resulting in a more engaged public via social media. It has been used in more than 25 million original Twitter posts, which collectively have garnered approximately 444 billion likes, retweets, comments, or quotes. This is roughly 17,000 engagements per post. The prolific use of the hashtag helped spread the movement from the local to the global (Wirtschafter, 2021).

As a social movement, BLM is of interest to the field of peace and conflict studies for a number of reasons. Critics of BLM, like critics of previous social movements for civil rights, assert that it would be better for activists to use more mundane and mainstream channels for social change, such as legislation and the courts. Yet, as many have noted, these channels have not only been unhelpful in remedying civil rights issues, they have frequently exacerbated them (Alexander, 2010). As Hoffman et al. (2016) explained, “the Black community has no reason to trust that people representing them in elected office and the political system will work to rectify at the heart of the Black Lives Matter movement. For those who have privilege, it is easy to rely on the system, which has tended to work for them and protect them. For those who the system has not worked, alternatives are needed” (p. 601). BLM can be seen in part as adhering to Gandhian principles, in particular, the principle of noncooperation with anything that is humiliating. Yet it does not explicitly disavow violence. It has also drawn a diverse group of allies, making it a unique movement for scholarly examination and for activist inquiry.

While there is typically opposition to social movements, BLM has garnered a particularly vitriolic backlash owing to the political divide in the U.S and to media narratives that present it as dangerous and harmful. Hoffman et al. (2016) noted that BLM challenges the worldviews of those who have privilege. Even the simple phrase “black lives matter,” intended to show the value of black lives and to underscore the historical and contemporaneous undervaluing of people of color, has been co-opted by oppositionists to assert that “All Lives Matter,” a total disregard of the point—that racist violence, especially by police as in the Floyd case—tell Black people their lives matter less than others. BLM founder Garza called on the long

history of non-hierarchical social movements in the shaping of BLM. She explained that the notion of a charismatic leader like Martin Luther King Jr. was always in part a myth or over-sell, in that it underappreciated courageous community activists who did not want celebrity status. In fact, Garza, like many before her, was critical of the need for “strong leaders,” noting that “strong communities don’t need strong leaders.” BLM leaders have also recognized that it is not just identity that makes someone a passionate advocate for a cause. Indeed, Garza and other BLM activists have called out other charismatic leaders who are more interested in self-promotion than advancement for people (Jackson, 2021).

As a movement, BLM has withstood a powerful political push for “All Lives Matter,” clearly a political ploy to diminish the movement and position it as “anti”—police, specifically, and white people in general—when nothing is further from the truth (Hoffman, Granger, Vallejos & Moats, 2016). Importantly, BLM activists found that social media allowed them to control their own narrative, in contrast to mainstream media which often depicted BLM as violent and its demands inappropriate (Mundt, Ross & Burnett, 2018). Earlier analyses of media coverage of Trayvon Martin and BLM found that 88 percent of news stories used an anti-black frame. Also common were pro-white frames and stereotypes about Black people, emphasizing criminality, violence, and threat (Lane et al., 2020). Indeed, mainstream media tended to depict protesters as “looters and rioters” and to associate demands like defunding police and teaching a more comprehensive and critical view of U.S. history with being “politically correct” or “woke.”

George Floyd was one of approximately 1,100 people killed annually by police use of force in the United States in recent years, according to data compiled

by Fatal Encounter, a nonprofit that tracks police-involved deaths since 2000. A disproportionate number of the people killed, like Floyd, are African American (Sugrue, 2020). BLM efforts in general, but in particular after Floyd's murder, resulted in real changes in many cities. Four days after the murder, Chauvin was criminally charged, and on April 21, 2021, he was found guilty of second-degree unintentional murder, third-degree murder, and second-degree manslaughter. In July 2021, Chauvin was sentenced to 22 ½ years in prison. Although the state had asked for a 30-year sentence, that Chauvin was prosecuted, convicted and sentenced is somewhat historic, as rarely do officers face trial let alone get convicted and sentenced for unlawful killings (Lempert, 2021). Three other officers were charged with aiding and abetting second-degree murder. Their trial is set for March 2022. As a result of BLM's attention to the Floyd murder, the police officers who shot and killed Breonna Taylor were fired. Taylor was a Black woman who was shot eight times in a botched drug raid on her home in Louisville, Kentucky. Less than two weeks after Floyd's murder, nine members of the Minneapolis city council announced support for dismantling the police force, one of BLM's goals. President Lisa Bender said, "We're here because we hear you ...We are here because here in Minneapolis and in cities across the United States it is clear that our existing system of policing and public safety is not keeping our communities safe. Our commitment is to end policing as we know it and to recreate systems of public safety that actually keep us safe." Minnesota Governor Tim Walz also promised police reform would be forthcoming. New York City Mayor Bill DeBlasio also pledged to shift some of the city's police funding to youth and social services. Many police departments and cities banned chokeholds, and former President Trump issued an executive order prohibiting them as well. A bipartisan bill, the Justice in Policing Act, was introduced to Congress.

It would ban no-knock warrants and make it easier to prosecute police for misconduct. Several initiatives were taken to better track police misconduct. Protestors also helped topple confederate statues and called for name changes of schools, roads and buildings that were named after racist figures. BLM had argued that these are daily reminders of racism and have no place in U.S. society. BLM's efforts after Floyd's murder helped spearhead accountability in media, as several top news leaders were forced to step down after publishing racist material. Similarly, several executives of major companies also resigned or lost their jobs, and companies like PepsiCo changed the names or imagery associated with their products, for instance, Aunt Jemima pancake syrup. The TV show "Cops," long accused of contributing to stereotypes about Black males as disproportionately criminal, was finally taken off air after 32 seasons (Ankel, 2020). Further, BLM has spearheaded efforts to improve the way K-12 public schools and colleges and universities teach about racism and the legacy of slavery today.

Yet, despite these achievements, BLM has faced significant backlash, like other social movements for racial justice before them. This essay looks at BLM from an historical perspective, discussing how it is an essential outgrowth from previous social movements and in particular, the repression of them. In doing so, I show that criticism of BLM and violence against activists is similar to that of other eras, and that even the concept of "peaceful protest" has been framed by White people in ways that minimize or repress activism for racial equality. Next, the essay focuses specifically on the backlash against BLM. Although that has come in many forms, I emphasize the wave of anti-protest laws has been enacted in many states. While some of these pre-dated the Floyd murder, many were clearly focused on curtailing BLM.

Repression and Marginalization of Black Activists: A Brief Historical Review

Historians have pointed to three major waves of nationwide uprisings in the 20th century related to racism and specifically police violence. The first occurred at the beginning of the 20th century and ended with what has been called the Red Summer in 1919. The U.S. was bitterly divided, with tense racial relations, gender inequality, anti-immigrant fervor post-World War I, and, like today, dealing with a global pandemic, the Spanish flu. 1919 saw dozens of violent racial clashes in at least 25 cities. Police typically did little to disrupt these incidents and in many cases, arrested Black individuals who were doing nothing or were defending themselves. Then, in 1921, violent white mobs, with police complicity, assaulted Tulsa, Oklahoma's "Black Wall Street," killing at least 300 people and leaving nearly the entire Black population of the city homeless. Black people responded by organizing, with the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) being founded in 1909 and amassing 500,000 members by 1945. Marcus Garvey's United Negro Improvement Association, formed in 1921 as part of an international movement for Black pride. The second wave came during the Great Depression and the time of World War II. Many were outraged that the U.S. was fighting a war for democracy abroad, with many of its soldiers being people of color, yet still had not reconciled its own racism. Black people again organized, and media began publicizing the "Double V" campaign to end fascism abroad and racism at home. 1943 saw at least 240 violent clashes. In every case, the police came in to protect White people and arrest Black people. Activists staged sit-ins and protested police brutality both nonviolently and violently, leading to the civil rights movement of the 1960s. This is considered the third wave. Black activists were divided on the degree to which they should always

adhere to nonviolence. Martin Luther King Jr. and others espoused a nonviolent approach, and followers used a variety of direct-action tactics and were faced with violence by Whites and in many cases, by police. Followers of Malcolm X and later the Black Panthers believed self-defense was an essential part of Black pride and that they would remain powerless when police had the ability to use force and they did not.

According to Sugrue (2020), "2020's uprisings resemble those of 1919, 1943, and 1968 in certain respects: They grow out of simmering hatreds seeded by the long, festering history of white violence and police brutality against African Americans that has taken hundreds of lives per year, including Floyd, Breonna Taylor and Ahmaud Arbery, three of the most recent victims. Most of 2020's protests have been peaceful, early reports have found, with a fraction becoming violent." But, as Yannick Giovanni Marshall (2020), scholar of Black Studies, asserted, even the understanding of what peace should look like has been racially coded. Further, Marshall (2020) and Sebastian (2015) explain that most Americans have a distorted view of the "nonviolence" of the civil rights movement that they glorify as the way to make social change. While BLM has been criticized for not necessarily using violence but provoking it, Sebastian (2015) noted that provocation was a hallmark of Martin Luther King Jr.'s approach. Like BLM, King was admonished by liberal Whites to bring it down, to be less disruptive. King responded to eight White liberal clergymen who wrote that while they supported his movement, his tactics were "foolish" and "counterproductive" in his 1963 Letter from Birmingham Jail. He wrote that the goal was to dramatize the problem of racism such that it could no longer be ignored. "In other words, violence was not something that simply happened to activists; they invited it. Violence was critical to the success of

the 1960s civil rights movement, as it has been to every step of racial progress in U.S. history" (Sebastian, 2015). In fact, just a month after he was released from the Birmingham jail, King and other organizers marched Black children through the city's streets, knowing full well that they would be met with Bull Connor's violent police force but approving the controversial tactic because the sight of those innocent kids under attack would help propel the movement. The kids called it D-Day. King was even criticized by Malcolm X but defended the tactic as "one of the wisest moves we made" (Sebastian, 2015).

Discussing BLM protests, Marshall (2020) noted, "Our peace is not their peace. Their peace has been when we accepted, quietly, the corpses of Black people thrown against our screens. Our peace is when they stop killing us. Our peace is when they lose faith in the certainty of impunity. When they have to live the rest of their lives straining to decipher every eerie sound in the wind, hoping it is not bad luck. Our peace is when they are forced to pause, and for the first time since the passage of the Act on the Casual Killing of Slaves, wonder whether they might face a consequence." Marshall asserts that protest is typically framed by white supremacy that emphasizes "peacefulness" and commands a differentiation between "good and bad protestors." Liberals during the King era and also during the BLM protests who support the goals got upset when King marched through their neighborhoods calling out segregation and racist housing practices just as progressive Bernie Sanders was upset about the "extreme" tactics used by protestors at his events (Sebastian, 2015). This framing of protest ignores the historical and current fact that people of color face far more risk when doing anything, let alone when rising up against police violence. Marshall (2020) explained,

"In their peacetime, Black people are killed with impunity. In the time they are anxious to go back to – the time which helicopters and riot police and armies are sent to bring back by force – Black people are killed with impunity. In their regular order, Black people are killed with impunity. In their time of laughing loudly in cafes, Black people are killed with impunity.

In the times when videos of Black people being killed fall out of the news cycle, Black people are killed with impunity. In the time when this president is in power, Black people are killed with impunity. In the time when this president is not in power, Black people are killed with impunity. In their "counter-looting, Black people are killed with impunity. In their prisons, their hospitals, their streets, their police stations, Black people are killed with impunity.

In their riots, Black people are killed with impunity.

Their peace, their regular order is a place where Black people are killed with impunity."

Just as King was criticized for the fact that violence did break out at many of his marches and protests, BLM has faced outrage that buildings have been burned and looted and people killed at protests. But Sebastian (2015) noted, "Yet history shows that this violence is the inevitable consequence of challenging the racial status quo." While King wanted a nonviolent movement, he learned that if the response to organizer's efforts was not a violent spectacle, little changed. Hence the shift of efforts Albany, Georgia to Birmingham. Other movements achieved success only after violent state responses—the gay rights movement, labor rights movements, the end of slavery and more. Marshall (2020) goes on to call the movement after George Floyd was murdered an uprising, rather than a protest. "Their protest is a full course meal. When they are finished with it, they give us the "peaceful protest", the bones and gristle and entrails of their protest, thrown out like chicken feed to the slave cabins. I am not that hungry." Although Marshall's points about who gets to protest and how they are received are critical and

should be of great discussion amongst peace and conflict studies scholars, another concern is the repression of the right to assemble that has been escalated since Floyd's murder.

Anti-Protest Laws

Protest is a hallmark of social change movements. It has been used by movements of all sorts, from labor to anti-war, civil rights, gender equality, gay rights, environmental issues and more, and at every level from the local to the international. Gene Sharp includes protest on his list of 198 methods of nonviolent direct action. Erica Chenoweth and Maria Stephan (2011) found that protest is a key component of successful nonviolent movements, even those that result in regime change and creating democracy.

Concurrent to protests has always been efforts to stifle or quell them. As was noted, civil rights protestors in the 1950s and 1960s were met with physical resistance from counter-protestors, racial hate groups, and in many cases, law enforcement. Yet something new happened as a result of BLM and the widespread protests after the murder of George Floyd. The backlash was not just amongst those who disagreed with the movement or police but rather at the legislative level. Many states had already begun enacting anti-protest legislation, but such efforts dramatically escalated after Floyd was murdered (Adams, 2021). At least 80 anti-protest bills have been introduced in several states, all by Republican legislators. That is twice as many anti-protest proposals in 2021 than any year prior. Matthew Delmont, a history professor at Dartmouth College, asserted "It's important to understand that the anti-protest bills we're seeing right now are an attempt to maintain the status quo and prevent more significant change that would lead to more equitable systems" (Adams, 2021).

Some states saw proposals to give immunity to drivers who hit protestors. Others attempted to prohibit those convicted of a crime-related to a protest from receiving student loans, housing assistance, unemployment benefits and more. Other Republicans introduced a bill to make anyone convicted of "rioting" ineligible for state jobs and other state and local benefits. Florida enacted a rioting law that is being challenged due to the overly broad definition of rioting. It is considered the most severe anti-protest law, placing strict penalties on those convicted of "rioting," denying bail to those arrested until after they have made a court appearance, making it a felony to destroy a flag or monument, and allowing officials to appeal in cases where municipalities vote to cut police budgets. Melba Pearson, a civil rights attorney and former candidate for Miami-Dade state attorney, called the Florida law "a solution looking for a problem." Pearson explained, "What the bill does is, it creates a new class of minimum mandatorys and enhances charges for organizers of the protests. So we're going beyond people who have done something illegal. The fact that people would now be afraid to go out and protest ... is another way of attacking your First Amendment right. This means people are going to be less likely to exercise that right due to fear of excessive government action." In essence, this law and others like it will have a chilling effect on protest. Matthew Delmont, history professor at Dartmouth College, asserted, "It has been a pretty consistent pattern, at least since the 1960s, that any kind of movement for racial justice is accompanied by a strong desire by a different set of the population to rein those protests in and re-establish a sense of order — typically for white Americans." He went on, saying "The way authorities have limited protest activity is by trying to demoralize different social movements. The over-policing that comes along with law-and-order politics just makes it difficult to build and maintain grassroots social

movements that would have regular public protests. The bills we're seeing today are as much about signaling to different constituents as they are about trying to stop the kinds of massive protest we saw last summer" (Adams, 2021)

James Tager, a human rights lawyer and director of research for PEN America, an organization devoted to advocacy for free expression, found that between 2015 and 2019, 116 bills were proposed in state legislatures to limit the right to protest. PEN's report on those bills came out two days after Floyd was murdered, and Tager said there was a dramatic increase afterwards, noting that many of the proposals were targeted at specific protest movements, most notably BLM. PEN conducted a follow up report from June 1, 2020 through March 15, 2021 and found at least 100 anti-protest proposals in 33 states. In many cases, state legislators largely copied and pasted from other states. At least twelve laws are mostly copycats of the Florida law. Tager commented, "Perhaps the most frustrating thing is the way that this onslaught of bills helps to shift the discussion around protest toward the idea of expanding the sphere of illegality for protests, seeing protests increasingly through the lens of actual or potential illegality rather than focusing on protest as a right that is fundamental to us as humans and as Americans and working to enshrine that rather than degrading it." Further, Tager noted that while many of the proposed bills or enacted laws may not pass constitutional muster, "there would still be a cumulative effect of degrading and denigrating the space for protest in the U.S. because these bills would send the clear signal to potential and actual protesters that there are potential serious consequences for engaging in the protest" (Bidleman, 2021).

In proposing these bills, legislators typically invoked derogatory and misleading language. DeSantis, for instance, cited supposed "professional agitators bent on sowing disorder and causing mayhem in our cities" as well as "Crazed lunatics" and "Scraggly-looking Antifa types." Lawmakers made it seem as though BLM protests were all violent melees, when in actuality, less than five percent of BLM protests involved any protester violence. Tager explained, "I think Republican legislators see this as a winning issue, particularly because they don't have to engage with actual protests. They just get to engage with this kind of made-up version of hyper-violent protests that they've painted, or have had painted for them" (Bidleman, 2021).

Conclusion

As a social movement, BLM's work is a model of courage, given the politically divided time, and tremendous backlash it has faced, including violence from counter-protesters and in some cases law enforcement. The movement has prompted dangerous legislative efforts to stifle protest. These moves affect others outside of the BLM movement as well, even though they are unlikely to withstand legal challenges. Regardless, given the history of efforts to chill progressive activism in the U.S., peace and conflict studies scholars and activists must continue to examine BLM and lobby for repeal of such threats to our area of study and action. Further, the field must do more to examine the violence of structural racism and the history of White-defined "peaceful" protests. As Marshall (2020) noted, the de-radicalizing of movements plays into the hands of the state, the group most responsible for racist oppression. As a field, we should do more than pay lip service to Black Lives Matter and to addressing systemic racism.

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CULTIVATING EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE AND COURAGE: WHAT DO SCHOOLS MEAN BY “PRODUCE PRODUCTIVE AND GOOD CITIZENS”?

MICHAEL HYLEN

Throughout history, education has had two great goals: to help people become smart and to help them become good (Lickona, 1991). However, in today's society, these two goals have become somewhat skewed. The first goal has remained the same—to provide a climate for student learning and academic achievement. The second has been altered. Public education tends to focus more on simply reducing student problem behavior instead of developing positive character traits and growing emotionally intelligent students. Still, many schools today include such terms as productive citizens or good citizens in strategically thought-out mission and vision statements regarding their graduates.

What difference does it make? I have heard it asked, “through the process of teaching right and wrong behaviors, are we not teaching positive character traits?” In some cases, yes. But not always. When schools focus on behavior, the notions of right and wrong are the concern (e.g., do not fight, do not be late, and do not use curse words). This is certainly something schools should be encouraged to do. However, when schools concentrate on building positive character traits, the focus shifts to

acts of virtue (e.g., courage, kindness, integrity, empathy, etc.). Instruction in both ethics and virtues is needed. The problem is that schools tend to focus on behaviors to the exclusion of teaching and practicing virtuous character traits. The impact of which is felt in the classroom and society alike.

Without an intentional focus on replacing negative behaviors with appropriate virtues, schools will fall short in their efforts to “produce good citizens”. While character education efforts provide a solid groundwork for doing so, additional strategies must be explored for producing good citizens. Such interventions can result in the positive growth of student social and emotional skills.

What makes a Productive or Good Citizen?

Before schools put any specific initiatives in place, they must address one question; “what makes a person a productive or good citizen?” One could suggest that a good citizen is a person who acts responsibly in their community, pays their taxes, is a law-abiding citizen and even pitches in during a time of crisis. This type of citizen is the one who demonstrates good character through giving to

local charities. Certainly, schools would want this of its graduates.

Still, should not schools set higher expectations of their graduates? Shouldn't they seek to produce citizens that are more active in their communities? Ones who not only participate in community efforts but also take leadership roles in them. Citizens who understand how to plan for the success of collective tasks. Citizens who understand how government agencies work and strive to improve their community. Citizens who not only give to local charities but help organize their efforts in meeting their clients' needs.

Why stop there? Should not schools take it even one-step further? Should they not strive to produce citizens that are capable of critically assessing the political, economic, social, and cultural structures of not only their local communities, but also the greater community at-large? Such citizens play an active role in seeking to eliminate the root causes that lead to people's need for the support of local charities. Such citizens understand social injustice and seek to effect change. Such citizens act courageously. Citizens at this level have the ability to understand community issues beyond what is apparent on the surface level and take action, regardless of the cost.

Emotionally Intelligent Citizenship

To this extent, schools must address core assumptions about what it means to develop students into good and productive citizens. Is it enough to incorporate a quality character education program into the curriculum aimed at developing students who are honest, responsible, and respectful? Should schools include service-learning projects into their character education initiative in an effort to graduate productive citizens who take leadership roles within community

structures for the sake of improving conditions for its members? Might it be that even more comprehensive efforts are needed, and that core assumptions should include the idea that good and productive citizens act courageously, seeking to solve societal problems through questioning and challenging established structures that lead to inherent injustices?

If so, the question at hand is, "can courage be taught?" It depends. If one thinks of courage in terms of the ability to do something that frightens oneself (Oxford Languages Dictionary), then probably not. It implies either one has courage or does not. However, if we look at in terms of the mental or moral strength to venture, persevere, and withstand danger, fear, or difficulty (www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/courage), I would suggest the answer is yes. Using this as our framework, we are able to move beyond seeing courage as an ability. It becomes a sense of duty. To that extent, acting courageously is a reaction to an emotional state of being.

If the argument is for schools to produce citizens at the highest level described above, then they must be willing to cultivate student emotional intelligence as well as academics. This requires an understanding of what emotional intelligence is. For the sake of time and space, we will simplify our perspective on emotional intelligence. According to philosopher Alain de Botton, "Emotional Intelligence is the quality that enables us to confront with patience, insight and imagination the many problems that we face in our affective relationship with ourselves and with other people" (www.mindful.org). Think of it this way, emotional intelligence is the way we behave in response to our emotions as well as how we respond to the needs of others.

So then, the bigger question is, “Can we truly help students grow emotionally intelligent?” Aristotle believed the answer was yes. To Aristotle, education had a threefold purpose: first, to develop student potential for reasoning; second, to help students learn a skill and grow their knowledge base; and third, to help students mature and grow virtuous habits. In other words, student growth character and virtues were equally as important as student growth in academic knowledge.

So where do emotions enter the picture? Aristotle believed that there were five distinct features to consider when addressing student dispositions and character (Arthur et al., 2017). According to Arthur et al. (2017), Aristotle believed that education should focus on:

- 1) Human flourishing (behaviors that help others flourish);
- 2) Cultivating virtues through ones’ lived experiences that become habits in life over time;
- 3) Moral dilemmas (working through issues requiring decisions to be made between right versus right instead of just wrong versus right);
- 4) Education (teaching positive character traits from an early age); and,
- 5) Emotions.

Aristotle believed that education was for the purpose of helping students learn not just knowledge and behaviors, but about emotions. He understood how emotions drove our actions, interactions, and behaviors. Aristotle believed that teaching students about their emotions from a young age helped them better manage and regulate them later in life. Additionally, he believed that the tie between motivation and emotions was a strong one. How we respond in a time of emotional distress is directly related to our emotional intelligence quotient. People who are

emotionally strong, trust their feelings and act appropriately to them. This is important when one considers that acting courageously is an emotional response during a time of distress.

Emotional Intelligence and Courage

Think of it in these terms: a citizen observes an injustice (time of distress), the citizen is offended, bothered, or infuriated (emotion) by the injustice, the citizen takes action to right the wrong (courageous response). In this scenario, the courageous response serves as a direct indicator of the person’s emotional intelligence level, represented by a positive social response to an emotion. It is a demonstration of the level of success of the efforts of teachers, and other adults, in providing students the tools, understanding, and resolve needed to respond positively in an ever-challenging world.

The goal of developing a strong emotional intelligence is not to change who a person is. The purpose is to help one better understand oneself and others and to respond appropriately in a variety of circumstances, to replace negative thoughts and behaviors with positive ones, and to have a greater awareness of others and society as a whole. It is a matter of replacing a system of thinking in terms of do’s and don’ts with a greater understanding of our role as citizens of a community. With that in mind, we circle back, might it be that schools should develop comprehensive efforts towards growing emotionally intelligent students; and, that core assumptions about what makes a good and productive citizen should include acting courageously, seeking to solve societal problems through questioning, and challenging established structures that lead to inherent injustices.

COURAGEOUS SOLIDARITY

NASHAY LOWE

Approaching this theme initially left me paralyzed for a few days before I could finally write. There have been so many recent global events impacting different communities in different ways every day, in addition to the ongoing systemic issues silently operating in the background. In these moments, it can be overwhelming and hard to be optimistic. In conflict management, it can be challenging to be hopeful for sustainable changes in this political climate. It seems we are constantly putting out fires instead of preventing them from starting. I wanted to write something that acknowledges all of this while offering a glimpse of practical hope in our courageous responsibility to unite in solidarity to persevere.

Courage is not the absence of fear
But the will to move forward despite it
At times it seems as if this will is lost
But it softly treads in the pits of our hearts
We just have to be tenacious enough to find it

It is here in the midst of the darkness
That we find the courage to light our own paths
And hope that others find their way
Along the trails we've set forth
Letting the stones I lay guide you around the turbulence of pain

Avoiding the mistakes that need not be repeated
Straight through the efflorescent promenade towards a future of enlightenment
As the world continues to chaotically turn
And our realities are flipped upside down
As our backs are pushed into the corner
It is only hand in hand that we can lift ourselves off the ground

The bravery of exposing our vulnerabilities
Bridges the gaps of misunderstandings
And replaces our indifferences with empathy
And balances the weight of our burdens

It is easy to allow defeat to swallow us whole
It takes resilience to keep standing when we get knocked down yet again
But in the moments that we feel too weak to move forward on our own
It is a solidarity of our goodwill
That reminds us that our chances of preserving are so much stronger
Together.

COLD HANDS, WARM HEART

NINA RIAZ

Courage is committing to something and doing it despite the fear you feel. This is the first time that I am sharing my story publicly in print, and I am scared; but, this is a moment over 20 years in the making, perhaps more.

Twenty years ago, I was in college and had a breakdown, resulting in my family dragging me to therapist after therapist until finally, there was one who I felt understood me, and I opened up to them.

I was sexually assaulted twice in college. I was diagnosed with PTSD and suffered from depression and anxiety. On top of it, I was found “gifted” and “highly sensitive” - which sounds elitist but in this context it means that my traumas impacted me more than it would the average person. Throughout therapy, residual traumas - bullying and abuse during childhood and through adulthood from various sources also surfaced and I had to deal with those, too.

I took to therapy quite well. I saw it like school, a place where I could better myself and learn new things. For the next 20 years, I went in and out of outpatient therapy, taking group classes like sexual assault victims classes and Dialectical Behavior Therapy (1) where I learned life-changing skills: how to manage emotions, express feelings, set and

observe boundaries, handle trauma, and communicate healthily.

I graduated college, two graduate schools and law school due to these new life skills. In the back of my mind during all this time, I was asking the following questions of the world:

Why do bad things happen to innocent beings like children and animals?

What did I do to deserve such treatment?

What drives people to do terrible things to each other?

Slowly, over time in a most synchronistic fashion, I received answers to my questions that, today, make up my worldview. Most of the time, those answers came from group therapy classes or my academic classes; other times, the answers came from a kind stranger who happened to say the perfect thing to me at the right time.

Let me explain my journey that led me to my worldview. It wasn't easy and I was scared at first; it takes courage and strength to unpack one's baggage and actually deal with it.

I was introduced to a concept that took me a few months to understand, another few years to grasp and a final few years to embody - holding the

dialectic - where you hold two seemingly opposing ideas as both true. No, it wasn't fair that I was victimized repeatedly in life and it wasn't my fault, and yes, I'm the one responsible for my life so I need to clean up the mess that someone else made in it.

In 2010, I stepped out of the traditional law and policy career route I was on and returned to graduate school where I concentrated on Philosophy, Cosmology and Consciousness, exploring the foundational depths of the psychology that was healing me.

Many newer psychological modalities utilize philosophical, religious or spiritual concepts such as the dialectic, non-dual awareness, mindfulness, meditation (or deep breathing / prayer depending on your worldview), compassion, empathy and forgiveness (2) They also emphasize how feelings relate to thoughts, which drive behavior, so I learned how to consciously break the cycle by intentionally choosing my thoughts (hence my worldview).

During the last arousal of residual traumas, which was just over a year ago - much less intense and shorter lasting than before due to all the work I had done - I experienced feelings of "pure dread" I recognized as a source of suicidal ideation. I broke the cycle by intentionally choosing my thoughts, beginning with the conscious recognition that, "this is a feeling," "it is dread," and "this can drive one to suicidal thoughts." I acknowledged it, held it, and let it pass. I never had the clinical suicidal ideation that would warrant a safety plan with someone (3) but I was able to note it to tap into empathy for others who do struggle with it - it really isn't a rational thing; it feels more like a feeling or an energy.

The conscious awareness of this causation was not the only thing that helped me through it. I moved

my body, meditated my mind, and regulated my breathing and physiology. Everyday, I hiked for an hour in my backyard, meditated multiple times, and expressed emotions by crying, drawing, singing or writing. Sometimes I simply sat and held feelings that came to me until they went on their way.

Soon, the feelings of dread abated and were replaced by feelings of freedom and utter joy. The freedom came from forgiveness; the joy, a reduction of othering. By then, my skills of forgiveness and compassion had been practiced enough that, within the shortest time yet in my life, I was able to forgive the last bully in my life and find compassion and understanding for him.

In my earlier victims class, I learned that forgiveness has nothing to do with the perpetrator; it has everything to do with the victim. To forgive is not to condone; to forgive is not to forget. Forgiveness is to grant freedom and reclaim the power of the victim that the perpetrator stole by allowing the victim to be free of the echoing consequences of the horrific act. It means not ruminating on its unfairness, praying for revenge, or doling out blame. It means processing it in a way one can return to being fully present in one's body and having total control over one's life. By this time last year, I had forgiven all the acts up to that point - the abuses, the bullying, the assaults. To forgive this last bully was quite easy, because of the practice of forgiveness but also in part because I never let him take my power - I fought because I learned enough to see him for what he was.

What made it easier was a core aspect of my worldview that helps me reduce othering and welcome not only the stranger but the perpetrator. This aspect is the idea that we are all connected to each other, the earth, and everything in our reality. If that connection is true, it follows that to hurt

someone else is to hurt oneself.

But why would we hurt ourselves?

A second core aspect of my worldview is that the driving factor behind many awful things is to learn (4). Without the bullying, abuse, and assaults, I wouldn't have the skill of forgiveness today. I'd have never needed those classes and learned these things that today make my life full of wonder and limitless possibility. True, I never would have had to experience "victim" consciousness because I'd never have been a victim. But then I'd also never have made the journey to become my own hero (5).

Now, I feel gratitude for the "perpetrators." I'm grateful I had these experiences because they make me who I am today and who I am today has a superpower to take any darkness she finds herself in and turn it into a light that shines on in her life. That light shines on not only in my own life, but also in the lives I touch along the way. Clients in St. Louis and former students of mine in Oakland have benefited from my hard-earned experience as I've passed on these bits of light to them (6).

And turning darkness into light is a power no one will ever be able to take away.

I am not saying anyone can do anything to anyone, nor that this is carte blanche permission for chaos and destruction. It is not a "pass" on crimes or responsibility. Quite the contrary; it is about personal responsibility - taking responsibility for one's own actions as well as the aftermath of things done to you. I have inflicted my share of pain onto this world and I have had to own those actions and find forgiveness for myself and compassion for the little girl who was acting out in cries for help.

Accountability is the other side of the coin of

empowerment. I control my life, and I am responsible for the aftermath of that which is done to me, that which I do, and that which I choose not to do. We tend to see responsibility as a burden but it is really simply a skill. It means "the ability to respond" (7). When you are able to respond consciously and intentionally to the darkness in the world, it includes with it the power to do something with that darkness. How long will you sit in it? How long will you take it, withstand it, perhaps even punish yourself? What are you going to do with it?

I want to tell my former self, that young, innocent child, that -

Your skin is brown, yes, and it is beautiful.

Your facial features are Persian and South Asian, and, yes, they are different, and they are beautiful.

Let go of wanting to be the other - the white skinned little girl with tiny features. Differences are the source of beauty in this world.

I want to tell my former self, that college student, that -

You did nothing wrong.

These were about taking your power and asserting their control.

You will reclaim it and it will be more than it ever was before because you are going to transmute all that darkness in your life into light.

I want to tell everyone out there -

those who have been bullied

those who have been assaulted

those who have been victimized

those who have been abused

those who feel alone because they feel different -

You are not alone.

You can get through this and create a life of your dreams.

It may not be easy, or fair, but it is doable. I am living proof of that.

So, I ask you again, what are you going to do with the darkness? As you ponder that question, is there anything I've written that strikes a chord in your heart? I ask for your support as I take these first steps trepidatiously, sharing my story with you here right now and later, quite publicly. If you happen to see me, and shake my hand afterwards, I apologize ahead of time - they will be freezing cold, which happens when I am nervous. I try to take refuge in the saying, "Cold hands, warm heart."

My heart is warm, and after 20 years shut in the dark, I have found the courage to open it and let the world see the light within shine on.

Endnotes

1. DBT is a therapy modality developed by Dr. Marsha Linehan.
2. DBT grew from CBT - Cognitive Behavior Therapy, which was founded by Dr. Aaron Beck. ACT - Acceptance and Commitment Therapy founded by Dr. Steven Hayes - is another offshoot of CBT and all 3 of these tend to the cycle of feelings-thoughts-behavior, adapting spiritual, philosophical and religious concepts.
3. During my time at a community mental health center, I became clinically adept at identifying suicidal ideation and drafting safety plans for my clients. If you or anyone you know has signs of suicidal ideation, please go to the nearest emergency room or call 988 or 1-800-273-8255 to speak to someone on the National Suicide Prevention Hotline.
4. See the lesson on "severe teachers" by Rabbi Zalman Schachter-Shalomi, for example. Zalman Schachter-Shalomi and Ronald S. Miller, *From Age-ing to Sage-ing: A Revolutionary Approach to Growing Older* (New York: Grand Central Publishing, 1997). Connie Zweig, *The Inner Work of Age: Shifting From Role to Soul* (Rochester, Vermont: Park Street Press, 2021), 187, 209.
5. My influences include Joseph Campbell's "The Hero's Journey" and Maureen Murdock's adaptation of it, "The Heroine's Journey", as well as the work of Carl Jung.
6. In St. Louis, Missouri, I worked for a community mental health center, and in Oakland, California, for the No Child Left Behind program. In both, I went into the homes of the most underprivileged in the area to help them with education and anything else they needed to better their lives. Currently, I have a private practice in St. Louis with a sliding scale: St. Louis Grief Recovery.
7. Responsibility comes from the Latin root word "responsus," which means "to respond".

THE COURAGE TO CARE. THE COURAGE TO LOVE. “THE COURAGE OF AMANDA GORMAN”

P. K. MCCARY

Caring and loving take courage. It always has and always will.

Turning 60 was the year of my enlightenment, a time to take stock of my life, assessing it for what lessons were learned, and what lessons I had yet to uncover. Almost ten years later, I have come to some conclusions. The most important conclusion is the journey I've set course on was impacted by my past. As a black woman nearly 70, I was born less than a 100-years outside of the era where the freedom of my ancestors' enslavement was enacted, an enslavement that should have never been. I am taunted by this in various ways, a second-hand trauma that I don't always understand, a deep sense of grief that can be overwhelming. Moreover, this trauma is further exacerbated by witnessing the killing of George Floyd filmed by a bystander and the brutal questioning of Judge Ketanji Brown in her Supreme Court confirmation hearing.

Over the past two decades, I've used my voice to not only speak to the ills of this society, but also to speak to the redemption of society through love and care. The latter is the most difficult because the ills are so endemic that love and caring seem to be a fool's errand. Why bother if nothing seems to change for the better? Why waste my time? And yet I persevere. Because, I realize, time is not

wasted if I am working with others to change for the better. Moreover, what I know now is that there is no one way to achieve these goals. We look not only for restoration, but recovery, healing, and a rebuilding of our society that includes justice for all, not just some.

In 2021, the term of a new president, after a particularly difficult four years, ushered in so many mixed feelings, it made one dizzy. Some believed that a new president meant that the ills of the past would be eradicated. If only it was that easy. Sometimes, the more things change, the more they stay the same. We cannot begin to fathom the fact that we've been here before and in truth, we are doomed to repeat once more the same antics, the same philosophies, and same lessons—and do so without any changes to ourselves. Who among us is ready to change? Who is willing to try? Who therefore, has the courage necessary to do what we haven't tried before? Can we be courageous enough to replicate the acts of good people who were courageous enough to turn the tide of unrest into peace? But what is courage? The dictionary defines it as “strength in the face of pain or grief.” We must be specific because courage is action, and it means doing what is right. As Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. learned, “the time is always right to do what is right.” It's a fact.

We live in a country where that simple fact is essential for workers of peace. And just who are these workers of peace? The list is long but the one that stands out for me is Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. People described Dr. King as a man who had the “courage” to ask, no demand, the freedom of his people. But he also did something different than even the abolitionists of the past didn’t. King sought to use non-violence as a tool, and to push love and compassion in restoring hope for blacks, even as they dealt with those who took hate to a new level. He was courageous in his efforts, but he committed to something else. He committed to a world he didn’t get to see but struggled to build anyway. Would he be disappointed with the world as it is now, or would he give us insight into our next steps, influencing us to have hope.

And here we are several generations later at yet another presidential inauguration, hoping that something will change. Well, it did. A young woman stood at the podium with words to inspire. She didn’t come as those before her came (older, more established), yet she came with power and strength—some might even call it courage. As the youngest poet to perform at presidential inauguration, she came with something new, to speak her truth, and her vision of the world.

“We will not march back to what was. We move to what shall be, a country that is bruised, but whole. Benevolent, but bold. Fierce and free.”

~ Amanda Gorman

Amanda Gorman came unafraid but maybe wasn’t quite sure of the impact her words would have after finishing the poem just hours after the January 6th insurrection. Still, her words spoke to a new dawn and was, without a doubt, filled with genuine love and an unabashed caring for the America she lives in. Her words speak to life’s longing for itself, which

Khalil Gibran so eloquently spoke about 100 years before. His words were prophetic, and her words became the prophecy fulfilled.

As I get older, I find I’m not only more observant about the world around me, and more than willing to take the risks of what it means to love and care. I commit to being more loving and caring because it takes courage and the more courage you exude, the opportunity for change increases. When I think about my life (I was born a century after slavery), and Gorman’s life, I see a similar viewpoint in what Gibran writes in *The Prophet*. He wrote this a century before Gorman expresses it through her poem, *The Hill We Climb*. Gorman supports Gibran’s belief that life goes not backward nor carries with yesterday. And in this, having courage stands on the precipice for us to believe in it rather than the ills of society. It is to have lived long enough to be affected by slavery, while at the same time being affected by the fulfillment of a prophecy that Gibran didn’t get to see.

Maybe the truth about courage is that it changes things. I think courage is something we deny ourselves because we refuse to care or love and that’s mostly because we’re selfish. We believe that societal ills are here to stay. It requires less effort to deal with the ills than to care about another human being. Other people can hurt us and being vulnerable is a risk we don’t want to take. But I take the words of the prophetic writer and strive to learn from the newer prophets who dare us to care, dare us to love. Amanda Gorman is a light and there are lots of bright, shining lights out there waiting to brighten our path. Gorman leaves us with the forecast that “there is always light. If only we’re brave enough to see it. If only we’re brave enough to be it.” Be courageous. Love fiercely. Be unwavering in your care.

CHALLENGING CANCEL CULTURE WITH COMPASSIONATE COURAGE

PUSHPA IYER

Every day we wake up to the news of someone losing their job because they said or acted in ways that allegedly offended, discriminated, and (violently) harmed members of an identity group. While some public figures must be held to the highest level of accountability, many "ordinary" individuals (justly or unjustly) accused of being discriminatory cannot bounce back from public humiliation, defamation, and pain. So, I am not talking about Bill Cosby or Goya Foods but, let's say a teacher who "inadvertently" failed to address a student by their self-identified gender pronoun and was then canceled - suspended or lost their job. The phenomenon of canceling someone results in everyone - the alleged victim, the alleged perpetrator, and everyone around being injured by the experience.

Canceling involves calling-out (which preceded cancel culture) an individual or organization for acts of discrimination. At times it is important, necessary, and even empowering to call-out those who have harmed us. This is especially true when we need to challenge someone with much power. The current global reckoning on race has created spaces for us to question the abuse of privilege and subsequent ways to say 'no' to all forms of discrimination. However, there is always a downside to how call-out culture will play out, especially when it gets out of hand. Loretta Ross defines call-out culture as the tendency to publicly

shame and humiliate others by giving them labels without nuance. Call-out culture emphasizes and elevates the actions taken by the "victim" of discrimination as morally superior. These individuals adopt a victimhood status, prioritizing how words or actions were received and eliminating or inventing the intent of the person seen as the "perpetrator." Call-out culture also involves labeling the "perpetrators," which, as we know, is the process by which we pass judgment and put people in boxes. Others are attracted to join in the call-out to showcase their distance from the individual identified as the source of discrimination. The calling-out process is complete when groups of people lead frenzied attacks similar to what Christopher Ferguson calls Mourner's Veto - where allegations of harm are even equated to a "threat to exist," making any reasonable debate or discussion impossible. Mourner's Veto, like call-out culture, always leads to someone, usually the alleged perpetrator, being tone-policed and silenced.

The accuser suffers too. Assuming the mantle of victimhood is hard work, it is emotionally draining. However, victimhood brings some comfort, too, because it keeps one in the zone of never being challenged. It is a different kind of power that comes from a lack of courage and prevents one from engaging. As injured human beings, both the alleged victim and the alleged perpetrator end up as polarizing figures. This is because the community

around them is forced to take sides or turn completely neutral. Taking sides leads to deep divisions in the community while being neutral deprives all sides of the conflict of receiving justice. It is indeed a paradox, but what if a third approach helped bridge the extreme responses of taking sides or being neutral? I call this approach *Compassionate Courage*. I founded the [Compassionate Courage initiative](#) in the summer of 2021.

The *Compassionate Courage* approach has similarities with the calling-in method. By not presuming intention and directly appealing to a person's sense of humanity, Ross says the goal of calling-in is to "educate" them and thus change behavior and attitude. *Compassionate Courage*, however, differs from the call-in approach in two fundamental ways: One, it asks that the process of reconciliation and healing be shared with the community so there are no rumors, misunderstanding, or shaming. Second, it involves taking steps to initiate changes at all levels of the institution or community. In short, it emphasizes change from the systemic to the individual level.

Compassionate Courage is a conflict prevention and intervention approach that emphasizes the need for both courage and compassion when working to resolve identity-based conflicts. Compassion has been described as a positive emotion by many who believe there is a symbiotic relationship between systems of compassion and individual acts of compassion. When an emotion is described as positive, I understand it as one considered morally valuable. It makes it the emotion that most people would desire to have. I like to think of compassion as empathy in action, that is, it is not just enough to understand a person's suffering or put yourself in their shoes but to do something about it; the action part is what requires courage.

Courage is also seen as a philosophical virtue – a marker of moral excellence, as said by Aristotle. Courage is often understood as the ability to overcome fear or some challenges. This means there always has to be some high intensity of emotions one has to experience to emerge virtuously courageous. Instead, what if courage was individually determined and judged? What if courage was an internal process of staying true to your values? I understand courage to be able and willing to be in uncomfortable spaces and even stay there when experiencing some degree of fear without giving up one's values. Staying true to one's values gives us the courage to have a value-based conversation with people we seem to disagree with simply because they act and think in ways different from us.

One might train to become a *Compassionate Courage* intervener in identity-based conflicts, but one can also be trained in the approach to engage as a party in such conflicts. It is possible to have the courage to intervene or engage but doing so without Compassion means you will cause more harm or more significant divisions, like the effects of calling-out. Similarly, compassion alone will not help those injured because all one wants is to please others.

The *Compassionate Courage* approach is particularly useful in organizations and communities where individuals must coexist after cancel culture has been used as a tool in identity-based conflicts. *Compassionate Courage* emphasizes transforming relationships. This approach does not ask for identity conflicts to be suppressed; instead, it encourages the emergence of these conflicts by training community members to engage in conflicts (but without canceling one another) to usher in positive change. The approach is rooted firmly in the field of Conflict and Peace

and believes that well-managed conflicts are good because they shake up the status quo and bring change. In institutions and communities, what this means is that we have to think about how we shift from the 'way-things-are-done-here' attitude. This is another of *Compassionate Courage's* primary goals – transform systems and structures that allow for identity-based conflicts to happen without the use of cancel culture.

I have practiced *Compassionate Courage* when I have made overt the racial conflicts in communities where I have worked. In addition, I have trained or facilitated the process of developing courage and compassion through various racial equity initiatives in Academia. From these experiences, I believe that it is easier for some to have courage than build compassion, and for others, compassion comes easily, but courage is difficult. It is a mixed bag but what is certain is that most of us struggle to have both at the same time.

The *Compassionate Courage* approach is proactive. Developing courage and compassion should be an ongoing process for everyone in a community, so we are all equipped to manage and resolve the conflicts that arise in our communities. I believe that engaging in cancel culture is cowardice. It is easy compared to engaging in conflicts with those we disagree with; engaging with compassion and courage is challenging but will change the current status quo and imbalanced power relationship.

In training individuals in the *Compassionate Courage* approach, I detail seven steps:

- Knowing Yourself: Values, Beliefs, Biases
- Building Courage: Working on your fears and exploring the alternatives
- Building Empathy/ Compassion: Listening, Feeling, Emotional Intelligence
- Decentering Power: Involving all actors,

including leaders, and taking steps to be more diverse, inclusive, equitable

- Rebuild Relationships: Not making apology or forgiveness as a prerequisite; instead, listening is the prerequisite; Justice through improved relationships (accountability)
- Act for Systemic Change: Identify the systemic issues by involving leaders and not categorize identity conflicts as a conflict between individuals and groups

Storytelling is one tool that helps facilitate each stage of *Compassionate Courage*. Critical Race Theory (CRT) advocates for keeping the lived experiences of minoritized communities at the center of all analysis of power. By emphasizing listening and teaching empathy, storytelling helps all sides in an identity-based conflict to be both the speaker (express grievance) and the listener (hear the pain of others.) For example, one initiative I ran in my school was to get students to talk about how they experienced race in the classroom. The anecdotes were anonymously posted on campus, allowing faculty and fellow students to understand how their words and actions impacted others around them. In another initiative, faculty, staff, and students spoke on video for a minute about their experiences as it related to one aspect of their identity. The stories reverberated across the school. Some of the following prompts work well to gather different kinds of stories:

1. Telling the stories of our values, where we got them from, instances where we have stood up for them, and instances where we have not been true to our values (how did it make us feel, who did we hurt?). These are our value stories.
2. Stories of our upbringing. How were we raised to understand other communities (identities)? How do we want to change who we are? CRT encourages us to envision ourselves as transformed individuals.
3. What are our fears in envisioning ourselves as a more diverse institution or community? (Builds organizational culture and community)

The *Compassionate Courage* approach requires everyone in the institution to be ready to engage in the process. It can still work even if everyone is not in the same stage, but conflicts with those who do not subscribe to the approach can cause a lot of harm because it can make the person practicing *Compassionate Courage* a vulnerable and passive victim. One of the main questions I get asked is how much the leadership needs to be involved in negotiating, transforming, or decentering power. The answer is they need to be very much trained and involved in this process for it to succeed. To answer the question, why would the leadership agree to engage in this process? I believe the alternative for them is to become a victim of what call-out culture might do to the institution. A divided and fragmented community will ultimately (if not in the short term) damage morale resulting in many other challenges for the institution.

To answer the next question on how to get leaders to engage in the *Compassionate Courage* approach, I suggest helping them spend a significant amount of time in the first stage of this process: help them build courage by creating a safe and brave space for them to explore their primary fear of losing power. To explain this, decentering power can come only from a historical perspective; knowing how a particular group of people gained power helps us understand how and why power balance must be restored. This requires institutions to pay attention to all three dimensions of power. Lukes describes the three dimensions as (a) power to influence people to change their behavior, (b) power to make decisions and the power to set the context in which these decisions are made, and (c) the power to manipulate people into thinking that the decisions made are good. Getting leaders to examine how all three dimensions of power play out in the institution will help them look inwardly into their behavior without making it about their

personality or character. This makes them less fearful of the process of decentering power. Further, replacing one group in power with another can be avoided by examining how privilege operates within all three dimensions of power. Doing this will ensure institutions and communities are not just shifting power but transforming power; irrespective of who holds power, institutional and communal values, beliefs, and practices will be negotiated.

In the example of the teacher who failed to refer to the student by their self-identified pronoun, a *Compassionate Courage* approach would bring together the students and teacher to engage in an honest conversation about impact, intent, and harm. This will be followed by a conversation with all who believe they are directly impacted by the incident. Next, the school administration would be involved in looking into policies, practices, and culture that needs modification to build trust, communication, and procedures to deal with similar conflicts in the future. All this results in transformed relationships and systems to keep the community together.

If *Compassionate Courage* was practiced, everyone in the community would be challenged, yet no one would live in fear of being called-out, attacked, or threatened. Of course, for each of these steps, the precondition will have to be the willingness to want and accept change, but by committing to the process of *Compassionate Courage* as a personal goal, we might find ways to get there.

A COURAGEOUS LITTLE GIRL AND A THERAPIST'S WILLINGNESS TO LOVINGLY SHOW UP FOR HER ALWAYS

REBECCA DONALDSON

Many girls around the world experience childhood trauma within their families, including verbal, physical, and sexual abuse, as well as neglect. These adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) often result in feeling untethered, making it difficult to form a clear sense of self and maintain one's internal light, no matter how courageous.

Sadly, some mental health professionals are quick to label these girls when they are older with having 'borderline personality disorder,' despite there be nothing disordered about their beautiful personalities. This population's feelings of sadness and suicidal ideation are frequently met with contempt by the mental health field, and it is not uncommon for providers to wish to rid their caseloads of these women.

Having been severely harmed as children, this population often searches everywhere for a person who will love them unconditionally in a safe space, free of abuse. Rather than be told their "emotions do not fit the facts" and forced to engage in chain analysis to change "problem behaviors," I wholeheartedly believe that these women need only

safety and attunement. They need someone who is willing to help the little girls inside them realize their worthiness and how wonderful they truly are. It took years for me to find a therapist who could put down their pathologizing lens and provide a safe space for me to share my story, but I can happily say that since finding this, I am standing once again, courageously, with my internal light shining brighter than it ever has.



Courage.

You're worthless!

Courage.

Good luck with that!

Courage.

You're a sissy!

Courage.

You're the biggest regret of my life!

Courage.

Hah! You're a wimpy girl!

Courage.

Grow up!

Courage.

Fat ass!

Courage.

Stop crying!

Courage.

You baby!

Courage.

Girls are meant to be seen and not heard!

Courage.

You're going to study abroad and live with wetbacks?

Hah. Good luck with that!

Courage.

I'm not paying for anything!

Courage.

You owe me for all the sacrifices I've made for you!

Courage.

You piece of shit!

Courage.

You selfish, narcissistic, brat!

Courage.

Good luck frolicking around the world while I am
digging ditches!

Courage.

I am King!

Courage.

I am God!

Courage.

I will be respected!

Courage.

Hi.
Courage.
My name's Rebecca.
Courage.
I am a woman and proud to be so.
Courage.
I will go to school.
Courage.
I will speak.
Courage.
I'll find my own way.
Courage.
I'll make my own money.
Courage.
I'll keep dreaming.
Courage.
I will stand here proudly.
Courage.
Soy Rebecca. Hablo español.
Courage.
I'm speaking.
Courage.
Eu sou Rebeca. Tudo bem?
Courage.
I said no.
Courage.
I said NO.
Courage.
I stand.
Courage.
I am saying enough.
Courage.
I will live.
Courage.
That little girl is mine now.
Courage.
We will dance.
Courage.
We will sing.
Courage.
She will be cherished for the rest of her life.
Courage.

She is free now, and so I am.

*This poem is dedicated to Carissa Karner, a
therapist who showed up for me with only warmth
in her heart.*

WITH ONE WING, HER WING TO HEAVEN

TODD STOLL

In this poem I want to convey the current oppression of women's bodily autonomy in the U.S. through symbols of broken wings and hands controlling car wheels towards crash landings. The heroine of my poem courageously overcomes both attempts to keep her down, and soars upward in defiance of fundamentalist patriarchal laws.

the wings of desire lay broken no
longer turning to fly in ecstatic dreams
but a torn page of plaster on
pavement paved by puritanical prudes
of the patriarchy a relic unrelished by
their violent drive over her pleasure
with both hands on her wheel to take
control of her roadtrips after filling her
up in their medieval fantasies of the
supreme injustice of a witch hunt then
making sure she dropped in a crash
landing like thelma and louise but she
refused to be his damaged goods no
fallen angel from his purity ball she
would fly to heaven with one wing her
wing to poke out the voyeur eye of the
incestuous god/father in the sky and
reclaim cloud nine to freely sing her
own o's and no means no's with dance
partners she herself chose



AN AUTOETHNOGRAPHY ON COURAGE

WIM LAVEN

As a kind of preamble and disclaimer to this piece let me start by saying two things: 1. It is not that I have gotten the details correct, I am sure I have not, but a matter of how I have remembered them. 2. Autoethnography involves a researcher writing about a topic of great personal relevance (e.g., familial mythology or secrets); I believe this is some of the most courageous scholarship that we can do.

My story starts with a Dutch nurse, Jacoba Trientje Zeldenrust, meeting an American doctor, George Thomas Laven, while working at a hospital in Haiti. They treated patients suffering from all variety of conditions. Tragically much of the illness is



preventable or easily treated in parts of the world with equitable access to resources but can become a death sentence for Haiti's poor and rural populations. Without their commitments and dedication to helping those in need I would never have been born. They were raised with values in charity and service; Haiti was an opportunity to help people in great need, it was hard work, but my parents answered that call.

My name—Melvin Willem Laven—honors both of my grandfathers. My father's father was Reverend Melvin Laven, and my mother's father was Willem Zeldenrust. Wim, my nickname, is short for Willem. Names tell us more about individuals and history than we frequently realize. In my case I have always known that my name and namesakes played significant roles in my development. My sister—Anna Vera Laven—was named after our grandmothers, Vera Briggs and Anna Wijnstra. This ancestral genealogy presents courage in the face of struggle,

and I hope I honor it. I was bullied in adolescence, sometimes for being different, my strange name was a source of ridicule, but I'm proud to continue the tradition of moral courage and resistance.

Both of my grandfathers served in World War II, but it was not something courageous... At least not according to them. My father's father was in the Seabees, the construction unit of the Navy (constructing bases and airfields, and building roads, bridges, and other support facilities), and mostly (or primarily) noncombat. He was injured unloading a ship, and stationed in Alaska. My mother's father—my Opa—had no choice. Textbooks say that Germany conquered the Netherlands in five days. Opa told me they were overrun in three days... but they were never conquered.

There was a strong resistance to Nazi occupation in the Netherlands. The approach, capacity, and significance of the resistance varied across the country. In the big cities, like Amsterdam, resistance groups engaged in sabotage and frequently fell victim to traitorous subterfuge. The province of Friesland (in the north) suffered from persecution but avoided the so-called "hunger winter" and refugees travelled considerable distances for food and milk.

It is not merely a matter of my family's mythology; my grandfather's name is permanently recorded in the memorial honoring those who took part in The Resistance. "The Underground" is a spoken (albeit rarely) tradition in my family. Opa likely suffered some effects of post-traumatic stress disorder, a disease we know more about now than during his lifetime, but which would be consistent with the trauma he experienced and the horrors he witnessed.

I cannot remember when I first started hearing about sacrifice and honor in fighting or dying for

one's family, country, or God. At nineteen-years-old I would estimate several thousand times. So, it was interesting to hear Opa contradicting that narrative. His English was much better than my Dutch, and I had not learned the rules of: "there are some questions you should not ask."

He pulled out a picture, it was his platoon, and two thirds of the people were crossed out. I asked if those were the people who had died since then, he told me those were the people who died during the three days of resistance.

I asked if he had ever killed anyone. He told me it was a silly question, something to the effect that there was no knowing who was responsible for anything.

Nothing about war was courageous. If you have a choice, you're a fool for joining; If you have no choice, then you are just trying to survive.

Both of my grandfathers were deeply religious men. They argued over the Bible but agreed (I think) that there was nothing praiseworthy in violence. I was young and I am certain to have missed crucial nuances. I wish I could ask more questions and double check on my memory. I don't remember how being a Seabee fit with being a conscientious objector. My memory is that Grandpa Laven served in a noncombat role in Alaska as part of his religious objection to violence, but he did not join the ministry until after the war was over.

The greatest story of courage that I have ever heard was of Anna Wijnstra—my Oma.

Her brother Joop—my granduncle—was detained and held in German custody. A scheme was concocted to break him out of detention. Oma went with her mother, and they snuck in an extra set

women's clothing under their dresses. When they met with the Joop, they gave him the clothing and he dressed up like she was.

Afraid of what it would look like for two women to enter and three to leave, two left while Oma waited behind. I am sure the minutes she waited felt like an eternity. She must have known the horrific stories of victimization. She waited according to the plan, and it is not clear how much of the plan was improvised spontaneity, but after several hours when a guard discovered her in the visiting room, she gave an excuse. I imagine something like this:

"What are you doing in here?"

"Have you come to take me out?"

"What do you mean 'take you out?'"

"I was told to wait for an escort so that I could leave, it has been a while."

"Just get out of here..."

The Netherlands was a challenging place during occupation and the wars, and my family has shared many stories, but I have always known many more were kept secret. Some of the most remarkable stories have been shared after funerals.

Willem Zeldenrust evaded German security forces while squatting in farms in northern Holland. Much of the Dutch farmland in the central part of the country was flooded, the dikes had been opened in a defensive move. The water was intended to delay or prevent the movement of advancing troops. 6 inches was the optimum amount, it would soak boots and socks but was not enough to make using boats possible. This made the farms in the northern parts of country even more important.

They created elaborate systems for evading detection and making escape possible. Escaping occupation forces in flat and treeless farms was not

always an easy task. One story I heard was of a barn that did not have a functioning escape route, or perhaps it was a backup plan for when someone was too tired to keep running...

Inside the barn there was a barrel and hay that was rigged to drop and cover the barrel. The barrel was just big enough to fit a person and covered with hay it was a last-ditch hiding spot.



When I heard the story, I noted the painful attention to detail. The many hours it would have taken to secure enough hay to fully cover and reliably hide the barrel. The uncertainty about what it would look like and the uncertainty, "am I really hidden?"

One day it was used, and the hay piled over the barrel. With only seconds to spare and sitting in the dark inside a cramped barrel the sounds of the pursuing soldiers could be heard. A group (numbered 6 or 20?) rummaged through the barn.

"Ich sah ihn diesen Weg gehen."

I imagine more sounds in the background provided some relief to the failing efforts to stop breathing or breathe quietly. It is painfully impossible to breathe quietly when you have just run away from someone. I remember hiding once, I decided I could breathe out and take a breath every time I heard a car drive by. But there were no cars—nothing—at this farm. After all, you could not squat at a farm in use.

Everyone in the Netherlands is multilingual, the German, "I know he went this way," may have been muffled under the hay. Did he say, "Ich weiß, ich sah ihn diesen Weg gehen?" What do you do while you are waiting and fearing for your life? Do you think of a new getaway? Do you ponder taking your life instead of being captured?

Then the words, "Soll ich in den Heuhaufen schießen? Er muss sich dort versteckt haben."

Certainly, it would seal your fate. "Should I shoot into the pile of hay? He must be hiding there."

The eternity in those moments must have been unbearable. But they rarely told these stories. In my late 30s I was the young one at the table. Before the story was over there was a pause, it is one part everyone making sure I understand what I am hearing. Of course, I say I understand, but maybe I am missing elements of Dutch culture. It is part a moment for humor, "yes, you Americans know everything, you even know what you don't know," and "obviously he survived, so we can all tell it differently." It is part survivors' guilt, though I never hear those words used.

I can hear that there is a long history of humility. I understand that it would be in poor taste to boast of surviving events that left so many dead and suffering. Good luck and bad luck are features of the story.

Courage: noun: mental or moral strength to venture, persevere, and withstand danger, fear, or difficulty.

My family tree was shaped by the response to the question, "should I shoot into the pile of hay?" A "yes," would have meant the end to the branch I am a part of. The future is a huge casualty in war.

The officer in charge said something to the effect of: "save your bullets, we'll get him another time." Luckily, they did not. I wonder if I can use this story as an example to articulate the costs of war; had there not been a need to conserve weapons and ammunition a different outcome would have been much more likely.

I think about courage more than I realize. But I am always stuck on the role of fear. Certainly, they must have been afraid, but then I consider how overpowering fear would have been.

I see courage in everyone; in parents who treated and sometimes failed to save the lives of newborn babies suffering from what should have been preventable diseases but did not give up; in grandparents who served in the theater of a horrific war; most importantly in the commitments to living unselfish lives in the service of others. Courage is not the stuff of comic books and Hollywood movies but of the daily lives of average people trying to rise to the occasion when called upon. Courage is striving for survival in dire circumstances. Courage is understanding life and death consequences but persevering in the face of death. I am grateful that none of these people gave up, even when it would have been easy to do so, and that they had the courage to stick to their values when greed and selfishness would have been much easier.