

Welcome to Courage

"Courage doesn't always roar."

- Mary Anne Radmacher

Courageous people change the world. So many names fall easily from our lips: Martin Luther King Jr., Mahatma Gandhi, Nelson Mandela, Ruth Bader Ginsburg, Sojourner Truth, Harvey Milk, Marsha P. Johnson. The list goes on and on.

We rightly honor such giants. But the problem is most of us aren't that tall.

Or are we?

Here's what we have to help each other remember: In addition to the heroic acts that alter history, there are also the daily choices that prevent history from altering us! Bending the arc of the universe toward justice deserves praise, but so does the ordinary work of integrity and not allowing *yourself* to be bent.

We need to make room on the stage for these common acts of courage. The bravery of embracing your beauty even when it doesn't fit the air-brushed images surrounding us. The courage of calling out microaggressions that occur daily for many of us. And what about resisting the persistent seduction of status and stuff? Simply put, the list is long: Turning down that drink one day at a time. Making yourself get out of bed when depression tells you to stay. Holding your partner's hand in public. Make no mistake, there are dozens of ordinary acts of bravery we embody every day!

Or maybe we should say there are dozens of ordinary acts of bravery *we help each other* embody every day. This we need to remember as well. Courage is not only noble; it's contagious! The bravery that makes it into the history books may save the world, but it's our ordinary courage that keeps each other going. Watching someone else make it through another day helps us endure. Witnessing someone else confront bigotry allows us to bravely be more open about who we are. They say that courage is found by digging deep, but most often it is passed on. It doesn't arise from within as much as it arises from the connections between us.

So don't worry so much if you haven't changed the world yet. And certainly let's stop comparing ourselves with those giants. Our work rests less in looking up to them and more in looking over at each other. And in remembering that others are also looking over at us.