



When I use
my strength
in service of
my vision, it
makes no
difference
whether or
not I am
afraid.

Audre Lorde
(1934 - 1992)
Poet

Courage is often misunderstood. Many have noted that courage is not the absence of fear, but action even in the presence of fear. Courage can be expressed by moving forward, by standing firm, or by a decision to withdraw. What takes no measure of courage for one person to do, may take a full measure of courage for another.

Courage is a resource in living with power.

Courage can help us know power. Power comes from beyond us, yet is lived through us. Our power may come from our communities, from our values, from roles that we choose, from God within us. That power may show up as an ability we steward, an identity we embody, or an ideal to which we hold firm and faithfully commit our lives.

Sometimes, that which others may think depletes our power is actually a deep wellspring of power. Courage can help us inhabit the power expressed in our voice, the strength revealed in our behavior, or the transforming capacity of simply living our lives with integrity.

Courage can help us take responsibility for our use of power. Like many precious things placed in human hands, power can be used for good or ill. Power we hold can further healing in our common life or it can undermine our social relationships. Courage pushes us to be honest when we seek to increase our hold on power or try to distance ourselves from the reality of power we possess. Blended with courage, our vulnerability is powerful. Courage assists us in exercising power justly, as well as accepting the consequences of living openly with power.

Courage can help us live into the vision of life to which we are called.

From where does my power arise? How do I express the power I hold?