

Courageous Leadership: Empowering and Inspiring Action for All

Cathy J. Lassiter, Ed.D.



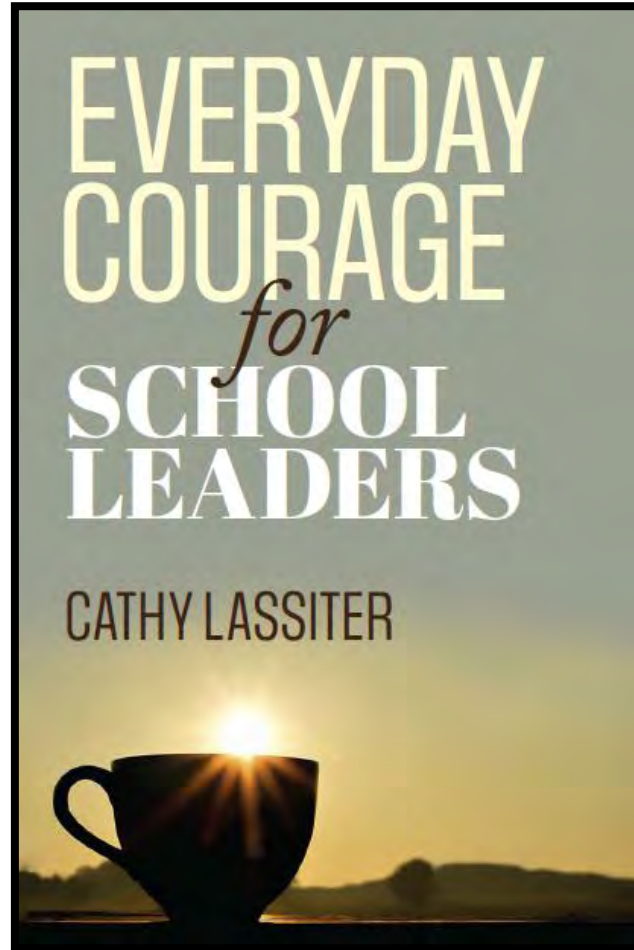
Ohio Leadership Advisory Council
Action Forum
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Guiding Principles

- Courage is in all of us
- School leaders must act courageously to create high performing schools
- Nothing changes, if nothing changes



Research for the Keynote



Part I: Foundations in everyday courage



Rationale



PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS FOR EDUCATIONAL LEADERS 2015

Standard 1. Mission, Vision, & Core Values

Effective educational leaders develop, advocate, and enact a shared mission, vision, and core values of high quality education and academic success and well-being of each student.

Standard 6. Professional Capacity of School Personnel

Effective educational leaders develop the professional capacity and practice of school personnel to promote each student's academic success and well-being.

Standard 2. Ethics & Professional Norms

Effective educational leaders act ethically and according to professional norms to promote each student's academic success and well-being.

Standard 7. Professional Community for Teachers & Staff

Effective educational leaders foster a professional community of teachers and other professional staff to promote each student's academic success and well-being.

Standard 3. Equity & Cultural Responsiveness

Effective educational leaders strive for equity of educational opportunity and culturally responsive practices to promote each student's academic success and well-being.

Standard 8. Meaningful Engagement of Families & Community

Effective educational leaders engage families and the community in meaningful, reciprocal, and mutually beneficial ways to promote each student's academic success and well-being.

Standard 4. Curriculum, Instruction, & Assessment

Effective educational leaders develop and support intellectually rigorous and coherent systems of curriculum, instruction, and assessment to promote each student's academic success and well-being.

Standard 9. Operations & Management

Effective educational leaders manage school operations and resources to promote each student's academic success and well-being.

Standard 5. Community of Care & Support for Students

Effective educational leaders cultivate an inclusive, caring, and supportive school community that promotes the academic success and well-being of each student.

Standard 10. School Improvement

Effective educational leaders act as agents of continuous improvement to promote each student's academic success and well-being.

PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS FOR EDUCATIONAL LEADERS 2015

<p>Standard 1. Mission, Vision, & Core Values Effective educational leaders develop, advocate, and enact a shared mission, vision, and core values of high quality education and academic success and well-being of each student.</p>	<p>Standard 6. Professional Capacity of School Personnel Effective educational leaders develop the professional capacity and practice of school personnel to promote each student's academic success and well-being.</p>
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PSEL Standard 1

Vision, Mission & Core Values Element

**Articulate, advocate, and cultivate core values that define the school's culture and stress the imperative of child-centered education; high expectations and student support; equity, inclusiveness, and social justice; openness, caring, and trust; and continuous improvement.
(p.9)**

PSEL Standard 3

Curriculum, Instruction & Assessment Element

Confront and alter institutional biases of student marginalization, deficit-based schooling, and low expectations associated with race, class, culture and language, gender and sexual orientation, and disability or special status. (p.11)

Tommy Thompson, New London High, CT



Ashton Clemmons, Brooks Global, NC



Emily Paul, (retired)
Good Shepard of the Nativity,
New Orleans, LA



Stan Law, Arlington High, IN



Walter Perez, Austin Elementary, TX

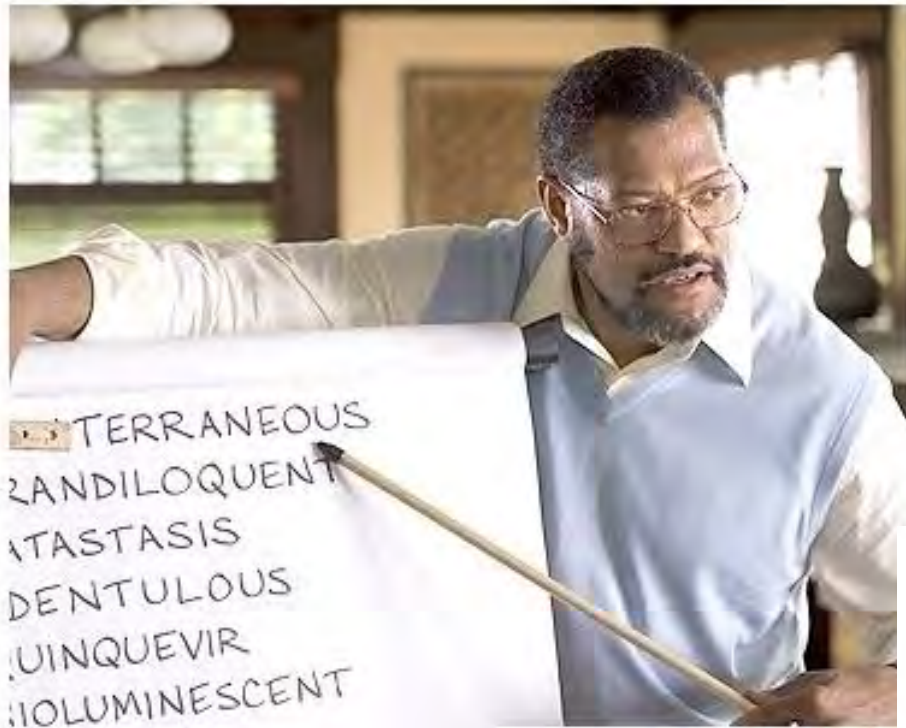


The Meaning

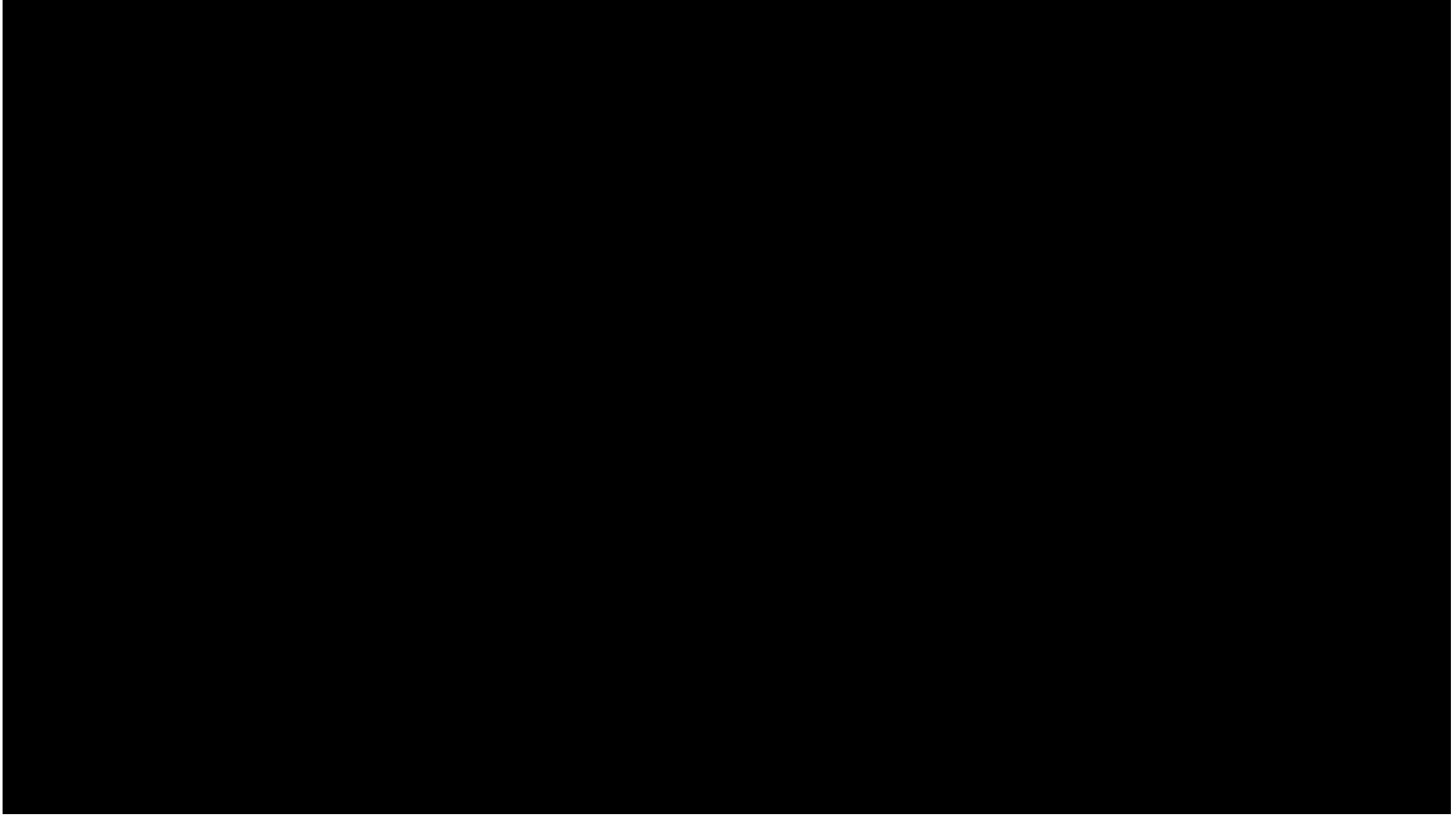


A woman in a dark business suit is captured mid-air, jumping between two rocky ledges. She has her arms outstretched and a determined expression. The background is a clear blue sky. The image is part of a presentation slide with a red footer.

**There is no
courage
without fear.**



Our Deepest Fear



There are many kinds
of courage.
Awesome kinds.
And everyday kinds.



Still, courage
is courage —
whatever kind.

Kinds of Courage for School Leaders

Kinds of Courage

Moral Courage:

Standing up and acting when injustices occur, human rights are violated or when persons are treated unfairly.

Disciplined Courage:

Remaining steadfast, strategic, and deliberate in the face of inevitable set backs and failures for the greater good.

Everyday Courage

Intellectual Courage:

Challenging old assumptions and understandings and acting on new learnings and insights gleaned from experience and/or educational research.

Empathetic Courage:

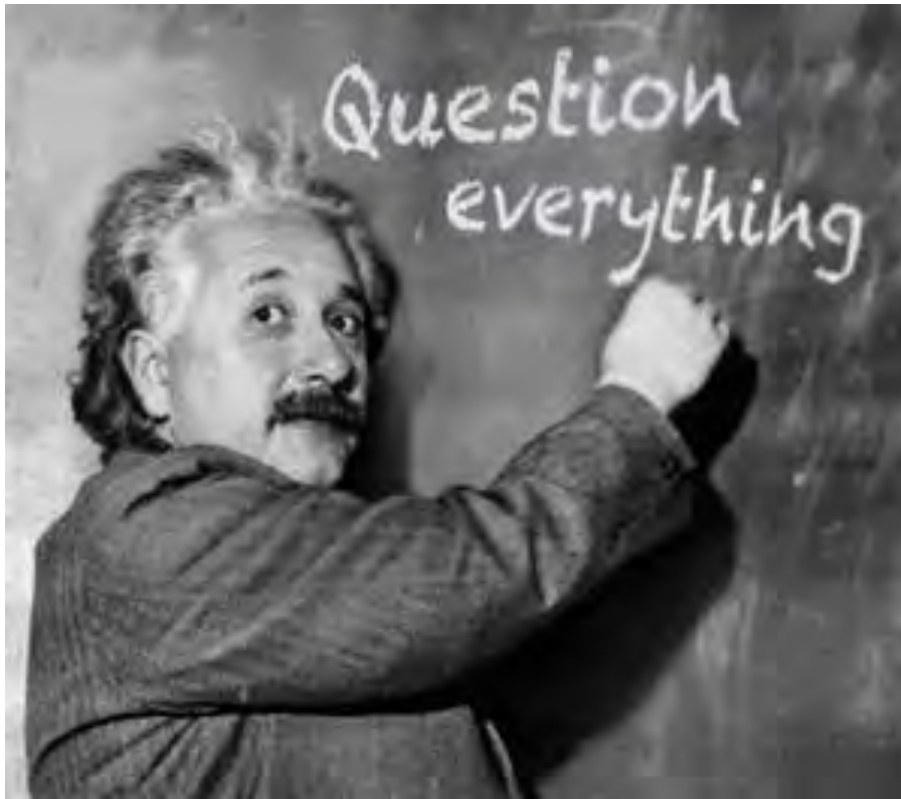
Acknowledging personal bias' and intentionally moving away from them in order to vicariously experience the trials and triumphs of others.

Partner Talk

Discuss the extent to which these types of courage are needed by school leaders with specific examples that require one or more of the 4 kinds of courage.



What's happening in TBT's and BLT's?



Determining Impact on All Students



Kinds of Courage

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Part II: Does everyone have courage?



Does everyone have courage?

Growing body of research in psychology and neuroscience on how courage operates in the brain



Research says, yes!

2 Studies



Research Questions

- Can we train our brain to act courageously?
- Can courage be leveraged to improve organizational performance?



Weizmann Institute in Rehovot, Israel

Research

- **Purpose:
Measure fear
and document
courage in the
brain**



Snakes in an MRI Machine



Fear Thou Not: Activity of Frontal and Temporal Circuits in Moments of Real-Life Courage

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SUMMARY

How does the brain encode courage in a real-life fearful situation that demands an immediate response? In this study, volunteers who fear snakes had to bring a live snake into close proximity with their heads while their brains were scanned using functional magnetic resonance imaging (fMRI). Bringing the snake closer was associated with a dissociation between subjective fear and somatic arousal. Activity in the subgenual anterior cingulate cortex (sgACC) and the right temporal pole was positively correlated with such action. Further, activity in the sgACC was positively correlated with the level of fear upon choosing to overcome fear but not upon succumbing to it. Conversely, activity in a set of inter-related temporal lobe structures, including the amygdala, was attenuated as the level of fear increased when choosing to overcome fear. We propose how the internally reinforced fast representational shift, in which the courageous-response representation gains control over behavior, takes place.

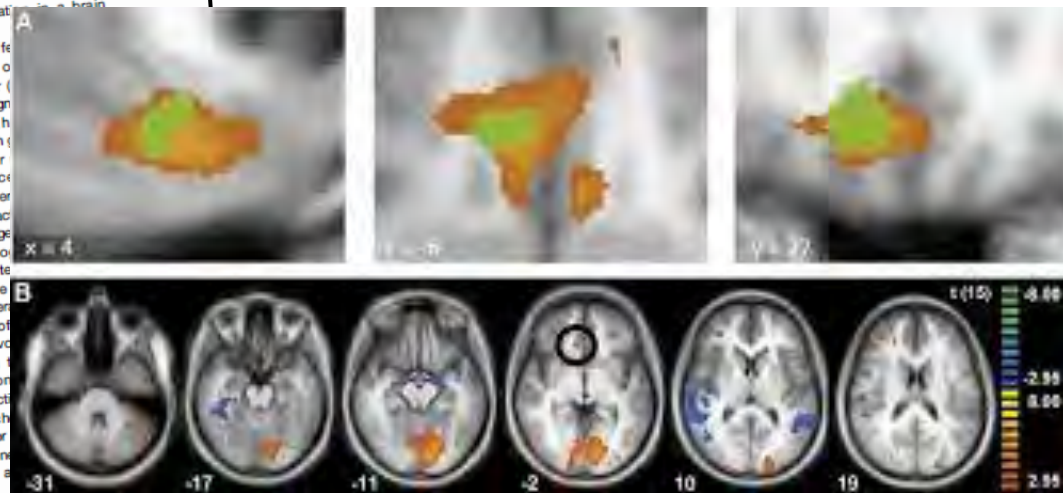
INTRODUCTION

The Roman philosopher Seneca considered all humans slaves to fear (Seneca, 1969). Yet given the right circumstances, ordinary people can set themselves free of this bondage and act courageously. How is this achieved? To act courageously may mean in ordinary discourse anything from rescuing a child from turbulent waters to selecting a risky academic career. Such a broad spectrum of behaviors hence spans different situations and time intervals. However, the wide spectrum of courageous behaviors does have a common denominator, which is the performance of voluntary action opposed to that promoted by ongoing fear (Rachman, 1984, 1990, 2004a). This suggests that rather different manifestations of courage might share some core brain mechanisms. It is noteworthy that courage as here conceived focuses on action (in spite of fearfulness) that is observed in the general population rather than on an exceptional trait (fearlessness). Thus, by gauging properly defined

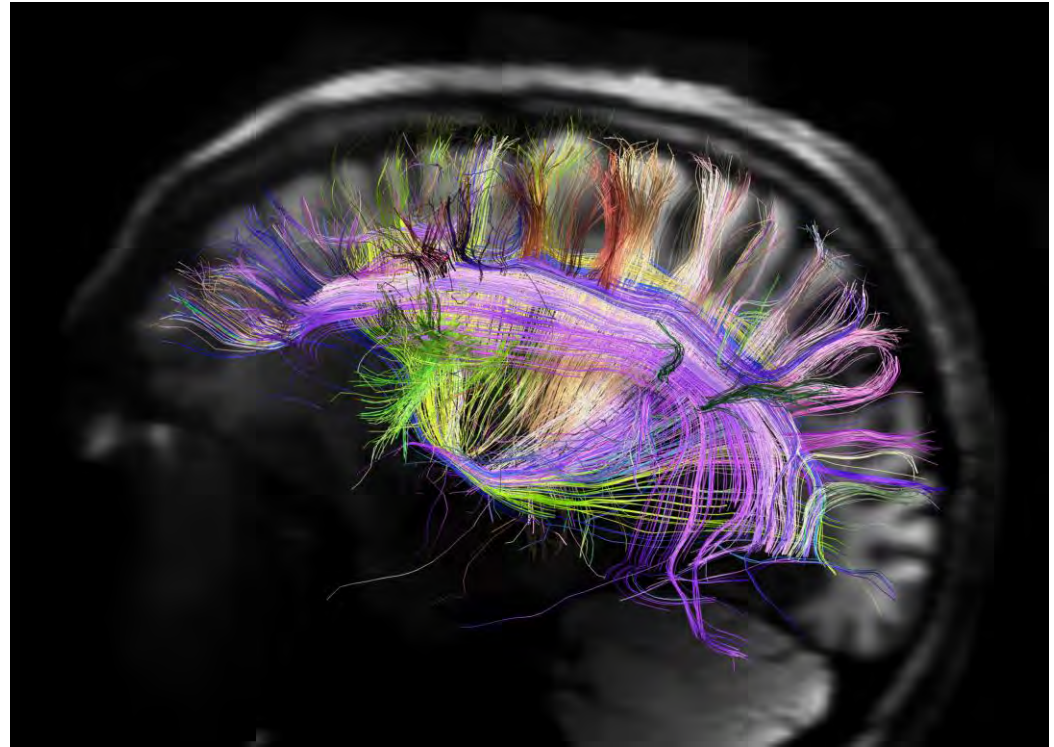
actions of either overcoming fear or succumbing to it in an acute controllable fearful situation, one can render certain neural substrates of courage amenable to investigation in a brain research laboratory setting.

Because it has to do with action to overcome fear, brain mechanisms of courage is expected to be a prolific research on brain mechanisms of fear (fear extinction (Quirk et al., 2006), and cognitive emotion (Ochsner and Gross, 2005)). There are, however, differences. Experimental extinction deals with conditioning to appreciate that a conditioned fear warranted any more because the original source is extinguished, whereas courageous action as considered here is a prompt voluntary overcoming of the fear reaction on-line source of fear. And although courageous action involves emotion control, in research protocols of cognitive emotion control, participants are commonly instructed to use cognitive strategies to regulate emotion, while in this regulation is not instrumental in general, nor does it affect the unfolding of the protocol. In contrast, real-life courage involves idiosyncratic regulation strategies leading to the best of our knowledge, to date, no functional studies have been reported that allow a choice to succumb to a naturalistic source of fear or to act on the choice; hence, there are no known brain mechanisms of swift decision and action to overcome fear.

In this study we devised a paradigm that enables induction of a sustained acute ecological fear ambience within a functional magnetic resonance imaging (fMRI) scanner, while allowing participants instant choices between overcoming and succumbing to the ongoing fear and a behavioral expression of these choices. We selected a snake as the fear-eliciting stimulus because fear of snakes, often intense, is common in the general population (Agras et al., 1969). Specifically, a live snake (common snake, *Elaphe guttata*, ~1.5 m long) or a toy bear (a control stimulus intended to evoke no fear) were secured to the top of a trolley that could travel step-wise on a conveyor belt spanning the distance between the far end of the scan room and close proximity to the participant's head within the scanner. Participants were instructed that their task was to reach maximal proximity to the objects, while overcoming to the best of their ability

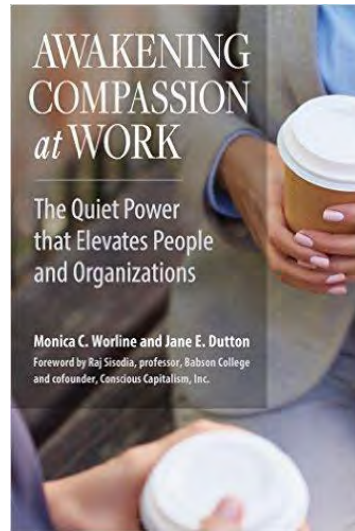


Study 1 Findings



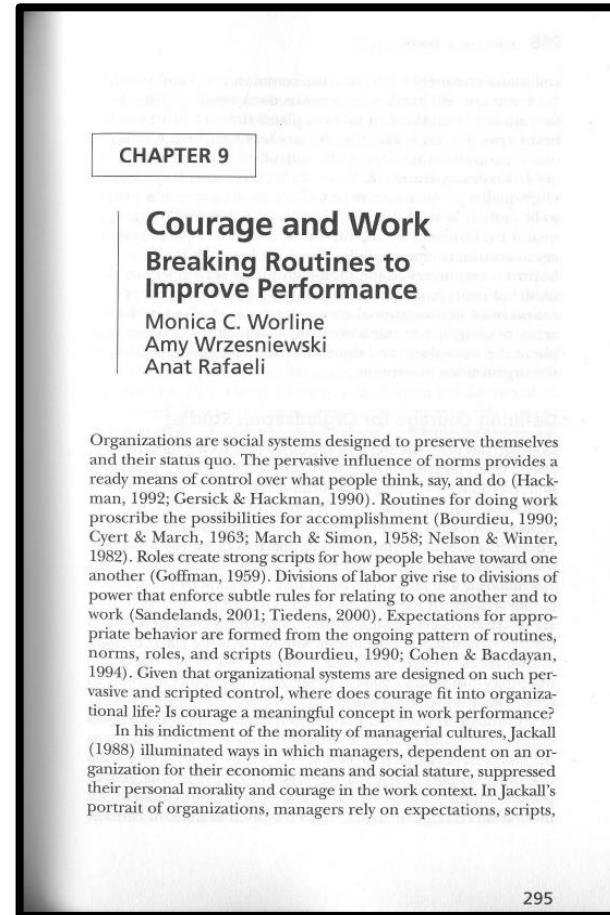
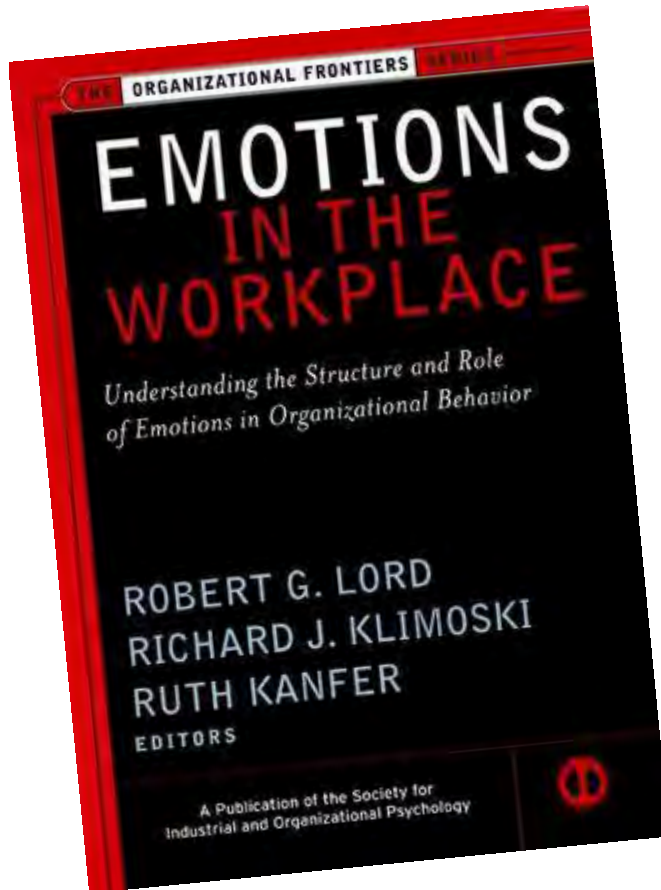
There is a courage center in the brain that is activated when we face our fears and this center serves to quiet the fear when courage activated.

Study 2: The Role of Courage in the Workplace



The Center for Compassion and Altruism Research and Education

Worline, M.C., Wrzesniewski, A & Rafaeli, A (2002). Courage and work. Breaking routines to improve performance.



Worline, M.C., Wrzesniewski, A & Rafaeli, A (2002). Courage and work. Breaking routines to improve performance.

Study 2: Findings



- Individuals who witnessed courage had subsequent
 - higher levels of self-efficacy,
 - a sense of organizational ownership,
 - a willingness to be engaged in work.

Courage at Work

- **Self-efficacy**
- **Ownership**
- **Engagement**

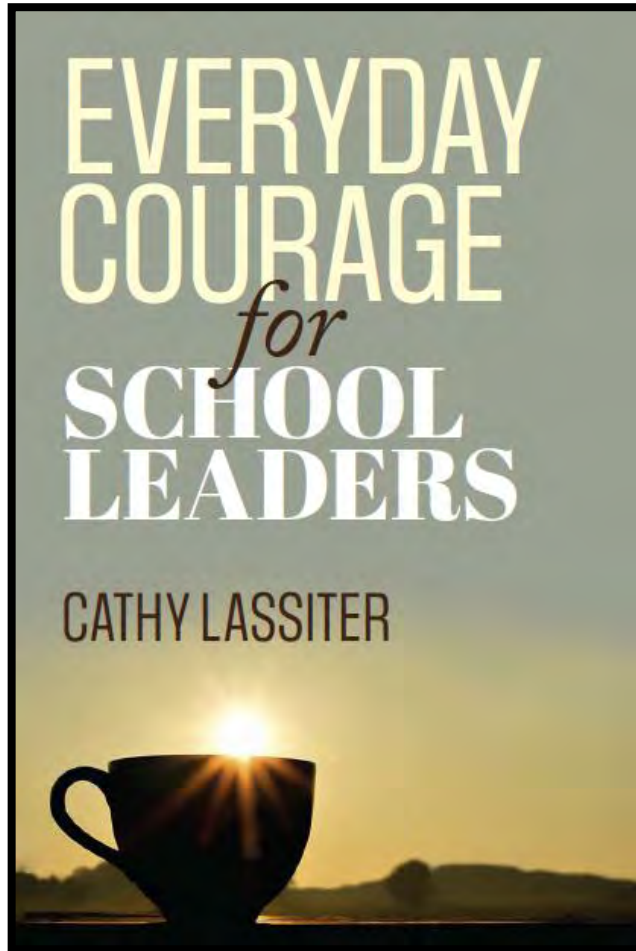


Partner Talk

Share an experience you have had at work which is related to the findings in research on courage.



The Three Cups of Courage



Trust

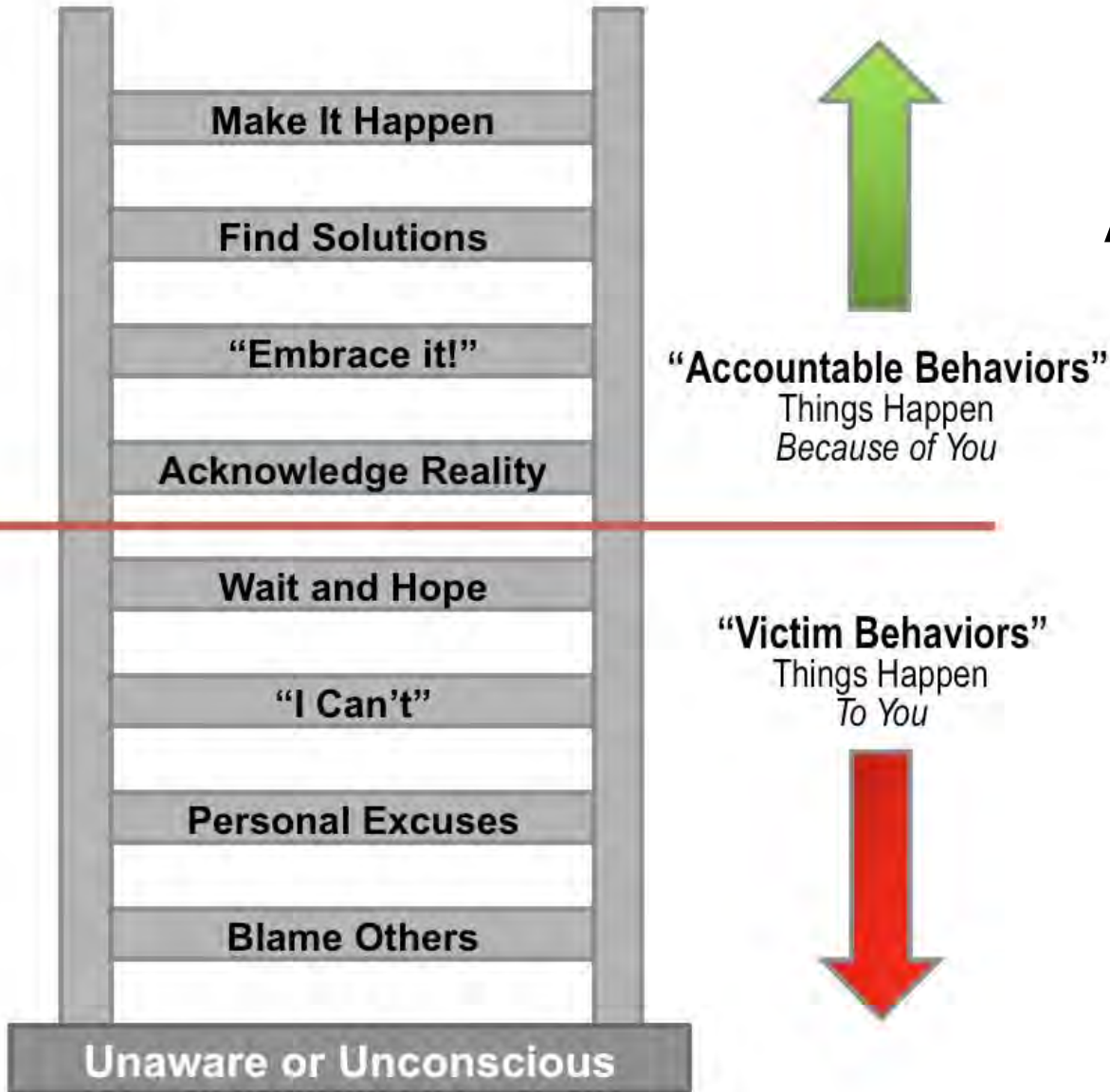


Accountability

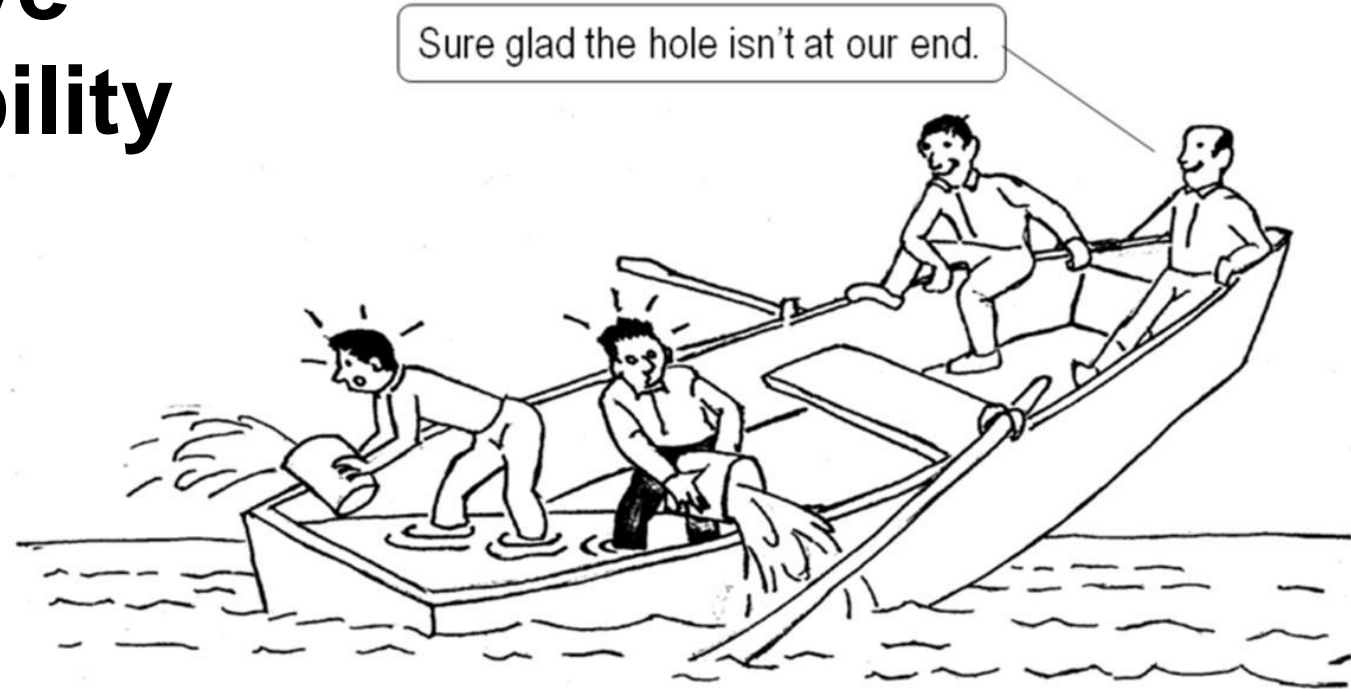


Risk-Taking

Personal and Collective Accountability



Collective Accountability



Collective accountability is the shared responsibility for results and the cooperative work among all staff to achieve at high levels. People are strongly connected, and they feel responsible to each other for getting their work done.

Organizational trust is dependent on the actions of the leader.



Trust builds *Organizational Citizenship*



Taking Risks in Service of Students

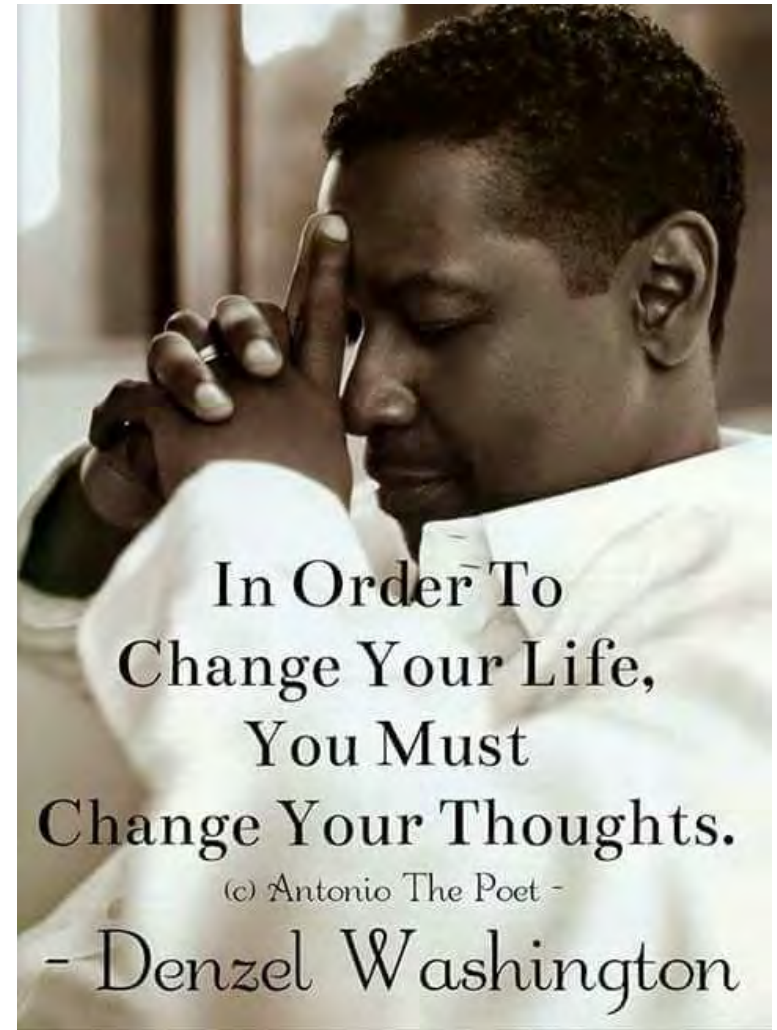


Building YOUR Courageous Mindset



3 Keys to a Courageous Mindset

**Believe in yourself
without limits
Keep worry at bay
Maintain optimism**



1. Believe in Yourself Without Limits





**Listen to the
voice of
strength,
confidence,
power and
passion.**

_____ %
of self talk
is negative



Roselle, B. 2006. *Fearless Leadership: Conquering Your Fears and the Lies that Drive Them*. Leader Press. Minneapolis, MN

**95 %
of self
talk is
negative**



Roselle, B. 2006. *Fearless Leadership: Conquering Your Fears and the Lies that Drive Them*. Leader Press. Minneapolis, MN

2. Keep worries at bay.

**WORRYING DOES NOT TAKE
AWAY TOMORROW'S TROUBLES:
IT TAKES AWAY TODAY'S PEACE**





Worrying constantly and staying on high alert will impede your development as a courageous leader.

amy

**Excessive
worrying takes
away focus,
causes fatigue
and stress, and
steals joy.**




Keep Worry at Bay

%	Worries
	Things that never actually happened
	Things from the past that could neither be changed nor otherwise influenced
	Needless worries about health
	Petty worries about unimportant things
	Worries about substantial issues
	Worries about things that could be controlled or changed

Keep Worry at Bay

%	Worries
40%	Things that never actually happened
30%	Things from the past that could neither be changed nor otherwise influenced
12%	Needless worries about health
10%	Petty worries about unimportant things
8%	Worries about substantial issues
½ of the 8% or 4%	Worries about things that could be controlled or changed

A low-angle, close-up photograph of a person's legs and feet as they walk on a paved path. The person is wearing dark brown trousers and brown leather shoes. The path is marked with a large white arrow pointing to the right. The background is blurred, showing other people walking in the same direction. The overall tone is motivational and focused on forward movement.

**The best antidote for
worry is purposeful
action toward a
meaningful goal.**

3. Maintain Optimism



“A pessimist is one who makes difficulties of his opportunities and an optimist is one who makes opportunities of his difficulties.”

- Harry S Truman



**Be deliberate
about your
optimism and
keep optimistic
people around
you.**



**Give yourself
credit for what
is best in you.**



**Optimists
outperform
pessimists by 50%**



Seligman, M. 2006. *Learned optimism: How to change your mind and your life.* Random House. New York.

A tale of two sales executives

“The prospects for sales are dim because no one wears shoes here.”



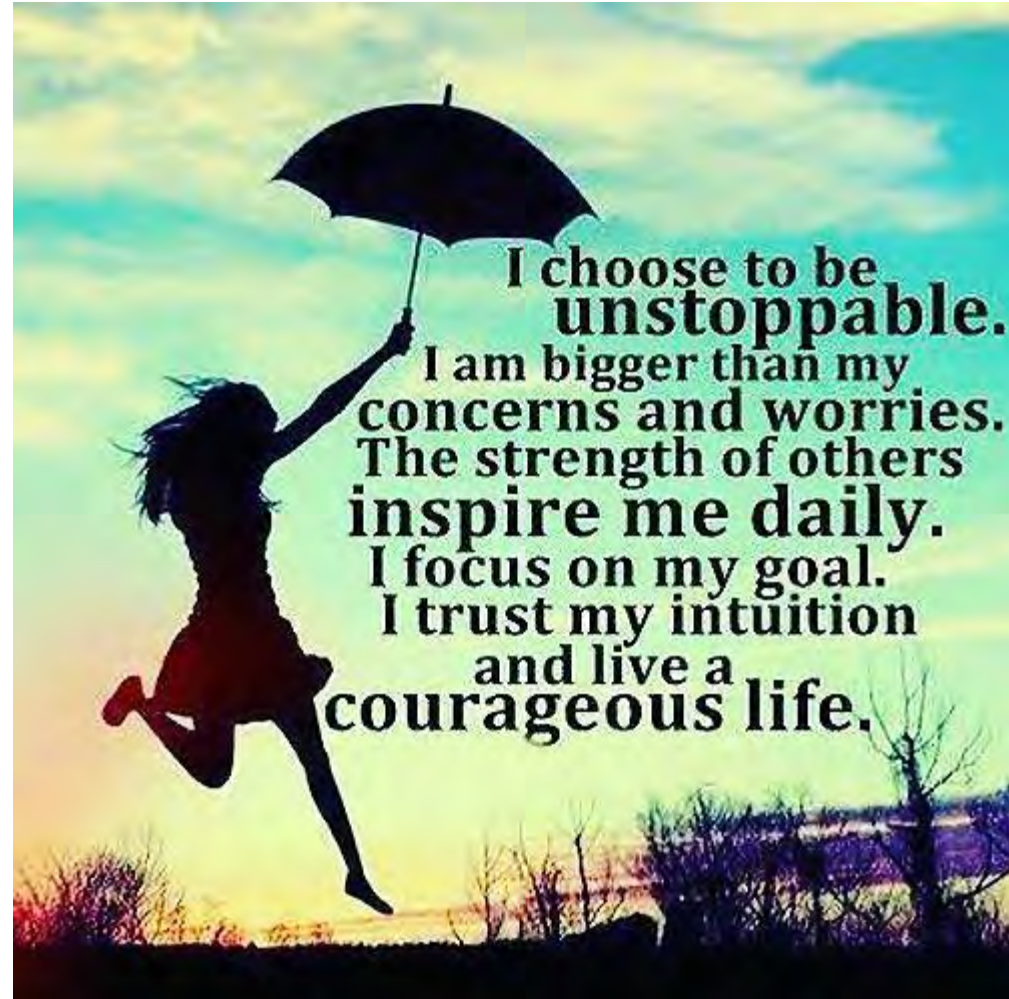
A tale of two sales executives

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Courageous Mindset

1. Believe in yourself without limits
2. Keep worry at bay
3. Maintain optimism



Eddie Murphy-Imagine That



*In conclusion,
Remember this.....*



“You may encounter many defeats, but you must not be defeated. In fact, it may be necessary to encounter the defeats, so you can know who you are, what you can rise from, how you can still come out of it.”

Maya Angelou

Closure and Questions

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