

Demonstrate Courage

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Did the last month offer you opportunities to demonstrate courage? If it did or didn't there will undoubtedly be some openings in your future. All the women who contributed to my book ***From Woe to WOW: How Resilient Women Succeed at Work*** shared stories which demonstrated courage in some form or other. Bravery is a prerequisite of resilience; to be able to bounce back from adversity and face what may initially feel overwhelming.

You have permission to make waves, to yell "Danger" and to call in the cavalry.

It's easy to see resilience in our esteemed role models—in Mother Teresa and her work with the poor in the slums of Calcutta; Margaret Sanger, who received a prison sentence because of her pioneering efforts to educate women living in the ghettos of New York city about contraception; Oprah Winfrey, who rose to success after a challenging childhood that included poverty and sexual abuse.

The danger is to compare ourselves and conclude we have never done an act of courage. Not so! Some days it takes all the courage you can muster to get up in the morning and face deadlines, disempowering management, disgruntled co-workers, dissatisfied clients or the myriad other workplace challenges you'd just as soon toss in the rubbish bin. However, facing them is an act of courage. Acknowledge and applaud your everyday acts of courage.

Take time for courage—courage to seek the job you really want, courage to take time for yourself, courage to stop doing what doesn't work for you and courage to stand up to the world's injustices. Ask yourself songwriter Jana Stanfield's question, "What would I do today if I were brave?"

Here are some tips taken from ***From Woe to WOW***:

Ten Tips to Feel the Fear and Do Your Work Anyway

"I can keep myself safe."

1. Support yourself when feeling anxious while taking justified action.
2. Flex your courage. Take a risk outside your comfort zone. You might challenge a procedure that others protect with "we've always done it that way." You might ask for a raise or an extended benefits package.
3. Exercise and become physically strong.
4. Take an assertiveness or self-defence class.
5. If you lived in fear as a child, tell yourself that, as an adult, you can now take care of yourself.
6. Edit out disempowering thoughts.

7. If you have an irrational fear or phobia, arrange for therapy. Phobias typically are easily diminished.
8. Think of all the times you have demonstrated courage.
9. Choose a courageous role model.
10. Become your own hero.

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