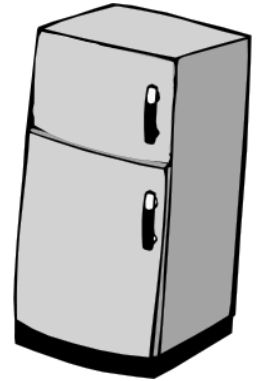




RE-Frigerator Page



We Celebrate...

Our theme for February is *Courage*. There are lots of kinds of courage, and lots of kinds of situations that call on us to be brave.

You could be courageous by doing things that are physically challenging, like climbing to the top of a high tree.

You could do things that are mentally courageous, like listening to someone you disagree with, and being open to changing your mind if they have more or better information than you have.

You could do things that are emotionally courageous, like reaching out to make a new friend if you are shy.

And, more than anything, UUism challenges us to be morally courageous—to do the right thing even when it is hard. Maybe that means speaking up when you hear someone say something cruel. Maybe it means stepping out of your comfort zone to create change. Moral courage isn't easy or simple, but it's how we build a better world!

**Family Quest
of the Church of
the Larger
Fellowship**

Feb. 2020



We Honor...

There have been plenty of Unitarians, Universalists and UUs who have shown courage, but perhaps the most obvious example of amazing moral courage would be Waitstill and Martha Sharp.



In 1939 Rev. Waitstill Sharp got a call from the vice president of the American Unitarian Association, asking them "to undertake the first intervention against evil by the denomination, to be started immediately overseas."

In spite of the extreme danger, Waitstill and Martha left behind their chil-

dren and their comfortable life to go to Czechoslovakia just before the Nazis took over that country.

In the months and years to come, in both Czechoslovakia and France, they operated as undercover agents getting people whose lives were in imme-

diated danger out of Nazi-occupied Europe.

Working with various aid networks, the Sharps rescued an estimated 125 people — Jews, political activists, writers, children and others under threat as fascist armies spread

across Europe. They also helped get food and other assistance to hundreds more in urgent need.

With incredible determination and bravery, literally risking their own lives, the Sharps chose to do everything in their power to resist a terrible evil of their time.

Talk About It!

- ☺ What is something you've done lately that felt courageous?
- ☺ Who is someone you admire for their courage?
- ☺ What is something you would do if you felt more courageous?
- ☺ What helps you to move forward when you are feeling anxious or intimidated?
- ☺ What courageous act would you like to be remembered for?

Act...

Bullying is pretty much the opposite of courage. Bullies make up for their own insecurities by taking them out on other people—people who they feel are not going to be able to fight back. But standing up to bullies is a courageous act that can make a big difference. You don't have to physically fight a bully to take a courageous stand.

If you see someone being bullied you can call them over to you and invite



them to join you in an activity somewhere else.

You can use humor (but not making fun of anyone) to change the mood of a situation.

You can tell an adult you trust about

what is going on.

You can refuse to join in a group of people that is saying mean things or spreading rumors.

You can make people less vulnerable to bullying by sitting with them at lunch or offering friendship in other ways.

Bullying depends on the bully keeping power, so any time you show your own courage and power to be kind you can make a real difference.

Nurturing the Spirit

One way to build courage is to find ways to reduce anxiety. After all, courage is what we do when we move through our fear or anxiety. There are lots of techniques for calming anxiety, but here is the 54321 practice that helps ground your spirit in your body:

Take a deep belly breath to begin.

5 - LOOK: Look around for 5 things that you can see, and say them out loud. For example, you could say, I see the computer, I see the cup, I see the picture frame.

4 - FEEL: Pay attention to your body and think of 4 things that you can feel, and say them out loud. For example, you could say, I feel my feet warm in my socks, I feel the hair on the back of my neck, or I feel the pillow I am sitting on.

3 - LISTEN: Listen for 3 sounds. It could be the sound of traffic outside, the sound of typing or the sound of your tummy rumbling. Say the three things out loud.

2 - SMELL: Say two things you can smell. If you're allowed to, it's

okay to move to another spot and sniff something. If you can't smell anything at the moment or you can't move, then name your 2 favorite smells.

1 - TASTE: Say one thing you can taste. It may be the toothpaste from brushing your teeth, or a mint from after lunch. If you can't taste anything, then say your favorite thing to taste.

Take another deep belly breath to end.

Draw yourself doing something courageous.

Practicing the Principles

A person could certainly use courage in practicing any of our seven principles. But one important kind of courage that society often ignores (or discourages) is our fourth principle:

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*A free and responsible search for truth and meaning.*

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It's a lot easier to just accept the beliefs and values of the people and

society around you than to engage in an active search for truth, and for how to best live out your values. It takes courage to ask yourself and others "How do you know that that is true? On what basis do you believe that?"

But moral courage demands that we risk finding out that we are wrong, as well as risking disagreeing with others if we can't believe what they are telling us.

Defying the Nazis: The Sharps' War is an excellent documentary by Ken Burns that is available on Netflix.

Find resources on addressing bullying at bullying.gov

The 54321 practice above is taken from copingskillsforkids.com/calming-anxiety, which has many useful techniques.