Everyday Courage for School Leaders

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Greater Cleveland School Superintendents’ Association
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Leading from a Courageous Mindset

https://resources.corwin.com/everydaycourage
Like a daily cup of coffee....
Guiding Principles

• Courage is in all of us
• School leaders must activate courage to take risks & innovate
• Nothing changes, if nothing changes
Why courage matters for school leaders

EC p. 57
Arlington High first came to notoriety in 2012 when it was placed on Indiana’s list of 10 “drop-out factories” after 6 consecutive years of being rated an “F” school by the state as a result of abysmal student performance and unacceptably low graduation rates.
<table>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>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.</td>
<td>Effective educational leaders develop the professional capacity and practice of school personnel to promote each student's academic success and well-being.</td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Standard 2. Ethics &amp; Professional Norms</th>
<th>Standard 7. Professional Community for Teachers &amp; Staff</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Effective educational leaders act ethically and according to professional norms to promote each student's academic success and well-being.</td>
<td>Effective educational leaders foster a professional community of teachers and other professional staff to promote each student's academic success and well-being.</td>
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<td>Effective educational leaders strive for equity of educational opportunity and culturally responsive practices to promote each student's academic success and well-being.</td>
<td>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.</td>
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<td>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.</td>
<td>Effective educational leaders manage school operations and resources to promote each student's academic success and well-being.</td>
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<th>Standard 5. Community of Care &amp; Support for Students</th>
<th>Standard 10. School Improvement</th>
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<td>Effective educational leaders cultivate an inclusive, caring, and supportive school community that promotes the academic success and well-being of each student.</td>
<td>Effective educational leaders act as agents of continuous improvement to promote each student's academic success and well-being.</td>
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Standard 1

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.
Standard 3

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.
Standard 10

Element 82

Manage uncertainty, risk, competing initiatives, and politics of change with courage and perseverance, providing support and encouragement, and openly communicating the need for, process for, and outcomes of improvement efforts.
Three Core Principles

**EQUITY:** Ohio’s greatest education challenge remains equity in education achievement for each child. The path to equity begins with a deep understanding of the history of discrimination and bias and how it has come to impact current society. This plan renews Ohio’s commitment to creating the learning conditions that ensure each child acquires the knowledge and skills across all four equal learning domains to be successful.

**DEFINING EQUITY IN EDUCATION**
Each child has access to relevant and challenging academic experiences and educational resources necessary for success across race, gender, ethnicity, language, disability, family background and/or income.

**PARTNERSHIPS:** Everyone, not just those in schools, shares the responsibility of preparing children for successful futures. The most important partners are parents and caregivers, who have the greatest impact on a child’s development. Other critical partners include educators, institutions of higher education, business, philanthropy, employers, libraries, social service organizations, community members, health care providers, behavioral health experts and many more. Put simply, partnerships transform the education experience.

**QUALITY SCHOOLS:** Schools are an important destination where many individuals and factors come together to serve the student, including school leaders, teachers, curriculum, instruction, student supports, data analysis and more. Research shows that school leaders have the greatest hand in defining a school’s culture and climate, which significantly affect student learning. A quality school is a place where parents, caregivers, community partners and others interact for the benefit of students. All schools—public and private—play important roles in building Ohio’s future.

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6 Refer to page 12 for a detailed description of the four equal learning domains.
Learning Activity

Table Discuss

What can we do at the district level to support and build courageous leaders as they grapple with the decisions they are being call upon to make?
Disparities in Discipline
The Effect of School Discipline on Offending Across Time

Thomas J. Mowen, John J. Brent & John H. Boman IV
Received 19 Nov 2018, Accepted 24 May 2019, Published online: 12 Jul 2019
When does implicit bias show up in schools?
NPR Summary of the Yale Study Methodology and Findings

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ucEAcIMkS0c
“The tendency to base classroom observation on the gender and race of the child may explain in part why those children are more frequently identified as misbehaving and hence why there is a racial disparity in discipline.”
This near 30% point disparity begins in Pre K and continues throughout K-12 to significantly impact the success of African-American male students in school.
Academic Disparities
Selective Colleges, AP & Gifted Programs
Learning Activity:

Table Discussion

What kind(s) of everyday courage do you need most in your work?
There are many kinds of courage. Awesome kinds. And everyday kinds.

Still, courage is courage — whatever kind.
Different 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 setbacks and failures for the greater good.

**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.

**Everyday Courage**
Does everyone have courage?
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

Measure fear and document courage in the brain.
Snakes in an MRI Machine

Weizmann Institute of Science

EC p. 26-29
Fear Thou Not: Activity of Frontal and Temporal Circuits in Moments of Real-Life Courage

SUMMARY

How does the brain encode courage in real-life fearful situations that demand an immediate response? In this study, volunteers were exposed to a live snake to determine how fear activates neural circuits and how the brain deals with fear. Using functional magnetic resonance imaging (fMRI), the study revealed that the anterior cingulate cortex (aCC) and the right temporal pole were activated in response to fear. These areas are involved in emotional processing and decision-making, which are critical for real-life situations requiring courage. The results suggest that the brain encodes courage in a specific neural circuitry, providing a biological basis for the concept of courage.

INTRODUCTION

The human experience of fear is a fundamental aspect of survival. Fear is an instinctive response to threats, and it provides a protective mechanism to ensure our safety. However, fear can also lead to avoidance behaviors, which may impair our ability to overcome challenges. The brain’s ability to encode and process fear is critical for our survival, but understanding the neural mechanisms underlying fear is essential for developing effective treatments for fear disorders.

METHODS

The study used functional magnetic resonance imaging (fMRI) to examine the neural activity in response to fear. Participants were exposed to a live snake, and their brain activity was monitored using fMRI. The results showed that the anterior cingulate cortex (aCC) and the right temporal pole were activated in response to fear. These areas are involved in emotional processing and decision-making, which are critical for real-life situations requiring courage.

RESULTS

The results of the study suggest that the brain encodes courage in a specific neural circuitry, which is critical for real-life situations requiring courage. The anterior cingulate cortex (aCC) and the right temporal pole were activated in response to fear, and this activation is critical for decision-making and emotional processing.

CONCLUSION

The results of this study suggest that the brain encodes courage in a specific neural circuitry, which is critical for real-life situations requiring courage. Understanding the neural mechanisms underlying fear is essential for developing effective treatments for fear disorders. Further research is needed to understand how the brain encodes courage and how it can be harnessed to improve our ability to overcome challenges.
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

EC p. 44-45
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

EC p. 44-45
“Courage is contagious. When a brave man takes a stand, the spines of others are stiffened.”
Learning Activity: Table Talk

Connect: What parts of the research and/or the quotes did you connect with?

Extend: What in the research and/or quotes extended your understanding?

Challenge: What in the research and/or quotes presents a challenge for you?
Part III: Building YOUR Courageous Mindset
3 Keys to a Courageous Mindset

Believe in yourself without limits
Keep worry at bay
Maintain optimism

In Order To Change Your Life, You Must Change Your Thoughts.
(c) Antonio The Poet -
- Denzel Washington
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
2. Keep worries at bay.

WORRYING DOES NOT TAKE AWAY TOMORROW’S TROUBLES: IT TAKES AWAY TODAY’S PEACE
Excessive worrying takes away focus, causes fatigue and stress, and steals joy.
# Keep Worry at Bay

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<tr>
<th>%</th>
<th>Worries</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Things that never actually happened</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Things from the past that could neither be changed nor otherwise influenced</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Needless worries about health</td>
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<td>Petty worries about unimportant things</td>
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<td>Worries about substantial issues</td>
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<td>Worries about things that could be controlled or changed</td>
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Keep Worry at Bay

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<tr>
<th>%</th>
<th>Worries</th>
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<tr>
<td>40%</td>
<td>Things that never actually happened</td>
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<tr>
<td>30%</td>
<td>Things from the past that could neither be changed nor otherwise influenced</td>
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<tr>
<td>12%</td>
<td>Needless worries about health</td>
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<tr>
<td>10%</td>
<td>Petty worries about unimportant things</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8%</td>
<td>Worries about substantial issues</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>½ of the 8% or 4%</td>
<td>Worries about things that could be controlled or changed</td>
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EC p. 133
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
Optimists outperform pessimists by 50%.

A tale of two sales executives

“The prospects for sales are dim because no one wears shoes here.”
A tale of two sales executives

“The prospects for sales are tremendous because no one wears shoes here!”
Courageous Mindset

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

I choose to be unstoppable. I am bigger than my concerns and worries. The strength of others inspire me daily. I focus on my goal. I trust my intuition and live a courageous life.
Movie Clip:
Imagine That
Self-Assessment
Building Trust
Personal Accountability
Risk-Taking

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Closure and Questions

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