



# CHARACTER CONNECTION

“What is right is right, even if no one is doing it. What is wrong is wrong, even when everyone is doing it.”

## Character Trait:

### Moral Courage

**Moral Courage:** The ability to act rightly in the face of popular opposition, shame, scandal, or discouragement

## Diversity Awareness:

### HISPANIC HERITAGE

Hispanic Heritage is the study of Hispanic history in America. In 1989, the year that Hispanic Heritage week was expanded from one week to a full month, President George H. W. Bush said "Perhaps no single ethnic group has had as profound an impact upon our Nation as **Hispanic** American ... Mexican Americans, Cuban Americans, Puerto Rican Americans and other men and women of **Hispanic** descent have not only demonstrated the power of individual enterprise but also added to the cultural diversity that so enriches American life."

## Quote Of The Month

“Standing for what is right when it is unpopular is the true test of moral character.” -- Margaret Chase Smith

## DID YOU KNOW?

Cinco de Mayo, or the fifth of May, commemorates the Mexican army's 1862 victory over France at the Battle of Puebla during the Franco-Mexican War (1861-1867). It is a relatively minor holiday in Mexico but in the United States, Cinco de Mayo has evolved into a celebration of Mexican culture and heritage.

## What is Moral Courage

Moral courage involves doing the right thing, even when we may face shame, opposition, or the disapproval of others. It requires that we rise above the apathy, complacency, hatred, cynicism, and fear-tactics in our political systems, socioeconomic divisions and cultural/religious differences. Doing the right thing means listening to your conscience and making judgments about what actions or behaviors are supportive of your ideas and which ones are destructive. It asks us to recognize our responsibilities and to act on them in a manner that is beneficial to society.

There have been many examples of great moral courage throughout history. Mohandas Gandhi led campaigns throughout India to ease poverty, expand women's rights, build religious and ethnic peace, end untouchability, and increase economic self-reliance. On December 1, 1955 in Montgomery, Alabama, Rosa Parks refused to give up her seat to make room for a white passenger. Her action sparked the Montgomery Bus Boycott and awarded her the name "Mother of the Modern-Day Civil Rights Movement." Three whistle blowers, Cynthia Cooper, Coleen Rowley, and Sherron Watkins were selected as the Time Magazine persons of the year in 2002. The moral courage of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., Nelson Mandela and the "tank man" who stopped a line of tanks during the Tiananmen Square protests of 1989 are all legendary.

Anyone can exercise moral courage every day. You don't have to risk imprisonment or make headlines to do something meaningful for others. Moral courage can simply be acted on by doing your best, acting on your well-chosen values, and refusing the temptation to comply with, assist with, or ignore: dishonest, unfair, cruel or deceptive behavior or practices encountered in your everyday activities.

### Are You a Person of Moral Courage?

(Take this self-evaluation and decide for yourself.)

- True False      *I stand up for what is right even if I stand alone.*
- True False      *I don't cave in to negative peer pressure.*
- True False      *Fear if failure does not prevent me from trying things.*
- True False      *I am not afraid to express myself just because some people might disapprove.*
- True False      *I work to solve problems without violence.*
- True False      *I never intentionally ridicule, embarrass, or hurt others*

