**Courage**

Courage is the mental power to overcome fear and face danger or opposition or other adverse circumference, either in the physical, or in the moral sphere.

The power and ability to conquer fear when facing physical dangers is physical courage; and the power and ability to uphold and fight fearlessly for one’s religious faith or moral principles is moral courage.

A person with moral courage will stand by his principles even if this should entail public disapproval, odium, contempt, ridicule and social ostracism.

Physical courage and moral courage may or may not exist together in the same person. One may be physically brave, but morally pusillanimous; and one may be physically a coward, but morally brave.

A solider may boldly face even death on the battle field, but he may not be able to bear the jeers and ridicule hurled at him by his fellows on account of his moral purity or his habit of praying to God. This man has physical courage, but no moral courage.

There are men who boldly defy public opinion for conscience sake, but cannot face physical torture or danger to life. Such a men are morally brave, but suffer from physical cowardience.

Those who have neither physical nor moral courage are total coward; and those who have both physical and moral courage are true heroes.

Moral courage is infinitely superior to physical courage. To stand alone and isolated, to defy public opinion, to risk the loss of friendship and companionship, to rouse opposition, contempt and hatred by daring to do what is right-this is supreme moral courage.

Patriots who fight and die for national independence and people who lay down their lives in defence of their religious faith are true heroes. The thousands of Indians who fought against the British under the leadership of Mahatma Gandhi and suffered imprisonment, torture and death were true heroes. And so were the martyrs who suffered persecution and death in defence of their religious faith during the last many centuries.