

INTERN MINISTER

Greetings from the Twitter-verse!

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As a reminder, I explore each month's Soul Connections theme on my Twitter account (@kellieuukelly) using a hashtag (#) and the month's theme (example: "#Identity"). I also would love to join your explorations of the monthly themes—simply include my Twitter handle at the beginning of your Tweet: "@kellieuukelly" or post to my Facebook wall. For those of you who aren't interested or able to sign up for a Twitter account, I include some of my favorite tweets here in our newsletter.



This month, we explore #Courage. What does it mean to be a community of #Courage?

As some of you may remember, I like to keep special words near me, whether in an ever-growing list of inspirational and profound quotations, memes stored on my phone, or cards and magnets decorating my kitchen. And many of them have to do with fear, risk, and #Courage.

The words that I share with you today are from author and artist Mary Anne Radmacher. Radmacher tells us:

Courage does not always roar.
Sometimes courage is the quiet voice
at the end of the day
saying, "I will try again tomorrow."

Radmacher reminds us that that courage comes in many expressions; that ALL have value.

What do you think of when you consider what it means to be a community of courage? I admit that I immediately think of the recent natural disasters—communities ravaged by the hurricanes Harvey, Irma, and Maria, communities broken open in the Mexico earthquake. I think of the first responders who move towards danger instead of away. These expressions of courage roar and are easy to recognize.

I also think of all the heartbreaking stories of individual courage that have emerged from these disasters—ordinary people helping each other even though they need help themselves, people sharing the limited resources that they still have. These expressions of courage do not roar, yet they are as meaningful, as courageous.

Just as courage can take many forms—from the loud roar of help to the quiet whisper of support

and compassion—courage can occur in many places. We can be a community of courage right here, right where we are. We can express courage by resisting and protesting injustice wherever it hides (locally, nationally, and globally).

Radmacher's words tell us to listen to the quiet voice of courage within each of us—the voice that tells us to keep trying, the voice that tells us to keep fighting for justice. Unitarian Universalist theologian Sharon Welch called this quiet and persistent courage "the ethic of risk."

In studying the literature of women of color and womanist theology, Welch recognized a common ethic that allowed these women to continue to protest and resist injustice despite not seeing the outcome they worked toward generation after generation, let alone in their own generations. Welch calls this commonality, this quiet and persistent courage, "the ethic of risk." She explains:

This ethic takes us far from the comfortable prayer of Reinhold Niebuhr: "God grant me the courage to change what I can, the serenity to accept what I cannot change, and the wisdom to know the difference." The drive of moral life is that we can never know the difference between that which we can change and that which we cannot. Our challenge is to move creatively in a very different sort of adventure, one whose prayer is more like this: "What improbable task, with which unpredictable results, shall we undertake today?"

Welch and Radmacher remind us that courage is more than single, outward expressions of bravery. Courage is persistent and quiet. Courage calls us to keep working, even when we have no rational hope of success (especially when we have no rational hope of success). Courage whispers in our ears, "What improbable task, with which unpredictable results, shall we undertake today?"

May you hear Courage's voice and answer again and again the rest of your days!

With gratitude, Kellie