



TITLE: **ON COURAGE**

BOOK: **Chicken Soup for the Soul**

PAGE: **27**

TIME TO READ: **1 minute**

TOPICS: **On Love**  
**Making a difference**  
**Tough stuff—dying child**  
**Family**

AGE LEVEL: **Grades 9–12**

SYNOPSIS: **A small boy believes that giving a blood transfusion to his sister means giving *all* of his blood and that he will die.**

**NOTES TO TEACHER:**

| This is a wonderful story to discuss the concept of sacrifice with various age levels.

## Chicken Soup for the Soul, On Courage

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### HIGH SCHOOL:

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#### PRE-QUESTIONS:

What is your definition of “sacrifice?”

What kinds of sacrifices, if any, have you made in your life? (*Gave up playing soccer in order to get a job to help with family expenses, gave up time with friends in order to take your little brother to the playground, gave your favorite jacket to a homeless person, etc.*)

### Read Story

#### POST-QUESTIONS:

Most people take our *free* life for granted. Yet, throughout history there are many people who have willingly gone to jail defending a cause. (*Nelson Mandela, Freedom Riders, etc.*)

What, if anything, would you face prison for, in order to defend it?

- Explain your answer.

What, if anything, would you risk your *life* for?

- Explain your response.

#### STUDENT ACTIVITIES:

Brainstorm a time in history when people gave up their freedom, or their life, in order to defend or protect others.

Research someone who did this. Write a two-page report on this person (*this could be someone famous, lesser known, or perhaps a relative*).

Spend two hours a month for three months, with someone in a nursing home.

- Get their memory of turbulent times in history when sacrifice was common.
- Write a two-page report on this person and/or their thoughts on this topic.

## On Courage

“So you think I’m courageous?” she asked.

“Yes, I do.”

“Perhaps I am. But that’s because I’ve had some inspiring teachers. I’ll tell you about one of them. Many years ago, when I worked as a volunteer at Stanford Hospital, I got to know a little girl named Liza who was suffering from a rare and serious disease. Her only chance of recovery appeared to be a blood transfusion from her five-year-old brother, who had miraculously survived the same disease and had developed the antibodies needed to combat the illness. The doctor explained the situation to her little brother, and asked the boy if he would be willing to give his blood to his sister. I saw him hesitate for only a moment before taking a deep breath and saying, ‘Yes, I’ll do it if it will save Liza.’

“As the transfusion progressed, he lay in a bed next to his sister and smiled, as we all did, seeing the color returning to her cheeks. Then his face grew pale and his smile faded. He looked up at the doctor and asked with a trembling voice, ‘Will I start to die right away?’

“Being young, the boy had misunderstood the doctor; he thought he was going to have to give her all his blood.

“Yes, I’ve learned courage,” she added, “because I’ve had inspiring teachers.”

*Dan Millman*

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