

Why courage matters: the way to a braver life (study questions)

[Philosophy](#)



Why Courage Matters: The Way to a Braver Life February 27 McCain said that “ without courage, all virtue is fragile.” He meant to say that, in order to uphold these virtues, people need moral courage. Moral courage is tested during difficult situations, especially when conflicting goals and values arise. In these situations, courage ensures the performance of virtues, for without it, virtues are superficially held without a fight. Courage protects virtues from being shallow virtues that are only “ said” but not “ lived” every day. Hence, courage acts as the most important defense mechanism against the crumbling of virtues, in light of everyday life conditions and demands.

2) An example of moral courage is when a cadet breaks the code of honor of his school without anyone seeing him. Courage means reporting his own transgression to the authority despite the punishment of expulsion. By reporting his failure to follow the code, he has truly performed his nearest duty. Moral courage is the same as physical courage because it requires immediate action during the most challenging times. Moral courage is only different from physical courage in degree and risk levels in different situations.

3) “ Doing one’s nearest duty” means doing one’s personal obligations, especially that which requires the most immediate attention and response. The fact that McCain is a high-profile politician adds an element to the idea because it means that, as a politician, he intends to be honest in his daily transactions and interactions with others. His politician status underscores the importance of doing our nearest duty in the workplace and society.

4) McCain’s decision to stay behind with his fellow soldiers brought him physical harm and included the risk of death, so in terms of physical

courage, he is a brave man who physically suffered from his valiant act. He is physically brave because he did something that injured him. McCain also showed moral courage because he did his nearest duty, which is to remain loyal to his fellow soldiers, instead of thinking of his self-interest. He showed moral courage when he prioritized his need to support his team instead of his need to preserve his health and life. He preserved the virtues of camaraderie and constancy through his moral courage.