

# Odysseus personal qualities (f

[Literature](#), [Mythology](#)



The *Odyssey*, by Homer, is about Odysseus, the king of Ithaca. Odysseus fights in the Trojan War and wins. He travels towards Ithaca but does not reach it because he is not in favor of Poseidon, god of the sea, who prevents his return. For many years, Odysseus wanders the seas and has many adventures. Meanwhile, suitors attempt to marry Penelope, Odysseus' wife, but she remains faithful to her husband. The gods pity Odysseus and assist in his safe return to Ithaca. Odysseus' personal qualities of bravery, self-discipline, and intelligence also help him to survive. Though Odysseus has the help of the gods, his personal qualities contribute to his survival in the seas and the return to his family in Ithaca. Bravery is one of Odysseus' qualities that enable him to survive his adventures. In one adventure, Odysseus encounters the goddess Circe who has turned his men into pigs. Eurylochus escapes from Circe and tells Odysseus what has happened. When Odysseus offers to rescue the men, Eurylochus says that no man can return alive. Knowing this, the brave Odysseus says, "Very well, Eurylochus, you may stay here in this place, eat and drink beside the ship. But as for me, go I must, and go I will." (P. 117) In another adventure, Odysseus must visit Hades, the kingdom of the dead. When he arrives, he takes out a cup of blood for the prophet, Teiresias, which attracts all of the dead souls. "All this crowd gathered about the pit from every side, with a dreadful great noise, which made me pale with fear." (Pg. 124) Despite Odysseus' fear, he shows his courage by remaining calm, protecting the cup, and talking to the souls. In another adventure, Odysseus is forced to sail his ship past the six-headed monster, Scylla. Circe warns him of Scylla and says, "She is no mortal, I tell you, but an immortal fiend, dangerous, deadly, savage, invincible!" (Pg. 140)

Nevertheless, Odysseus bravely sails his ship past Scylla knowing that he and his crew may be eaten alive but also that this is the only way home. Because of Odysseus' bravery with Circe and Scylla and his bravery in Hades, he is able to survive his adventures at sea. Another quality that enables Odysseus to return home and restore his kingdom is self-discipline. One testimony to his self-discipline is given by Menelaus. He tells Telemachus, Odysseus' son, about Odysseus' army that hid inside a wooden horse. The horse was taken inside the enemy walls into Troy. Everyone inside the horse wanted to say something but Odysseus was patient and did not say anything, nor did he let anyone else say a word. Anticles would have said a word, according to Menelaus, but "... Odysseus held his two hands tight over the man's mouth, and saved the whole nation..." (Pg. 50)

Odysseus made the plan of the wooden horse successful with his self-discipline. Another example of Odysseus's discipline is shown when he meets Nausicaa. Odysseus is caught in a storm at sea and undergoes much suffering until Athena and a sea nymph help him to an island. He awakes to the sight of the beautiful princess Nausicaa. After almost dying and grateful to see anyone, he wants to run to Nausicaa. He debates whether to run to her and throw his arms around her or stand where he is and politely ask for clothes. Because of his self-discipline, Odysseus restrains himself and politely speaks with Nausicaa so she will not run away. The last and one of the greatest examples of Odysseus' self-discipline occurs when he returns home disguised as a beggar. In order to carry out his plan to take revenge on his wife's suitors and to come home to his wife, he dresses as a beggar to assess the situation and devise a plan. He is able to speak with his wife and

friends and still keep his identity secret. Because of his self-discipline, Odysseus successfully carries out his plan to kill the suitors and reunite with his wife. Odysseus' self-discipline in the wooden horse, with Nausicaa, and in disguise help him to survive his adventures and reunite with his wife. Finally, the quality of intelligence helps Odysseus to return home safely. One example of his intelligence is when he sails his ship past the Sirens, singing sea nymphs whose songs lure sailors to their death. Odysseus plugs his crew's ears with wax so they cannot hear the Sirens' song. So that he may be able to hear the song without danger, Odysseus ties himself to the ship. His intelligence in this situation enables him to safely pass the Sirens without being lured to the treacherous rocks. Another example of his intelligence is when he is trapped with his men in the cave of Polyphemus, the giant one-eyed monster. When Polyphemus asks for Odysseus' name, Odysseus cleverly replies, " Noman." In order to escape, Odysseus devises a plan to make Polyphemus drunk and stab him with an olive pole while he sleeps. When he is stabbed, Polyphemus yells to the other cyclopes who ask who hurt him. Polyphemus replies, " O my friends, Noman is killing me by craft and not by main force!" (Pg. 108) Because of Odysseus' cleverness, the other cyclopes do not attack Odysseus and his men. They are able to escape in the morning by clinging to the bellies of the sheep who are let out of the cave. Another example of Odysseus' intelligence is shown in his plan for revenge on his wife's suitors. He plans to keep his identity a secret and wait for the perfect time to take vengeance on the suitors. As a beggar, the betraying suitors are cruel to him. He notices the kindness of the innocent suitors and they trap the corrupt suitors inside the palace. Because of his

intelligent plan, Odysseus is able to trap the suitors in a room, spare the innocent ones, and kill the corrupt ones. Odysseus' intelligence with the Sirens, the Cyclops, and in his plan to kill the suitors, help him to survive and regain his family. In Homer's, *The Odyssey*, Odysseus' personal qualities enable him to survive his adventures and return home to his family. One quality, bravery, is shown through his encounters with Circe, the dead souls, and Scylla. The quality of self-discipline is shown through the adventures with the wooden horse, Nausicaa, and in disguise as a beggar. The quality of intelligence is shown through the encounters with the Sirens, the Cyclops, and the suitors. Odysseus' personal qualities of bravery, self-discipline, and intelligence contribute to his survival at seas and his return to his family in Ithaca.