
COURAGE

“All our dreams can come true, if we have the courage to pursue them.”

~ **Walt Disney**

“Courage is not just walking into the lion's den but also locking the gate behind you.”

~ **Michael Sage**

“Courage is being scared to death and saddling up anyway.”

~ **John Wayne**

“A Ship is safe in harbor, but that's not what ships are for.”

~ **William G.T. Shedd**

“Courage is fear holding on a minute longer.”

~ **General George S. Patton**

Courage is something that everyone hopes they have. Many people say that they are brave until a true test comes and then they find out for sure. Most of us struggle with being brave or courageous. It is easy to hesitate, freeze, or let doubt creep in at the moment of truth.

On January 15, 2009, Captain Chelsey “Sully” Sullenberger had the opportunity to put his courage (and training) to the test. He was the pilot of US Airways Flight 1549 when it hit a flock of geese shortly after takeoff from New York's LaGuardia Airport. Both engines were damaged. Captain Sullenberger had to decide in an instant what the

best thing to do, not only for him, but for his 155 passengers. All of his experience as a fighter pilot for the United States Air Force, as well as his time as a commercial airline pilot, would come down to this moment.

A lot of times we seem to forget about all the preparation it takes to become successful, or we lose track of what we are really working towards. We don't take pride or put enough importance on the little things.

Unfortunately, we can't just wake up one day and instantaneously be successful. It comes with time. It comes with preparation. It comes with believing that the process we're embarking on will lead us to our destination. It comes with doing the little things every day. Courage is knowing that we are doing the right thing no matter the circumstances, and in a matter of seconds, Captain Sully demonstrated just that.

Once Sully called in for an emergency, air traffic operators advised him with several landing sites as options. However, he made the decision that landing on the Hudson River was the best place to ensure the safety of everyone aboard due to the lack of time. Captain Sully was fully prepared and able to make this courageous decision for the sake of all the passengers aboard Flight 1549. With more than 35 years of experience, he was confident enough to execute on the courage that would be needed to do something so extreme as landing in the water.

He landed the plane in the Hudson River, swam through the water-filled plane making sure that all passengers were okay, and made sure he was the last

person to evacuate. Amazingly, all 155 people were able to escape serious injury.

In a moment, he was thrust into making a decision that could cost so many people their lives. Captain Sully was able to be courageous because of his preparation. He knew that he had the ability to land the plane in the Hudson because of his years of preparation for a scary moment like this. Of course, the moment was scary, but he was able to overcome that fear. He even went so far as to make sure everyone was evacuated from the plane before evacuating himself. He was courageous in risking his life for the sake of others.

Preparation and practice make the big games not so big. Once we start to experience success, we cannot forget what got us there. Once we get to those big, important matches, it's time to be courageous and step up knowing that we are equipped to do this again. Be brave and ready to face anything that stands in the way of you and success.

If we prepare, if we work day in and day out, believing in the process, and always doing the little things when it is time, we will be able to be stronger than fear, anxiety, or lack of preparation. We will rise and be courageous. We will know we have nothing to fear.