



Courage to Accept and Dedication to Improve are Two Keys to Success

"The greatest glory in living lies not in never falling, but in rising every time we fall." - Nelson Mandela

Mandela's words resonate with the very essence of success, a journey paved with both **triumph and tribulations**. While ambition and talent drive us forward, true progress blossoms from two interlinked keys: courage to accept and dedication to improve.

Courage is the audacity to **confront fears and accept circumstances**, while dedication drives relentless improvement. Courage entails facing fears head-on and embracing vulnerability. It necessitates acceptance of present circumstances, viewing failure as a stepping stone rather than a setback. Dedication fuels continuous improvement, fostering resilience and discipline. It instills a growth mindset, prioritizing long-term goals over instant gratification.

Together, courage and dedication form a formidable partnership, **guiding individuals through the ebbs and flows** of life's journey, as evidenced by numerous tales and examples throughout history:

Thomas Edison, for instance, famously said, "I have not failed. I've just found 10,000 ways that won't work." His persistence and reframing of failure through courage and dedication led to revolutionary inventions.

J.K. Rowling's initial rejections for her Harry Potter manuscript demonstrate that the path to success is rarely linear. Unexpected detours and challenges can be catalysts for growth if dealt with courage to face failure and dedication to continuously improve.

According to the famous tale of **Eklavya**, he not only showcases unwavering loyalty to his Guru but also demonstrates remarkable courage in accepting his circumstances, including the refusal of his Guru and the subsequent insult by **Arjuna**. Despite these challenges, Eklavya exhibits an unyielding dedication to learning and improving his skills.

In the political realm, individuals like **Malala Yousafzai** embody the spirit of courage. Undeterred by the **Taliban's threats**, she dared to fight for girls' education, sparking a global movement that continues to echo today. Liberia's first female president, **Sirleaf**, confronted immense challenges rebuilding her war-torn nation. Despite criticism, she courageously tackled corruption and economic instability, dedicating herself to enhancing governance, education, and healthcare for her people.

India's "**Garibi Hatao**" (**Eradicate Poverty**) movement led by former Prime Minister Indira Gandhi exemplifies the nation's courage to accept its socioeconomic challenges and dedication to improving the lives of its citizens.

In a geopolitical context, recognising the vulnerabilities of relying solely on oil revenues, **Saudi Arabia** has embarked on ambitious economic reforms especially in sectors like tourism, technology, infrastructure and entertainment. By embracing economic diversification, Saudi Arabia demonstrates **courage in acknowledging the need for change** and dedication to improving its long-term economic sustainability and resilience in a rapidly evolving global landscape.

Similarly, the social sphere resonates with the fight for **LGBTQ+ rights**. Edith Windsor's courageous pursuit of marriage equality culminated in the landmark, **United States v. Windsor**, case demonstrating the transformative power of dedication in the face of societal stigma.

Economically, India's **LPG reforms** in the **1990s** exemplify bold policy decisions fueled by courage of accepting economic downfall and a dedication to improvement. Liberalising trade and investment, privatizing state-owned enterprises, and deregulating the financial sector led to significant economic growth, attracting foreign investment and unleashing entrepreneurial potential.

The ecological landscape also echoes the necessity of courage and dedication. The **Chipko Movement in India** arose in the 1970s as a grassroots effort to protect forests. Led by environmental activist **Sunderlal Bahuguna** and inspired by local women, the movement involved embracing trees to prevent their destruction. This act of courage not only raised awareness but also led to government policies recognising the rights of communities in forest management.

In the space domain, despite setbacks with **Chandrayaan-2**, ISRO's swift announcement and clear execution of Chandrayaan-3 highlight its unwavering courage and dedication.

In the realm of sports, individuals like **Virat Kohli** epitomized the courage to accept shortcomings after the England Test Series in 2014 and dedication to improve. He transformed criticism into motivation, honed his skills, and led India to historic victories.

In the professional domain, **Ashok Khemka**, an IAS officer stands a prominent example. Despite facing threats and transfers, he courageously investigated corruption in land deals, unwavering in his dedication to truth and justice.

However, in the pursuit of courage and dedication, individuals often encounter barriers that hinder their progress and inhibit their ability to reach their full potential. One significant barrier is **fear—fear of failure, rejection, or uncertainty** can paralyze individuals, preventing them from taking risks and stepping outside their comfort zones. Additionally, **societal norms and expectations** can serve as barriers, imposing limitations on individuals' aspirations and discouraging them from pursuing their passions.

Moreover, **self-doubt and insecurity** can undermine one's confidence and motivation, leading to a lack of commitment and perseverance. Furthermore, external pressures and distractions, such as financial constraints or personal obligations, can **divert individuals' focus and energy away from their goals**. Overcoming these barriers requires **resilience, self-awareness, and a willingness** to challenge limiting beliefs and societal norms. By cultivating inner strength, seeking support from others, and staying true to their values and aspirations, individuals can break through these barriers and unleash their full potential with courage and dedication.

Also, this potent duo of courage and dedication requires a crucial companion: **wisdom**. Blindly pushing forward **without self-reflection, adaptability, and a willingness to learn** can lead to unintended consequences. Consider **Malala's advocacy**, which evolved beyond education to encompass broader human rights issues, demonstrating her evolving wisdom always aiming for a little extra.

"The difference between ordinary and extraordinary is that little extra." - Jimmy Johnson.

Indeed, the stories of individuals who have achieved extraordinary success often reflect their willingness to invest that little **extra** whether it's **Dr. A. P. J. Abdul Kalam's** tireless efforts to advance India's space and defense capabilities as the "Missile Man," **Mother Teresa's** selfless dedication to serving the poorest of the poor, or **Lata Mangeshkar's** unmatched dedication to music, becoming one of India's most iconic playback singers.

In conclusion, Nelson Mandela's powerful metaphor reminds us that **success is not about avoiding falls, but about rising with greater strength and clarity**. Embracing the courage to accept reality, coupled with the dedication to improvement and guided by wisdom, unlocks the potential for positive change across all dimensions of our lives.

"Do the best you can until you know better. Then when you know better, do better." - Maya Angelou

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