**Courage**

*[Video Link to Poet Reading Her Poem](https://youtu.be/l5y72KmK36A)*

Courage. It’s what they tell me when my head hangs low. Courage. It’s what the figure heads stand up and say to us as our heads hang low. But has anyone really truly completely stopped? And looked up and said no? Has anyone ever said that courage is damn easy to say – two syllables, 7 letters, 4 vowels and 3 consonants but it’s not damn easy to do? Courage shouldn’t be used as a catchphrase. Courage is more. It’s holding your head up, even when the weight of emotion and heartbreak and stress brings it down. Courage is the fire burning inside that fuels you to fight for what you want.

It isn’t just a word – two syllables, 7 letters, 4 vowels and 3 consonants. Courage is a feeling. It’s a fear. Isn’t that ironic. People ask me why? They tell me that courage isn’t a fear, courage is a lack of fear. But in my understanding, courage is created by fear. The fear fuels the courage.

It isn’t just a word – two syllables, 7 letters, 4 vowels and 3 consonants. Courage is the gleam of someone’s unruly tears falling down their face, courage is a voice breaking in a packed room. It’s the ability to rise up and push yourself further. Harder. Longer.

Two syllables, 7 letters, 4 vowels and 3 consonants. Courage is the dare to joy, the dare to love, the dare to be happy even when the world around you tells you not to be. Courage is the morning hope and the smile on your face as you face the day. As you face the struggles, as you face the things you love most. Courage is looking in the eyes of someone you love and telling them outright. Courage is believing in you. Believing in your potential.

Two syllables, 7 letters, 4 vowels, 3 consonants. Real ourage for me and real courage for you are only the same in terms of syllables, letters, vowels, and consonants. You define courage as the ability to stand up for what you want. I define courage as rising up, pushing yourself, holding your head up, confronting fear, shedding tears, the dare to joy, the dare to hope, the dare to believe. So next time someone tells you “have courage” look them in the eye and tell them that you do.