

On Educating Upstanders

Facilitation Guide

What is it?

Supporting young people to develop moral courage can begin with giving them opportunities to be helpful toward others and to interact with people who are different from themselves. Use this video to spark a discussion about how educators can help develop moral courage in their students.

Why use it?

The PI framework defines courage in the following way:



Courage is the willingness to take action towards a desired outcome, even in the face of uncertainty and the possibility that it may result in adversity or failure.

Courage differs from sheer willpower in the face of fear because it is rooted in a sense of values and purpose. The notion of “moral” courage, more specifically, involves courage when compelled to action by one’s moral value system (Practices **M1** and **M2**), which may involve action on behalf of certain groups who are disadvantaged by the current systems and contexts (Practice **C1**).

In this video, psychology professor Ervin Staub discusses how to develop what he calls “inclusively caring” people — those who go out of their way to help others and who care about the welfare of people who may be different from themselves. He describes his research showing that when children are engaged in activities that help others, they are more likely to become people who engage in helpful behavior later in life, including behavior that requires moral courage. This video can spark a discussion about how educators can support their students in building these behaviors and mindsets.

The organization that made the video, Facing History & Ourselves, has an [online library](https://www.facinghistory.org/resource-library/video/educating-upstanders-erwin-staub) of many curricular resources that educators can use to teach students about the events of history and how to stand up to bigotry and hate. This video is part of their series on bystanders and the Holocaust.

What you need

- Time: 15-20 minutes
- Video: <https://www.facinghistory.org/resource-library/video/educating-upstanders-erwin-staub> (3 minutes)

Instructions

Step 1: Prepare

Read the description above and review the video.

Step 2: Situate

Situate the viewing by stating that the asset in focus in this video is courage, which the PI framework defines in the following way:

Courage is the willingness to take action towards a desired outcome, even in the face of uncertainty and the possibility that it may result in adversity or failure.

Then have students discuss the concepts of bystanders and upstanders, first defining these terms in their own words (either individually or in pairs or small groups). Share that they will watch a short video in which a professor who researches peace psychology and has studied the passivity of bystanders talks about how to support the development of moral courage in young people.

Phase 3: Present

Present the video for the participants or have them watch it on their own.

Step 4: Discuss

Lead a group discussion (in person or online) sparked by the video. Here are some questions to consider using:

1. What are some of the ways Dr. Staub has found to be effective in developing “inclusively caring” people?
2. How do you think seeing yourself as a helpful person can translate to having moral courage?
3. Can you think of experiences you’ve had of being a bystander? What about being an upstander? What kind of circumstances or contexts can help a person show their moral courage and be an upstander?
4. What are some activities that teachers can do with students to engage them in helpful acts toward others?