

HEROISM: THE ANTIDOTE TO EVIL?

I did what anyone could do, no big deal to jump on the tracks

...Wesley Autrey, New York City's Subway Superman

WHAT TO KNOW!

- ❖ Heroism involves doing great things at great personal risk to oneself
- ❖ Heroes have the willingness to make a personal sacrifice for the benefit of others.
- ❖ Heroism is different than altruism as altruism is selfless acts that assist others, while heroism involves deeper personal sacrifice
- ❖ Heroism doesn't come from a few exceptional people but from those placed in the right circumstance at the right time and given the tools to take action
- ❖ Heroism involves a commitment to a noble purpose and accepting the consequences of fighting for that purpose.
- ❖ Heroic acts usually have 4 characteristics:
 - ❖ a quest to preserve a life or an idea
 - ❖ some form of physical peril or social sacrifice
 - ❖ it can be active as is firefighting or passive as in passive resistance
 - ❖ it can be sudden such as pulling a driver from a burning car or it can persist over a longer period of time with planned actions
- ❖ Some researchers believe that a hero is just an ordinary person who does something extraordinary because of the situation they get placed in
- ❖ Many heroes act when they have no choice and don't consider themselves as heroes
- ❖ And who the media call heroes are often not true heroes but celebrities
- ❖ Research shows that the same situations that can make some people hostile can also make some people perform heroic deeds
- ❖ Heroes do not conform to groups; they act when others are passive and they act for the good of others, not themselves
- ❖ Dr. Zimbardo believes that habits of wise and effective acts of heroism can be learned, encouraged, modeled, and are achievable for anyone at any point in their lives
- ❖ The Heroism Model has 4 elements: it is done voluntarily, it provides a service to others in need, it involves risk to health, social stature, or quality of life, and it is done without expecting anything in return
- ❖ The Heroic Mindset is a set of beliefs and attitudes about helping and caring for others and a readiness to take risks on their behalf; it involves being aware of heroic opportunities and a willingness to take action regardless of risk
- ❖ The risks of social heroism involve arrests, death, danger to family members, loss of financial stability, loss of personal credibility, and lowered social status

WHAT TO DO!

- ❖ Recognize that everyone has the capacity to be a hero even if not recognized as one
- ❖ Develop a heroic imagination by being prepared to act in ways different from others such as taking responsibility and being mindful of actions around you
- ❖ Be prepared to make vital sacrifices for others
- ❖ Practice social heroism on a daily basis by looking to help others and giving aid when necessary such as in natural disasters
- ❖ Seek professional help to learn to be heroic and to overcome anxiety and depression

WE CAN HELP!

Call us at **954 755-2885** or email us at DrKimmel@KimmelPsychology.com

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