

Episode 24 – RTT Series – Heroes, Courage, and Fear

This podcast builds off of the concept that, overall, our brains understand the totality of our life experiences as a story. It's crucial for our mental health, and overall sense of becoming centered, to see ourselves as the hero of our own life-story. This is the situation for children and youth in residential treatment.

Upon entering residential treatment, kids often feel at a low point, viewing their challenges as insurmountable. They need to become part of a classic story-line in which our young central character faces personal tragedy, separates from parents, finds mentors and friends, and undergoes growth to become the hero. The key quality for the hero needs is courage.

Actions in the face of dangerous situations can show bravery, with or without the significant presence of fear. Courage, on the other hand, always involves facing fear. There cannot be courage without fear.

A way to gain power over one's personal fears is to be able to talk about fear in a more generalized fashion. This episode introduces the concept of the "Eight Fears of All Human Beings," placing them within the Meta-Compass Model used in other episodes of this podcast. These fears include the fear of the cold, being alone, the woods, the dark, animals, water, rot, and being judged.

The discussion delves into each fear, its metaphorical meaning, and how addressing these fears both requires courage and nurtures courage. These fears can also be understood in the context of the developmental stages of life, cognitive processes, and behavioral responses.

The goal is to empower clients in residential treatment to recognize their fears, recognize that they can face those fears with courage, and thus become more resilient. By framing these fears as universal conditions, the counselor aims to create a non-judgmental space for kids to discuss their experiences and demonstrate courage in the face of adversity.