



## JUNE Courage

### Definition:

Strength to face sadness, fear, or pain, to do what you can to create a better world.

### Why is it important?

Learning about complex and tragic global issues can leave you feeling overwhelmed. It takes courage to stand up for what you believe is right, even when you experience sadness or fear, and to use the tools you have to help give a voice to those who are suffering.

### Class activity - Difficult conversations role play:

When someone expresses an opinion you disagree with, or feel is morally wrong, it takes courage to have a respectful conversation about your conflicting opinions. Respectful conversations about conflicting opinions are, however, one of the most effective ways to increase understanding, breakdown prejudice, and encourage reflection on assumptions, actions, and words. When someone is expressing an opinion you disagree with, start

by asking yourself whether your own opinion follows the Golden Rule: treat others and the planet as you would wish to be treated. If it does, continue the conversation, following these tips:

- Even if you find the other person's opinion upsetting try to keep calm as this often makes them more open to hear your opinion.
- Ask the other person to explain their opinion, listen carefully and ask questions if necessary so you understand their opinion and why they hold it.
- Explain why you disagree; the other person may not have the same information as you so may change their mind once they find out.
- Avoid saying they are wrong, respect their right to have a different opinion.
- Try finding compassionate values you both share (e.g. the importance of kindness, respect, or the Golden Rule), and explain how your view supports this shared value.

**Role play:** in pairs person A thinks of an opinion that does not follow the Golden Rule, e.g. 'poor people should not receive education', or 'we should destroy the environment to make money'. Person B uses the tips above to ask person A about this opinion, explain why they disagree, and try to persuade them to change their mind. What was and was not effective?

### Make a change:

Think of some previous **personal** experiences, or realistic future situations, when these difficult conversation techniques could be useful. How could you share these difficult conversation tips with your **local** community? How could you use these techniques to enable conversations on a **global** scale to improve understanding between people with different beliefs?