Courage

"To establish how courageous we are, we must be clear about what we mean by "courage." It is a quality available to everyone. Being courageous can mean the following:

1. Facing up to life's swings between joy and sorrow.
2. Standing up to even the greatest difficulty, looking at it critically, and trying to overcome it. Overcoming obstacles is one of the most important tasks in life.
3. Taking responsibility for one's actions and accepting their consequences. This is part of what we mean by "personal courage," or having the courage of one's convictions, and has nothing to do with masculinity or femininity.
4. Tolerating criticism. This is really not easy because we tend to become defensive straight away.
5. Admitting one's mistakes without feeling humiliated. Many people are prepared to admit their mistakes and failures, even to other people, but they usually feel humiliated in doing so. Only when we overcome this feeling of humiliation by accepting that nobody is perfect and everybody makes mistakes can we claim to be even reasonably courageous.
6. Being flexible. This means that one is adaptable and sensitive to the situations and conditions at hand, one of the most important aspects of human development.
7. Being prepared to make oneself unpopular if necessary. We should not simply conform or go along with the group; we ought to have a more idealistic view of solidarity than that. If the group in which we find ourselves does not move in the right direction, we should even risk making ourselves disliked in order to help the group develop and make the right sort of progress.
8. Being able to cope by oneself, without always having to burden others with one's affairs.
9. Feeling responsible for the social ramifications of one's actions.

Of course this is not an exhaustive discussion of what it means to be courageous, but this list can give us some idea of the state of our inner courage and self-confidence."

Blumenthal, E. (1998). *The way to inner freedom: a practical guide to personal development.* Center City, MN: Hazelden.