

# 18 serenity, courage, and wisdom

## for you to know

You can reduce feelings of anxiety by using serenity, courage, and wisdom. That means you step back and evaluate the situation you are in, determine the difference between the things you can and cannot change, and then act on your knowledge.

Gabriella was talking with her aunt about some problems with her friends. Two of her best friends had gotten into an argument and weren't talking to each other. Gabriella wasn't fighting with either of them, but she felt as if she was in the middle of their argument. Each friend would talk to her negatively about the other, and that made Gabriella uncomfortable. She wished they would make up and get over it, but they were both so stubborn that neither one would apologize first. When Gabriella was with either of them, she felt very anxious. She didn't want to lose her best friends, but she wasn't enjoying being with them much anymore.

Gabriella's aunt told her about a tool she used to help herself let go of anxiety. She told Gabriella to say to herself, "I have the serenity to accept the things I cannot change, the courage to change the things I can, and the wisdom to know the difference."

Gabriella repeated the words, and then her aunt helped her step back and look at the situation carefully. They talked about the fact that Gabriella couldn't force her friends to apologize—that was something she had to accept that she couldn't change. However, she could tell them that she didn't want to be placed in the middle anymore. And she could decide to walk away or not to listen when they complained about each other—that was something she could change.

Gabriella repeated the words once more, "I have the serenity to accept the things I cannot change, the courage to change the things I can, and the wisdom to know the difference." She soon felt more peaceful as she thought about using serenity, courage, and wisdom to help herself.

directions

The kids in the pictures below are feeling anxious about their situations. Next to each picture, write what they can change and what they cannot change about what is going on. At the bottom of the page, write Gabriella's words about serenity, courage, and wisdom.



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# more to do

Describe a situation that you have been feeling anxious about in your own life lately.

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Think about the situation carefully and realistically. List the things that you can actually change about this situation.

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List the things that you really cannot change.

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How will it affect your life if you accept the things you cannot change?

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activity 18 \* serenity, courage, and wisdom

Are you able to feel serene about it? Tell why or why not.

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Do you have the courage to change the things you can change? Tell why or why not.

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What might help you feel more courageous?

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Write Gabriella's words about serenity, courage, and wisdom here. Read the words out loud and then sign your name below them.

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Make a copy of this quote with your signature, cut it out, and put it in your wallet or notebook so you can carry it with you. If you start feeling anxious, take it out and read it over.