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What Is Moral Courage? Definition, Explication, and Classification of a Complex Construct

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> Nothing demands more courage and character than to be in open opposition to time and mainstream, to stand up and to say aloud: No!
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> —Kurt Tucholsky, in Frohloff (2001, p. 231)

Consider the following two instances of prosocial behavior. The first took place in Munich, Germany, January 13, 2001: About 20 Nazi skinheads harassed a young Greek and started to beat him up in a most brutal way. Five young Turks witnessed the situation and decided to intervene. Risking their own lives, they were able to save the disabled and blood-stained victim from being beaten to death. The second instance occurred in Asia: After the big tsunami wave in Southeast Asia in December 2004, more than 165,000 people lost their lives and more than one million people were made homeless by the floods. Shocked by this horrible natural disaster, people all over the world wanted to ease the victims' suffering. Thousands of volunteers went to Southeast Asia to help on the ground and in Germany, for example, more than 250 million Euros were collected in private donations to help the tsunami victims.

The young Turks and the tsunami volunteers and donors both acted prosocially and supported people who were in situations of severe distress. However, in the first situation, the young Turks had to reckon with massive negative social consequences such as being assaulted by the Nazi skinheads or at least being harassed by them. In contrast, the tsunami volunteers and donors could anticipate positive social consequences such as gratefulness from the victims and recognition from other volunteers, other donors, and the public. Thus, even if both types of actions are done in pursuit of the same goal, namely, helping persons in need, the consequences for the helper might be very different. We argue that the first kind of prosocial behavior is a typical instance of moral courage, whereas the second is more typical of helping behavior.

This chapter deals with moral courage. We seek to highlight this construct by comparing it with other prosocial behaviors, such as helping behavior and related constructs such as heroism or social control. We also include research about

classical determinants of helping behavior that do not affect moral courage, followed by studies about determinants that foster moral courageous behavior. Models for moral courage as well as scales to measure it are presented. Finally, we discuss a practical implementation of our research: moral courage trainings.

Defining Moral Courage

In this chapter we use the term *moral courage* as a synonym for civil courage (see Greitemeyer, Osswald, Fischer, & Frey, 2007). Both terms refer to the German word *Zivilcourage.*[1] Moral courage is a prosocial behavior with high social costs and no (or rare) direct rewards for the actor (e.g., Bierhoff, 2002). In situations that demand a morally courageous intervention, instances of injustice happen, human rights are violated, persons are treated unfairly and in a degrading manner, or nature and cultural assets are in danger; these situations are about discrimination against foreigners or other minorities, violence and aggression against weaker individuals, sexual harassment or abuse, mobbing, or illegal business practices (Frey, Schaefer, & Neumann, 1999). Lopez, O'Byrne, and Petersen (2003) defined moral courage as "the expression of personal views and values in the face of dissension and rejection" (p. 187) and "when an individual stands up to someone with power over him or her (e.g., boss) for the greater good" (p. 187). Thus, often an imbalance of power exists with a disadvantage on the side of the person who acts morally courageously. Moral courage situations (compared with other situations that demand prosocial behavior) are also characterized by a specific social constellation: There are not only one or more victims but also one or more perpetrators who discriminate against the victim(s) or act unfairly or threateningly, and the potential helper has to deal with the perpetrators to act prosocially (Jonas & Brandstaetter, 2004). Most of the social costs moral courage entails emanate from the confrontation with the perpetrators. Greitemeyer, Fischer, Kastenmueller, and Frey (2006) defined *moral courage* as brave behavior accompanied by anger and indignation, which intends to enforce societal and ethical norms without considering one's own social costs. Social costs (i.e., negative social consequences) distinguish moral courage from other prosocial behaviors.

Hundreds of studies have addressed prosocial behavior (e.g., PsycINFO lists 428 entries from 2007 with the term *prosocial behavior* in the title), but very little research has referred to prosocial behavior with high (social) costs for the actor (i.e., the person who helps). The reason for this seems obvious, as high-cost prosocial behavior is difficult to examine in a laboratory. Indeed, it is very difficult to generate respective situations that can take place in the laboratory and do not appear artificial. Furthermore, ethical considerations prohibit an exposure of subjects to danger or to unreasonable psychological stress. Therefore, the few studies that deal with costly prosocial behavior question people ex post (e.g., Becker & Eagly, 2004; Oliner & Oliner, 1988).

[1]Moral courage overlaps with "bystander intervention." In our opinion, moral courage includes bystander intervention but is more broadly based.

One subtype of high-cost prosocial behavior, namely, intervening at the risk of high social costs and with no or only little hope for reward (i.e., moral courage), has been neglected for the most part. This neglect is astonishing in light of the importance of moral courage for democracy and society (Ostermann, 2004). A reason for the relatively few studies about moral courage might be that previous research and theorizing on prosocial behavior did not distinguish between moral courage and other prosocial behaviors, especially helping behavior (Batson, 1998); thus, predictors of helping behavior have also been regarded as predictors of moral courage. Recent studies and theoretical considerations, however, suggest that moral courage should be separated from other prosocial behaviors. This is treated in the following sections.

Similarities and Differences Between Moral Courage and Other Prosocial Concepts

In this section we discuss relations of moral courage to other prosocial concepts. In this connection, we focus on helping behavior, heroism, and social control.

Differences Between Moral Courage and Helping Behavior: The Role of Negative Social Consequences

As already mentioned, the anticipated negative social consequences in case of prosocial action distinguish moral courage from other prosocial behaviors. For helping behavior, positive consequences, such as plaudit or acknowledgment, can be expected. Moral courage, however, can result in negative social consequences, such as being insulted, excluded, or even attacked. Of course, helping or donating could also lead to negative consequences for the help giver (e.g., losing time or money) but not to negative social consequences. Several studies tried to prove the distinction between moral courage and helping behavior empirically. Fischer et al. (2004; see also Greitemeyer et al., 2007) investigated whether laypeople anticipate more negative social consequences of moral courage than they do of helping behavior. In a vignette study, participants read descriptions of different situations with varying negative social consequences (i.e., the perpetrators were described as very terrifying or quite harmless). Results revealed that the more severe the social consequences were, the more participants characterized the relevant behavior as moral courage (and less as helping behavior).

Subsequently, Greitemeyer, Fischer, Kastenmueller, and Frey (2006) more closely examined people's implicit theories about moral courage and compared them with implicit theories of helping behavior, because implicit theories are crucial in a decision to engage in any kind of prosocial behavior (Dweck, Chiu, & Hong, 1995). If people's implicit theories of moral courage and helping vary, then their decisions on whether to engage in moral courage will follow the application of different standards. In the first study of Greitemeyer et al. (2006), participants read a vignette in which a bystander witnessed a person in need who was threatened and attacked by an offender. Similar to the results of the already mentioned study of Fischer et al. (2004), expected negative social consequences were manipulated by varying the extent to which the offender appeared

threatening. Participants learned that the actor intervened and stopped the attack, and then had to indicate to what extent they perceived the actor's behavior to be moral courage and helping behavior, respectively. Results revealed that the actor's behavior was more clearly labeled as moral courage when the offender was threatening than when the offender was not threatening. In contrast, perceptions of helping behavior did not depend on expected negative social consequences. Thus, the amount of expected negative consequences was related to the categorization of prosocial behavior as moral courage but not as helping behavior. In a second study, it was further demonstrated that in the case of offering help, participants expected more positive than negative social consequences; in contrast, in the case of moral courage, participants expected more negative than positive social consequences.

Thus, it can be concluded that people's implicit theories of moral courage and helping behavior do in fact differ and that perceptions of prosocial behavior as an act of moral courage depend on expected negative social consequences for the actor, whereas perceptions of prosocial behavior as helping behavior do not.

Moral Courage and Heroism

Moral courage shows certain similarities with heroism. Becker and Eagly (2004) defined *heroism* as taking risks "on behalf of one or more other people, despite the possibility of dying or suffering serious physical consequences" (p. 164). Regarding the possibility of suffering serious physical consequences, moral courage and heroism overlap: As already mentioned, when a person acts morally courageously he or she runs the risk of negative social consequences such as being insulted by a perpetrator; moreover, an act of moral courage can also result in physical violence by the perpetrator against the helper and thus lead to serious injuries or even to death. An important difference, however, between heroism and moral courage is that in the immediate situation (and also afterward), a hero can expect positive social consequences, such as applause or admiration. In contrast, in the immediate moral courage situation (and often also afterward) a helper cannot expect positive outcomes but rather negative social consequences, such as being insulted, excluded, or even prosecuted by one or more perpetrators. These theoretical assumptions were also investigated empirically: In a series of studies, Osswald, Greitemeyer, Fischer, and Frey (in press) demonstrated a separation of moral courage and heroism. In the first study, participants were given descriptions of different dangerous situations, and the variables of whether a perpetrator was present or not and whether social costs of the prosocial act were high or low were manipulated. Participants had to indicate to what extent they perceived the described behavior as moral courage and as heroism. Results revealed that participants clearly labeled situations with a perpetrator and high social costs as moral courage. In contrast, situations with low social costs and without a perpetrator were characterized as heroism. Further studies indicated that moral courage and heroism correspond to different moral prototypes: Moral courage was associated with the just prototype, whereas heroism was affiliated with the brave prototype (for more research about moral prototypes in general, see Walker & Firmer, 2007, and Walker & Hennig, 2004).

Moral Courage and Social Control

Another construct related to moral courage is social control (Jonas & Brandstaetter, 2004). Social control involves an intervention that curbs impolite or uncivil behavior, that is, a verbal or nonverbal communication by which individuals signal another person that they disapprove of his or her deviant, counternormative behavior (Chekroun & Brauer, 2002). For example, persons exert social control when they criticize someone who has thrown litter in a public park. Most of the empirical research about social control was conducted by Brauer and colleagues (Brauer & Chekroun, 2005; Brauer, Chekroun, Chappe, & Chambon, 2007; Chaurand & Brauer, 2002, 2005). In their studies, they regarded social control mainly as a reaction to uncivil behaviors. Uncivil behaviors are counternormative behaviors that occur in urban environments and decrease the quality of life, such as littering, failing to clean up after one's dog, urinating in public, and playing loud music in the street. These uncivil behaviors are "urban stressors" (Robin, Ratiu, Matheau-Police, & Lavarde, 2004), but they are not really serious or dangerous (Chaurand & Brauer, 2005). This is the first theoretical reasonable difference between social control of uncivil behavior and moral courage: Moral courage situations are dangerous both for the victim and for the helper. Being bullied, discriminated against, insulted, harassed, or attacked can have serious mental and physical consequences for the victim.

Social control serves to keep up and to enforce social norms because a person who violates these social norms runs the risk of receiving an angry look, a negative comment, and so on (i.e., social control; Brauer & Chekroun, 2005). Like people who show social control, people who show moral courage also want to enforce norms. One could theoretically argue that the types of norms, however, that are enforced by social control and moral courage, respectively, are different. By social control, social norms that relate to everyday living are implemented (Brauer & Chekroun, 2005). In contrast, with moral courage, ethical norms (e.g., observation of human or democratic rights) are pursued, and people stand up for a greater good (Greitemeyer et al., 2006; Lopez et al., 2003).

Because different types of norms aim to be enforced by social control and moral courage, respectively, it may be that social control and moral courage derive from different motives and values. In a recent empirical study with 65 persons (43 women), Osswald (2008) investigated whether different motives and values stand behind social control and moral courage. It could be demonstrated that social control more likely results in egoistic motives compared with moral courage ($M_{\text{social control}} = 4.41$; $M_{\text{moral courage}} = 3.79$), whereas people act morally courageously because of altruistic motives (compared with motives behind social control, $M_{\text{social control}} = 4.33$; $M_{\text{moral courage}} = 5.56$). Furthermore, compared with social control, moral courage is more strongly associated with the value of universalism (Schwartz & Boenke, 2004; $M_{\text{social control}} = 2.20$; $M_{\text{moral courage}} = 2.66$). Universalism means "understanding, appreciation, tolerance and protection of the welfare of all people and of nature" (Bardi & Schwartz, 2003, p. 1208).

So far, we have tried to separate moral courage from related constructs. In the next sections we present empirical research about classical determinants of helping behavior that do not affect moral courage followed by a description of factors that promote morally courageous behavior.

Classical Determinants of Helping Behavior and Their Failure to Predict Moral Courage

Certain classical determinants or predictors of helping behavior exist. We argue, however, that these predictors cannot simply be assigned to moral courage. Relevant experiments are reported in the next section.

The Role of Bystanders

Plenty of studies revealed that the presence of others inhibits helping behavior (for an overview, see Latané & Nida, 1981). However, in almost all studies on bystander intervention conducted to date, the bystander did not have to fear danger or severe negative social consequences in the case of intervention; the role of bystanders concerning moral courage was not yet clear. As Schwartz and Gottlieb (1976) suggested, it might be that in dangerous situations the social inhibition effect of additional bystanders is reduced by processes of a clearer emergency awareness, more arousal because of the higher need of the victim, or changed cost–reward–analysis (Piliavin, Dovidio, Gaertner, & Clark, 1981). Thus, Fischer, Greitemeyer, Pollozek, and Frey (2006) examined whether a passive bystander inhibited helping behavior but not moral courage. Participants observed a live broadcast of a cross-gender communication that allegedly took place in an adjacent room. The participants saw a woman and a man who talked with each other in a quite natural way during the first minutes. However, as time progressed, the man became intrusive, touched the woman, and started to harass her sexually. The woman, however, clearly rejected the sexual advances. She tried to escape by leaving the room, but the man blocked the exit, and a brawl started, with the woman being clearly inferior. The picture then went black. In the helping condition, the perpetrator was skinny and of small stature, whereas in the moral courage condition he was strongly built and thug-like. In the bystander condition, participants were in the presence of one additional passive bystander, whereas they were alone in the solitary condition. As a dependent measure, it was assessed how many participants tried to intervene.

In the helping condition, the classic bystander effect was replicated: More help was given in the solitary condition than in the bystander condition. In the moral courage condition, however, participants were equally likely to show moral courage in the solitary condition and in the presence of another bystander. Thus, though the probability of showing helping behavior decreased with an increasing number of bystanders, the probability of showing moral courage was not affected by the number of bystanders. In the context of dangerous emergencies, that is, in a moral courage situation, the bystander effect does not occur.

Moreover, Fischer and colleagues (2006) found out that moral courage situations faced in the presence of bystanders are recognized more quickly and less ambiguously as real emergency situations than as harmless (helping) situations. Furthermore, the costs for the victim in case of a nonintervention are also higher in a dangerous moral courage situation than in a more harmless helping situation. Thus, arousal in a moral courage situation is higher than in a helping situation and an intervention becomes more probable, independently of whether a passive bystander is present or not.

The Role of Mood

A further classical determinant of helping behavior is mood. Previous studies demonstrated that the decision to help is influenced by the mood of the potential helper. People are more likely to help others when they are in a positive relative to a neutral mood because helping others is an excellent way of maintaining or prolonging positive mood (Isen & Levin, 1972). In addition, negative, relative to neutral, mood states are shown to increase prosocial behavior because helping dispels negative mood (Carlson & Miller, 1987; Cialdini, Baumann, & Kenrick, 1981). Because moral courage situations are associated with fewer anticipated positive social consequences and more anticipated negative social consequences relative to helping situations, one may expect that showing moral courage actually worsens an actor's mood. As a consequence, whereas positive and negative mood states (as opposed to neutral mood states) can be expected to lead to more helping behavior, mood should not affect moral courage.

To test this reasoning, Niesta, Greitemeyer, Fischer, and Frey (2008) conducted three studies in which participants' mood (positive vs. negative vs. neutral mood) was experimentally manipulated and either moral courage or helping behavior was assessed. In the first study, actual behavior was recorded and results revealed that positive and to a lesser extent also negative mood promoted helping behavior. In contrast, mood did not differentially influence moral courage. In the second study, positive mood fostered the intention to show helping behavior, whereas the intention to act morally courageously was not affected. Furthermore, norm salience was shown to partly mediate the relationship between positive mood and helping behavior. The third study examined what variables beyond mood and norm salience determined moral courage. Again it was replicated that positive mood fostered helping behavior, whereas participants were comparably likely to show moral courage in each of the three mood conditions. However, it was also demonstrated that justice sensitivity, civil disobedience, resistance to group pressure, moral mandate, and anger lead to moral courage, but not to help-giving. Thus, mood as a determinant drops out, but other variables possess the potential to foster moral courage. Further determinants that promote moral courage are presented in the next section.

Factors That Foster Moral Courage

In the preceding sections we demonstrated factors that do not promote moral courage. In the following sections we seek to show variables that have the potential to foster morally courageous behavior.

The Role of Norms

The importance of social norms for promoting prosocial behavior has been demonstrated in a variety of studies (for an overview, see Cialdini, Kallgren, & Reno, 1991, or Batson, 1998). However, the prosocial behavior that was examined in the studies conducted to date did not include costs for the actor. So far, it

was not clear whether norms foster moral courage as a costly prosocial behavior in a similar way. Schwartz (1977) argued that they do not because costs deactivate norms by different defense mechanisms (Schwartz, 1977; see also Tyler, Orwin, & Schurer, 1982). In two studies, Osswald, Greitemeyer, Fischer, and Frey (2008a) tested the effects of norms on moral courage. In the first study, for half of the participants prosocial norms were activated by film material, whereas for the remaining half no prosocial norms were made salient. The film material that activated prosocial norms consisted of different scenes in which people showed moral courageous behavior. The participants were then brought into a morally courage situation: They witnessed how the experimenter insulted and discriminated against a foreign student (a confederate). As a dependent measure, it was assessed whether participants intervened and defended the foreign student against the perpetrator.

Results revealed that salient prosocial norms fostered moral courage: Subjects for whom prosocial norms were activated intervened more often against discrimination than did subjects for whom no prosocial norms were made salient. Thus, when prosocial norms are salient in people's minds they are more likely to show moral courage despite possible negative social consequences. The second study shed light on mediating mechanisms: It was demonstrated that anger, awareness of the situation, and responsibility take-over (i.e., they felt more responsible to act) mediated the intention to intervene. When prosocial norms were made salient participants reported more anger, a higher awareness of the situation, and more responsibility takeover. Anger, awareness of the situation, and responsibility takeover in turn fostered the intention to show moral courage.

In summary, the results of Osswald et al. (2008a) are in line with the study of Greitemeyer et al. (2006; see earlier discussion), which already gave first hints about the importance of norms for moral courage: Prosocial norms have the potential to foster moral courage, but they have to be strongly activated in the forefront to display an effect.

The Role of Anger

In our description of moral courage, anger is an integral component: When a person acts morally courageously, he or she is in most cases angry at a perpetrator or he or she is upset because of injustice, violations of human dignity, and so on. Also, empirical results underline a close relation of anger and moral courage: Greitemeyer et al. (2006) demonstrated that moral courage situations were associated with more anger, Niesta et al. (2008) showed that anger promoted the intention to show moral courage, and Osswald et al. (2008a) found that anger (besides awareness of the situation and responsibility takeover) mediated the effect of salient prosocial norms on morally courageous behavior. Thus, anger seems to play an important role for moral courage. Anger possibly motivates or strengthens the intentions to act or the behavior itself. But what kind of anger is this? The following theoretical considerations demonstrate that a conclusive answer cannot be given yet. When people show moral courage, they stand up for a greater good and seek to enforce ethical norms without considering their own social costs, because one or more perpetrators have violated ethical norms,

human rights, or democratic values. Therefore, one could guess that anger related to moral courage is about moral outrage. Moral outrage means an anger that is provoked by the perception that a moral standard (in most cases a standard of fairness or justice) has been violated (Hofmann, 2000; Montada & Schneider, 1989). However, Batson et al. (2007) recently argued that an angry reaction at unfairness is not moral outrage but rather empathic anger. In two studies, Batson and colleagues (2007) could demonstrate the existence of empathic anger but not of moral outrage. They admitted, however, that a clear distinction between the moral outrage and empathic anger is most (if not exclusively) possible by manipulation. Because the studies by Greitemeyer et al. (2006), Niesta et al. (2008), and Osswald et al. (2008a) did not manipulate but measured anger, no clear statement can be made whether empathic anger or moral outrage was assessed. The anger measured by these studies presumably includes parts of moral outrage and of empathic anger. More research is needed for a final conclusion to be drawn.

Altogether, linking anger with a prosocial behavior such as moral courage seems to be an interesting research area because in most cases empathetic or caring emotions are theoretically and empirically linked to prosocial behavior (for a review, see Batson, 1998), whereas anger has been linked to aggression and antisocial behavior (e.g., Weiner, Graham, & Chandler, 1982; Zillmann, 1988).

Personality and Moral Courage

Besides situational factors that promote moral courage, dispositional variables also play an important role. As noted earlier, Niesta et al. (2008) found justice sensitivity, civil disobedience, resistance to group pressure, and moral mandate to be conducive determinants of moral courage. In an earlier study, Kuhl (1986) demonstrated that high self-assurance, which in turn affects how difficult the situation is perceived, fosters moral courage. Hermann and Meyer (2000) also found self-assurance, self-efficacy, and social competence as well as moral beliefs and responsibility takeover to be important. In a study with more than 700 pupils, Labuhn, Wagner, van Dick, and Christ (2004) showed that the more empathy and inner ethnical contacts and the less dominance orientation pupils had, the higher was their intention to show moral courage.

Finally, in a recent study with real behavior as a dependent variable, Osswald, Greitemeyer, Fischer, and Frey (2008b) investigated the effects of different personality variables on moral courage. At a first time point, a number of dispositional variables were measured. Three weeks later, the dependent measure was assessed: Participants witnessed how an experimenter insulted and discriminated against a foreign student (a confederate). As a dependent variable it was assessed whether they intervened and defended the foreign student against the perpetrator (the data were collected in the same experiment in which we also tested the influence of norms on moral courage; see earlier section). Results revealed that the higher participants scored on the openness dimensions of the Big Five, the more likely they showed moral courage. This is an interesting result because in most studies of the relationship between personality variables and prosocial behavior the Agreeableness dimension of the Big Five was found to be

related to prosocial behavior (e.g., Penner et al., 2005). Nevertheless, it makes sense that only a very slight relationship exists between agreeableness and moral courage: Being agreeable and friendly does not foster answering back a rude experimenter. On the other hand, openness to new experiences and a broad mind promote acceptance of different ways of life and of persons from other countries and cultures. It therefore seems plausible that open-minded persons are more likely to intervene against discrimination and to show moral courage. Furthermore, empathy was significantly positively related to moral courage, whereas responsibility denial was significantly negatively related. The more empathic participants were and the less they denied responsibility the more they intervened. These data are in accord with other studies and theoretical considerations (see Schwartz, 1977; Batson, 1998). Because a study by Bardi and Schwartz (2003) demonstrated a relationship between values and behavior, it was also assessed whether values might be related to moral courage. Conformity and tradition turned out to be of importance: The less central participants regarded conformity and tradition as values for their life, the more likely they were to intervene. It seems reasonable that values conformity and tradition correlate negatively with the act of intervention against discrimination. If a person esteems conformity and tradition he or she will probably not advance opposite views or argue with perpetrators.

Thus, a variety of dispositional variables have been shown to play a role in moral courage. More research is needed, however, because most of the studies conducted thus far assessed only the intention to show moral courage and not actual behavior (e.g., Kuhl, 1986; Labuhn et al., 2004).

So far, we have argued that moral courage should be separated from helping behavior and presented determinants that promote moral courage. In the next section we address the issue of whether theoretical models for helping behavior can be used to predict moral courage or whether particular models for moral courage should be established.

Classical Helping Models and Models for Moral Courage

Because implicit theories of moral courage and helping behavior differ and classic predictors of helping behavior (bystanders and mood) differently affect moral courage, it is questionable whether classical helping models such as the process models of Schwartz and Howard (1981) or Latané and Darley (1970) can simply be transferred to predict moral courage. Greitemeyer and colleagues (2006) addressed this question from an empirical point of view, and Osswald, Frey, Greitemeyer, and Fischer (2007) highlighted it in a theoretical contribution. The model of Latané and Darley (1970) consists of five different stages of making a decision to help: attention (Stage 1), emergency awareness (Stage 2), attribution of own responsibility (Stage 3), skills for helping (Stage 4), and final decision to provide help (Stage 5). Each of these stages, completed by considerations of Schwartz and Howard (1981), was examined concerning their meaning for moral courage.

For the empirical test, Greitemeyer and colleagues (2006) asked participants to describe a situation in which they had either helped someone or in which

they had showed moral courage. Other participants were asked to describe a situation in which they had either failed to help or failed to show moral courage. Next, participants answered questions referring to the five stages of Latané and Darley's helping model. Results revealed that moral courage situations differed from helping situations: Moral courage situations were perceived more quickly (Stage 1) and were associated with more perceived responsibility (Stage 3) and fewer perceived intervention skills (Stage 4) than were helping situations. Regarding the decision to intervene (Stage 5), moral courage, relative to helping situations, was associated with a higher degree of expected negative social consequences, with a higher salience of societal norms, and with more evaluation apprehension, more anger, and more empathy. Furthermore, Greitemeyer et al. (2006) demonstrated that the decisions on whether to show either moral courage or helping behavior or not are differentially influenced. In other words, perceived responsibility and empathy are more important for the decision to help or not than for the decision to show moral courage or not. Thus, the helping model of Latané and Darley (1970) cannot simply be transferred to predict moral courage but has to be modified. Osswald et al. (2007), Frey et al. (2007; see also Frey & Schaefer, 2001), and Meyer (2004) proposed particular theoretical models of moral courage that we present shortly.

On the basis of the studies of Greitemeyer et al. (2006), Osswald et al. (2007) proposed a process model with steps related to the model of Latané and Darley (1970): Before a person can act with moral courage, he or she has to perceive an incident as a situation of moral courage, and he or she has to take responsibility and has to feel competent to act. Furthermore, the person should possess a variety of reaction options that he or she can promptly realize. Moral courage situations mostly happen fast and are often dangerous and quite unsettling. Therefore, fast reactions are necessary. In the model, the availability of reaction options besides self-efficacy and high self esteem as well as salience of prosocial norms, empathy, and moral outrage act as promoting factors of moral courage. As inhibiting factors, anticipated social costs, fear of being evaluated and judged, and the (mis)perception of having not enough intervention skills are proposed. Indeed, in moral courage situations people feel less competent to intervene than in other prosocial incidents.

Frey and colleagues (2006) took for their theoretical model the theory of planned behavior (e.g., Ajzen, 1985) and described variables that affect the intention to act morally courageously. Determinants of the behavioral intention are (a) situational conditions (e.g., awareness of the situation), (b) the former life of the morally courageous person (e.g., socialization), (c) personal traits (e.g., responsibility takeover), and (d) inhibiting factors (e.g., fear of being evaluated). These factors affect the intention to show moral courage which in turn influences the real behavior. The model provides good indications of which determinants may play a role for moral courage. However, it remains for the most part to be empirically tested.

In his theoretical model of moral courage, Meyer (2004) proposed four main factors that promote or inhibit moral courageous behavior: (a) social and political context, (b) situational factors, (c) personal factors, and (d) perception of the situation. All these factors consist of a variety of subsections: The social and political context includes among others the social position of the intervenor person or

the form of government (democratic vs. authoritarian) under which the morally courageous person lives. Situational factors consist inter alia of the place where the situation happens and how the situation develops. Personal factors include competencies and resources such as empathy or knowledge, and motivational variables such as justice sensitivity or prosocial beliefs. Perception of the situation contains attention or evaluation of the person's own helping abilities. The model tries to specify short- and long-term determinants of moral courage, and like the model of Frey et al. (2006), it provides an interesting overview about possible influence factors. However, it also still remains to be empirically tested.

Empirical investigation is possible only with reliable measurements. Therefore, in the following section, two scales are presented that seek to measure moral courage.

Scales to Measure Moral Courage

Our research group recently developed a scale that measures the intention to show moral courage (Kastenmueller, Greitemeyer, Fischer, & Frey, 2007). The scale consists of three factors, which emerged by exploratory and confirmatory factor analyses: moral courage at the workplace, moral courage in situations of physical violence, and moral courage against racism. Validity analysis revealed that the moral courage scale, as opposed to the established helping scale of Rushton, Chrisjohn, and Fekken (1981), better predicted moral courage, whereas the helping scale better predicted helping behavior than did the moral courage scale.

Another scale that also partly measures moral courage is the Woodard-Pury Courage Scale–23 (WPCS-23; Woodard & Pury, 2007), which consists of four subscales: (a) work or employment courage; (b) patriotic, religious, or belief-based courage; (c) social–moral courage; and (d) independent courage and family-based courage. Social–moral courage seems to be the scale that is most closely related to moral courage.

So far, we have treated theoretical and empirical questions about moral courage. Research about a prosocial behavior of such importance should also have practical implications, however. In the next section we present possibilities to practically apply research results about moral courage: workshops and trainings that seek to promote morally courageous behavior.

Training Moral Courage

Moral courage is an important virtue within society. Thus, trainings, workshops, and courses that aim to promote moral courage were recently developed (see Jonas, Boos, & Brandstaetter, 2007). Moral courage is not an innate behavior but can be learned and trained. The moral courage trainings try to teach behavioral routines that can easily be recalled to foster adequate and fast reactions. For example, because it is dangerous and often not reasonable to intervene alone, participants learn in role plays how to activate other people also to help. Our research group also offers a moral courage training developed by Brandstaetter and Frey (2003) for students that goes beyond the university setting. In discussions, role

plays, and group exercises, we try to work out with our participants how to react in a moral courage situation without endangering oneself. Moral courage does not refer to rushing into the most dangerous situations hoping to survive somehow. The motto of our workshop is "Small deeds instead of heroism." Already, small deeds (which are named and shown within the training, e.g., "call the police" or "inform other bystanders if you think something is happening") can have enormous effects, and the worst thing is to do or to say nothing. Presenting people with such knowledge promotes the probability that people will intervene in a critical situation because they are released of the pressure to act heroically or to work wonders. The training aims to impart practical knowledge and behavioral competencies as first aid courses do. A first empirical evaluation of our moral courage training revealed that participants perceive themselves after the workshop as more competent regarding how to react in an emergency and report more self-efficacy when faced with a situation that demands moral courage. Furthermore, after moral courage trainings, situations are recognized as an emergency more quickly and clearer, and personal responsibility to act and to intervene is fostered (Frey et al., 2007). Thus, it seems possible to train people in moral courage. However, more research, especially concerning long-term effects, is needed.

Summary and Conclusion

In this chapter, we highlighted the construct of moral courage more thoroughly. We gave theoretical outlines and empirical results showing that moral courage shares certain aspects with helping behavior, heroism, and social control. Nevertheless, moral courage also fundamentally differs from these prosocial constructs. The most important difference between moral courage and other prosocial intentions is the negative social consequences a person has to fear when acting morally courageously. Furthermore, classical determinants of helping behavior, such as mood or bystanders, do not affect moral courage, whereas other factors such as moral outrage play a role. We therefore argue that moral courage should be examined as an independent subtype of prosocial behavior and not be subsumed under prosocial behaviors such as helping behavior or heroism.

At the time of writing, our research group is working to elucidate more specific determinants of moral courage behavior and to evaluate the effectiveness of moral courage training more deeply. We constantly seek to incorporate empirical data in our moral courage trainings to improve them. Research and practice should effectively collaborate to implement moral courage more profoundly in society. Having morally courageous behavior be more common should be an important goal for every society. As noted by Franka Magnani: "The more citizens with civil courage a country has, the fewer heroes it will once need" (as cited in Frohloff, 2001, p. 230).

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