

Firefighters in New Orleans after Hurricane Katrina typified what Collo May calls physical courage. Many had lost their homes but risked their safety to help others.



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of a diplomat and a general who was assassinated after negotiating Burma's independence from Great Britain in 1947, Suu Kyi was inspired by her parents to spend her life promoting democracy and human rights in Burma. When an oppressive military gained control of the government in 1988, Suu Kyi stepped into a leadership position, helping to found a democratic party and speaking publicly throughout Burma. Her inspiring vision drew huge crowds, and when her popularity became a threat, she was followed, harassed, and arrested. Suu Kyi spent a total of eleven years under house arrest, a sacrifice that meant living apart from her grown sons and not being able to visit her dying husband in England. Her moral courage was recognized when she won the Nobel Peace Prize in 1991. Beloved by Burmese citizens and admired worldwide as a democratic leader, she has been held under house arrest since 2002.

Moral courage is found as well in ordinary people who take a stand. Between April and July 1994, nearly one million people were killed in a mass genocide² in Rwanda; Hutu extremists murdered their Tutsi³ neighbors while the international community looked the other way. But one man, Paul Rusesabagina, did not look the other way. The son of farmers and a modest hotel manager, Rusesabagina at first wanted to protect only his wife and children. Gradually, however, he began to comprehend the scope of the brutality. He devised a way to hide Tutsi refugees in his hotel until they could be carried to safety. In all, Rusesabagina is responsible for single-handedly saving the lives of 1,268 people. His story, told in the film *Hotel Rwanda*, is reminder that moral courage can be found wherever a person chooses action over apathy.⁴

2. genocide: the systematic and planned execution of an entire national, racial, or ethnic group

3. Hutu and Tutsi: two of the three ethnic groups that occupy Rwanda and Burundi

4. apathy: lack of interest or concern