

Anger Management

Hello!

It's been a little while since my last newsletter because I have been occupied with selling our house and moving to a new one. But we're getting all settled in now and I can turn my mind to my newsletter.



This time we're talking about something so paralyzing that it keeps us prisoner, trapped sometimes in unhappiness sometimes in mortal danger and abuse. What is it that has such power over us? Fear.

Fear holds us back, prevents us from trying, keeps us locked into negative behaviors and makes us anxious about the future. It takes guts to face your fears, but there are ways I can help you do that. Believe me when I tell you that once you face your fears, they aren't so fearsome anymore.

Francesca Tomas
Counsellor

What are you afraid of?

Why do we keep doing what we're doing?

What holds us in our ruts? Fear. Fear of change, for the most part. Wherever we are, it feels comfortable because we've done it for a long time, maybe not happily, but we're used to it. It feels familiar, comfortable. Change brings uncertainty. Change will bring discomfort. But we get used to new things and they too become comfortingly familiar with time..

What fear does

Fear imprisons possibilities. It paralyzes us. It holds us back. It keeps us tied to unhealthy relationships. It prevents us from starting a business or quitting a bad job. Fear keeps us from committing to a loving relationship. Fear can control us, hobble us, limit and destroy us. But worse, it can keep us from trying to reach for our dreams. Fear keeps us from expanding our hearts and our minds to new horizons. It prevents us from following our own star. To let fear keep us prisoner is pitiful. We can spend our whole lives never knowing what it might have been like to try for what we only dream about. What a sad loss.

The unknown is what terrifies us

For many, the fear of the unknown is worse than anything they currently endure. It's often a question of choosing the devil you know. "Yes, our relationship is miserable but if I leave my partner, I'm afraid no one else would ever love me!" No matter how bad it might be, our routine is at least a kind of "normal", it is expected and you know you can survive it because you have. But if you change it, you're not sure.

Where does the fear come from?

It's important to examine where our fears took root. Our belief systems hold that secret. Did our parents teach us to be fearful, as a way to keep us safe? Do our friends instill uneasiness when we attempt to change the status quo? Sometimes, for the sake of their own comfort, the people in our lives put up roadblocks when we try to make life-altering changes. Drinking buddies seldom are supportive when one is trying to remain sober. Surrounding ourselves with people who support us and encourage our growth helps us accomplish great things. When we explore what is behind our fears, we can see they are just a kind of mental habit. A bad habit which can be broken.

Change isn't comfortable

Through counseling, we look at just what facing our fears entails. Change isn't comfortable. When we create growth it brings new things into our lives, new patterns, new challenges, and it all feels uncomfortable. But even the unfamiliar can become familiar with repetition. Patterns will emerge and the changes will become comfortable over time.

Our biggest fear- succeeding

One of the biggest fears is the fear of our own success. What is there to be afraid of about success?

- What if I succeed and find I can't handle the challenges that brings?
- What if success means more demands?
- What if I lose my friends if I am a success at my dream because I won't have time for them?
- What if I succeed and everyone finds out I'm really not smart enough, good enough, capable enough?
- What if I become wealthy and my belief system holds that wealthy people are bad?
- What if I become successful and other successful people dislike me?
- What if I'm seen as "rising above my station?"
- What if I make a horrible mistake and lose it all?
- What if I don't measure up?
- What if I fail?
- What if people laugh at me for thinking I could be a success?

Facing fears makes us confident

The hardest part is the first move toward facing our fears. That's when it's scariest. That's what keeps us from trying. But once you begin to change, it just gets easier. We feel good about ourselves for trying. Facing and conquering our fears allows us to handle the next challenge more confidently. Confidence and knowledge destroys fear. The fact is, there really isn't anything to be afraid of because we WILL adjust to all of life's changes. We adjust to whatever comes along, it's our nature. Oprah said "No matter what happens to me, no matter what, I know I'm going to be all right".

"Fear is the Mind-Killer. Fear is the little-death that brings total obliteration. I will face my fear. I will permit it pass over me and through me. And when it has gone past, I will turn the inner eye to see its path. Where the fear has gone there will be nothing. Only I will remain"

*Frank Herbert
Dune*

Making sure you can't fail

Feel the Fear and Do It Anyway is a book I'd recommend. In this book, the author, Susan Jeffers, Ph.D, explores fear and how it holds us back. She unmask fear by exploring options, by setting yourself up so you can't fail and by facing your fear and then running toward it. The growth that happens with this achievement can change lives.

Fear's biggest power

The biggest power fear has is its mystery. By unmasking it and looking squarely at what lies behind fear, where it comes from, we take the power away from it. The unknown is scary. The more we understand our life choices and the probable results of those choices, the less unknown there is and therefore less to be afraid of. Learning that you have or you can acquire all the things you need to cope with anything life can dish out, is an empowering realization.

"We have nothing to fear, but fear itself -nameless, unreasoning, unjustified terror which paralyzes needed efforts to convert retreat into advance."

Franklin D. Roosevelt

A healthy approach

A healthy person routinely faces their fears, analyzing them for nuggets of understanding, learns where the belief system came from that created those fears, considers the ramifications of action and if fear lies between them and where they want to go, they run right at it. It becomes appealing, conquering ones fears.

Let's talk about that together.