

Beyond Fear
By Jeanne Loehnis

“I couldn’t do that! It’s too scary.”
“Stand in front of a room full of people? I’d be so nervous! No way!”
“No, thank you. I’ve never done anything like that before. I’ll pass.”

Sound like something you might say? Is fear a major player in your decision making process? Are you missing out on life’s delicacies by letting your fear be front and center?

Maybe you don’t let yourself feel the fear. Perhaps these are more likely to be your words:

“She is SO good! I’ll never play that well and I’ll certainly not ever perform for others.”
“My brother got all the talent genes. I am so jealous.”
“He thinks he’s so smart. I could do better than that!”

Whether you realize it or not, underneath all of these external messages is fear. Afraid of the learning process when trying something new, afraid that we’ll look silly and *they* will laugh at us, afraid to let go of all of life’s “shoulds” and commitments, afraid we’ll be judged for not doing what *they* have come to expect us to do ... the list goes on. How much do you allow fear to run your life? How often do *their* opinions matter more than your own? Do you know that you can choose differently ... starting today?

Consider this quote by Ralph Waldo Emerson:

“He who is not everyday conquering some fear has not learned the secret of life.”

What does this mean? Is life supposed to be filled with fear? Is every day to be difficult and challenging?

Consider this alternative. *Living life to the fullest means embracing the notion that there is always more to learn, always new skills to develop, always new joys to partake in.* Each day holds opportunities to stretch – and with that stretching can come fear. Each time fear appears and we are faced with a stretching moment, we can choose to let the fear be the block which causes us to do an “about face” and retreat. Or, we can face and conquer the fear and find on the other side abundant joy, freedom, and satisfaction. Emerson also wrote:

“Do the thing you fear and the death of fear is certain.”

Fear is but a feeling, an emotion. Like all emotion, its purpose is to cause us to pause and assess the situation. If, after the pause, we realize that the fear is not alerting us to physical danger but, rather, is founded in a discomfort with the unknown, we can choose to conquer it. We can choose to push through the fear and it will dissipate! Fear is sure to

die in the face of courage, persistence, and the willingness to face it head on. In fact, most of the time, fear fits this definition:

(F)alse (E)vidence (A)ppearing (R)eal

Think about it. Fear is an emotion, an internal mental and/or physical reaction to what we think is happening around us. Often, the thing we fear never materializes. It was false evidence that we chose to make real in our minds.

Imagine that life is supposed to be a unique, exciting, and very personal adventure. Imagine that your life purpose is to make a positive difference in the world. From this mindset, ponder your life journey:

- When you were a child, what did you want to be when you grew up? How did it feel to think about your future?
- List as many reasons as you can why you matter today, why your life counts.
- What lessons has Life offered that you have not *yet* been able to receive?

Today, gift yourself by facing your fears directly. Take the time to discern whether the current fear represents real danger or false evidence appearing real. And choose today how you will spend each and every moment of your precious life.

Each and every moment of each and every day
the opportunity is mine to mold myself like clay
into the grandest version of the greatest vision I can see.
Yes, each and every moment is mine to be what I can be.

Lyrics by Jeanne Loehnis, adapted from text written by
Neale Donald Walsch in "Conversations With God"

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What Would Courage Say?

*When fear has filled my every thought
inertia trapped me though I've fought to
free myself and move ahead
may courage speak to me instead.*

What would Courage say?

*You've everything you need this day
to turn and walk the other way.
Deep within where Spirit dwells
come and know that all is well.*

*When I release my fear of fear
and draw it close and pause to hear
that still small voice: my inner guide.
No longer need I run and hide.*

I hear Wisdom say:

*The fear you feel within your soul
has come to teach you, make you whole.
Listen well then turn to see,
I'm in all; I'll set you free.*

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