

8 Fears Holding You Back & How to Overcome Them

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Introduction

Fears limit our lives. In order to live life to the fullest, you must confront and overcome your fears. This document will cover the core human fears shared by all and give you viable tools and strategies to combat your fears and live your best life.

“We gain strength, courage and confidence with every experience in which you stop to look fear in the face. You must do that which you think you cannot do.”

Eleanor Roosevelt

This is a quote I carried around in my wallet from the time I was 16 until it became so dog-eared I eventually threw it out. I knew it by heart and when I felt I couldn't do something, I would pull out the little crumpled, dog-eared piece of paper from my wallet and read it. It resonated with me because I think it is so true. We all have so many fears. So what are we afraid of? Or should I ask the more obvious question, what aren't we afraid of?

As human beings, fears are so prevalent in our lives. We have fears of failure, fears of rejection, fears of what people think of us, fears of falling on our faces, and even fears of being successful and what that may bring. I feel particularly qualified to write this given my own assortment of fears and the number of years I have spent working through them.

My Own Fears

I grew up being afraid of my own shadow. I don't know why, I was just a frightened little kid and it took me years to work through these fears. They were handed down to me by my parents, God bless them – but my Dad's little dissertation on personal safety may have had me looking in the backseat of the car before I got in but it also evoked heart thumping panic on any occasion where I found myself walking through an underground parking lot alone – day or night.

I'm a little bit better about this but now there are other things to worry about. When I found out I was pregnant, my husband and I were thrilled. Thrilled and terrified! I wonder if it took so long to get pregnant because I was so freaked out about what could go wrong. I've had to confront this fear and after I worked through this, one other fears came up. Nicholas, my son, was born 6 weeks premature and was hospitalized with breathing problems. This was so anxiety provoking and difficult. Fortunately, Nicholas did extremely well but it was a scary time for us. That's the thing with fears, you work through some and then others pop up.

As I work through this lengthy list of phobias, what I've learnt is that pain and adversity are powerful vehicles that really promote personal growth and that clinging to the safe shores in your life is nothing more than making a choice to be imprisoned by your fears. But how do we grow, how do we confront our fears, how do we force ourselves to run towards them when our knees are knocking? Maybe it would help to know it's worth it.

Courage isn't the absence of fear but the willingness to walk through your fears in pursuit of a goal that is important to you and on the other side of your fears you will discover your fortune.

Failure is a part of any life and if you look at anyone who is really successful they have failed numerous times. We often stop ourselves from trying because we don't want to risk failing. We have put such a

premium on being approved of that we become reluctant to take risks. Fear doesn't always manifest as that terrified, life threatening danger. Often fear manifests as just being unable to speak our minds. We often want to please everybody all of the time even at the expense of our own desires. Let's talk about these fears and let's work through them together.

In this report, I'll cover two main points:

- The core human fears.
- Tools to combat your fears.

The Core Human Fears

There are 8 core human fears and it is amazing how we all struggle with the same things. So often we put people up on pedestals. We think of someone like Richard Branson of the Virgin Empire, Nelson Mandela, The Dali Lama, Mother Teresa, Oprah Winfrey, and Barbara Walters. We think of these people as being fearless. We think that certain people are born with courage and are destined for greatness while the rest of us must sit on the sidelines and simply admire them.

This is not true. Every single one of us struggles with the same core fears. Being human is to deal with fear. The key is to figure out what your fears are and do the inner work necessary to transcend them.

As you confront them and run towards them you begin to do the work to transcend them. The key strategy of successful people is that they feel their fears and they still run towards them. They don't let their fears stand in the way of their dreams. It is really your growth coming to meet you and it is interesting when you begin to transcend your fears by confronting them, you begin to let them go.

But as you do new fears will emerge. Your whole life is really the inner work of moving through your fears that are constantly coming up to greet you. As you do, you become more and more powerful, with each fear that you confront, you are able to transcend the next one so much easier. You move to a whole new level of possibility and beauty in your life.

8 Core Human Fears

1. The Fear of Failure

There can no success without failure. By running away from failure you prevent yourself from achieving the success that you truly deserve. People who achieve the most have truly failed the most.

You will have to be ok with the failure and when you fall down you have to dust yourself off, get back up, and go again. You have to leave your comfort zone on a consistent basis. Try new things, dream new dreams, embrace new possibilities. Failure is really just your market research. If it is something you truly wish to do take the risk. Risk must be evaluated not by the fear it generates in you or the probability of your success, but by the value of the goal.

2. The Fear of Success

This is probably surprising to most people. You're thinking "I'm not afraid of success, I want success, I want to be successful financially, I want to be successful with my family, I want my business to be a huge success. I want all these things. I am not afraid of it." You may not be afraid consciously but at some subconscious level we are often afraid of what the success might bring to our lives. That it might give us too much responsibility or that it might take too much time.

Be aware of what I call the anti-intentions. Often we stop ourselves from getting what we want because we fear the price that we may have to pay.

3. The Fear of Rejection

This is the fear that prevents us from asking for what we want. It is the fear that leads a lot of people to take a consensus on everything before they state their opinion. So often you want to ask for something whether it is in a relationship, a friendship, or asking for a raise at work but you just don't.

The frustrating thing is that this mindset is often based on an assumption that is not true. If you just muster up the strength to ask for the upgrade to the airline ticket, ask for that special table in a restaurant, ask for a raise, the response may very well be "Yes, certainly you deserve it, I didn't realize you wanted it and certainly we can accommodate you."

Take the risk, get in the game, and have the courage to ask for what you want. It is so important to chance your dreams and ask for what you want in a respectful way. Author Paula Kuelho who wrote *The Alchemist*, said, "**What people think of us becomes more important than our destiny.**" Don't let that happen to you, chase your dreams and fulfill your destiny.

4. The Fear of not Being Good Enough

I think we have all felt this one. When we think of incredibly successful people, like top CEOs or top athletes, we assume they couldn't possibly have any self esteem issues. But when you go deep you find out that they do.

They often have a fear of just not being good enough called the "Imposter Syndrome." Which is the feeling that somebody is going to find out that they are not really that smart and don't really have a clue about what they're talking about.

Even for myself, pursuing a motivational company when I was trained as a physician, I had a lot of fears that people would wonder why they should listen to anything I had to say. Writing this is a big part of me conquering my fears.

5. The Fear of Scarcity

I think this can be an especially damaging fear because I believe that what you put out in the world is what the world sends back to you. We get from life, not what we want, but who we are.

A good example of this is in a business where you're doing well and the business is becoming quite lucrative. You may be getting well-known in your community, but if you have a general fear of

scarcity then you're always afraid that the success is going to go away. You fear that the financial status that you currently have is not going to be there forever and instead of continuing to give great service you're always thinking about the dollar, and you cut corners to try to make sure that you keep your profit margins high. In the process of doing this, through your subconscious fear of scarcity, you're actually decreasing your chance of your business being successful moving forward.

Remember that most billionaires have an abundant mentality. They are very grateful for what they have and they feel that there is enough out there for everybody.

6. The Fear of Being Alone

Instead of filling up our lives from the inside we try to fill them up from the outside. We are not really comfortable just hanging with ourselves, being with ourselves, and getting in touch with who we really are. It is important to remember that nothing on the outside can ever fill up a void on the inside. The great key to happiness is appreciating, loving, and being comfortable with yourself.

7. The Fear of Losing Control

So many of us want to be in control of every aspect of our life whether it has to do with our children, managing our office at work, or even what our spouse wears! I have decided that my husband is going to wear that loud, ugly Hawaiian shirt whether I continue to hassle him or not. At some point, I had to relinquish control and accept that if he wants to look like a schmuck it's his deal not mine. Besides, I can always pretend I don't know him. I do, however, draw the line with Speedos and socks with sandals though!

Control! We cling to this and it is related to a fear of the unknown and a fear of losing control. We probably all know people, we may even be one of them ourselves, that run what I call a perfectionist schema. Everything has to be absolutely perfect. The pantry has to be alphabetized for crying out loud and it is enough to drive you nuts.

It's all because you have a fear of not being in control. Don't lose the precious moments of your life by micromanaging the crap out of everything and everybody. If you can subconsciously address the fear and bring it into your consciousness you will be able to be a lot more relaxed in your life.

8. The Fear of Being Different or Standing Out

This can be a very serious fear because it often causes us to put on a social mask so we don't live our truth. We are not authentic, we don't live as we truly are. We sometimes become an accountant or a doctor because our parents wanted us to be an accountant or doctor. We marry a particular person because we think this is who society expects us to be with if we want to appear to be successful. We don't really love this person, it is just what we think is expected of us.

This fear can cause us to commit the number one crime a human being can commit – self betrayal. Be yourself, pursue your dreams, live your philosophy and your values. This is what is going to get you happy. Live life on your own terms. Do whatever you can to lose the fear of what others think. I think this is what Shakespeare meant when he wrote, "to thine own self be true".

9 Tools To Combat Your Fears

Now that we have talked about the core human fears, I wanted to give you some powerful tools to combat fear – what I call The Prescription for Overcoming Fear. These are not complicated, but often success is really about the fundamentals. These are simple ways to address your fears, confront your fears, and run towards your fears.

Robin Sharma said that, “What you resist will persist, but what you befriend you will transcend.” The day you decide to befriend your fears, get to know your fears and stand in your fears is the day you will be able to let go of them. Your fears are your signposts of where you need to grow and by achieving growth you will move your life to the highest of levels. The following are tools to combat your fears.

1. Be Aware of Your Fear

Be aware of which of the 8 core human fears impact you the most. Think about these fears and where they originate from. Journal about your fears, talk about your fears or make an inventory of your fears.

I think it is also important to hang out with your fears and get to know them. Fear becomes smaller when you do this. Think about them and write about them. Know what your fears are and really address them.

2. Validate Your Fears

Don't pretend they are not there, don't push them down, but acknowledge them and feel them. To heal your fears you must feel your fears.

Don't run from them, sit in the space of your fears. Notice the reaction they cause in your body. Do you get tightness in your chest, a knot in your stomach, or do your palms get sweaty? The fear will clear if you just sit with it and the next time you are in a similar situation and you get sweaty palms or the knot in your stomach you can say, “Oh, that's my fear of rejection, it is going to pass, it is going to pass, I recognize it and I can deal with it.” Look the dragon in the eye.

3. Correspond With Your Fears

Write a letter to your fear with as much emotional response as possible. Pull out your journal, you don't have to send the letter to anybody, you don't have to show it to anybody, but just say to your fear that you will no longer be limited by it, that your life is so much bigger than your fears.

If you find yourself afraid of taking a risk, list all the negative consequences that could follow. Ask yourself if they are really that bad? Would you still be happy you took a risk even if it fails? You'll likely find that failure will not result in disastrous consequences. You can always start over again and learn from your failures.

4. Tell Others About Your Fears

Have conversations with your friends and trusted advisors or anybody that you believe in about what you are really afraid of, no matter how ridiculous you think it is. Acknowledging one's fears can deflate their power, as well as create stronger and more intimate connections with others. Another person can look at your fears from a new perspective and help you differentiate the irrational fears from the rational.

Maybe it's your best friend and you can tell her that you're really afraid of not being smart enough, or giving yourself in a relationship or going broke. Sometimes just talking about it will help you to work through it. It will bring it from the subconscious to the conscious and this will be life changing. Hold the fear up to the sunlight and transcend it.

5. Don't Get Comfortable

So many people get used to a particular job, relationship or lifestyle. They avoid trying anything new because they feel safe in their current situation. The reality is that nothing is completely safe. That comfortable relationship you have could end and your steady but boring job could be downsized.

Being comfortable in your current situation is not a reason to avoid your fears and taking risks. Make changes to follow your passions before you are forced to by external events. Don't settle for comfortable or average, push yourself to reach your full potential.

6. Face Your Fears

Take every chance you get to take your life to the next level by seizing the chance to face your fear. Even if you feel the fear and notice the fear you must do the things you are afraid of. Start with smaller fears and gradually build up your courage to face your biggest fear. Somebody once said that the fears you do not climb become your walls. So release your fears.

Phobias are intense and persistent fears about a particular thing. People with phobias go to extreme lengths to avoid facing their phobias. Because they are avoiding their phobia, they never face their fear. Treatment for phobias forces patients to confront their fears so they realize that the object of their fear doesn't represent a threat.

Often times our perception of something is far worse than the reality. By facing your fears and realizing that the negative effects are minimal or non-existent you will be far more likely to face your fears again.

7. Create a Vision Board

I've created vision boards for the last five years. I use a large poster paper, magazine pictures and glue to represent my future goals. It's kind of like being a kid again.

Whether you want to travel to a far away land, hike Kilimanjaro, go on a cycling trip through Tuscany, have a baby, have a wonderful family life, or the big house on the hill, put it in your collage of dreams. It gives you a compelling reason to confront your fears.

Be so engaged in your best life that you are just going to have to work through your fears to get there. The best time to look at this collage or vision board is in the morning when your mind is most prepared for imprinting. If you know your goals, your dreams, and what you want to create it will give you the energy and perseverance to confront your fears.

8. Tell Yourself a New Story.

In this prescription for overcoming fear, you reframe your reality and perspective. Tell a new story, use a new way to describe your life, and be grateful for what you have.

Oprah talks a lot about gratitude journals. I have always agreed with writing in a gratitude journal where you sit down every day and find five things that you are really grateful for that day. It helps you to reframe and to shift away from being fearful.

9. Surround Yourself With Love

Love is the antidote to fear. Fear and love cannot coexist in the same moment. Make life a celebration and be grateful. When you completely surrender to love you no longer fear rejection or not being good enough.

Summary

In summary, I have written about the **eight core human fears**:

1. The fear of failure
2. The fear of success
3. The fear of rejection
4. The fear of not being good enough
5. The fear of scarcity
6. The fear of being alone
7. The fear of losing control
8. The fear of being different or standing out

Then I went on to introduce **9 powerful tools for overcoming fear**:

1. Be aware of your fears
2. Validate your fears
3. Correspond with your fears
4. Tell others about your fears
5. Don't get comfortable
6. Face your fears
7. Create a collage of your dreams
8. Tell yourself a new story
9. Surround yourself with love.

It is important to remember that we don't regret the things we tried that didn't work, **we only regret the risks we never took, the things we never tried and the dreams we never chased.** Don't die with the song, book, painting, cure or vision still within you. Let it out for the whole world to see. I believe you won't perceive a dream you don't have the capacity to fulfill. Just push past your fears and follow your heart.