

## **Befriending Fear**

***Ships in harbor are safe, but that's not what ships are built for.***

***--John Shedd***

### **1. Take responsibility for your life**

- a. *Never blame anyone for anything you are being, doing, having, or feeling. Only you create what goes on in your head. Though you may not control everything that happens to you (nor are you responsible for causing them) ONLY you can control your reaction to determine if you are miserable or joyful, defeated or enthusiastic, stuck or growing. Recognize the choice you have in every situation.*
- b. *Never blame yourself. You can accept responsibility—even when you have been in error—without berating or diminishing yourself.*
- c. *Be aware of when you are NOT taking responsibility of your life so that you can change, whether now or later. Acknowledge that you haven't taken control, that you've done the best you can, and that you are trying to reclaim your power. Clues that may indicate you're not taking responsibility include:*

anger	upset	impatience	joylessness
blaming others	fatigue	pain	intimidation
vengeance	control others	lack of focus	obsessiveness
self-pity	addictions	envy	jealousy
judgmentalness	helplessness	disappointment	feeling stuck
- d. *Be aware of the payoff that keeps you stuck.*
- e. *Be aware of the multitude of choices you have in any given situation.*
- f. *Start noticing what you say in conversation with others. Are you complaining about other people? Can you instead focus on how to turn the situation around? Can you go for one week without criticizing anyone or complaining about anything?*
- g. *Look at the gifts you've received from what you've always looked at as a "bad" situation.*
- h. *Determine what you want in life and act on it.*

***The best way out is always through.***

***--Helen Keller***

## 2. Positive thinking and positive action

### a. *Pain to Power Vocabulary*

I can't vs. I won't/I choose

I should vs. I could

It's not my fault vs. I'm totally responsible

It's a problem vs. It's an opportunity

I'm never satisfied vs. I want to learn and grow

Life's a struggle vs. Life's an adventure

I hope vs. I know

If only vs. Next time

What will I do vs. I know I can handle it

It's terrible vs. It's a learning experience

### b. *Affirmations*

I am powerful and I love it.

I can handle whatever comes my way.

I am capable of changing.

I am open to new experiences.

I deserve love and respect.

I succeed by seeing the opportunity in each situation.

I freely embrace joy.

I choose.

I remember that I always have options.

I am blessed.

I am a loving person.

I can deal effectively with my fears.

I forgive myself.

I am growing and changing.

I am beautiful inside and outside.

### c. *A Risk a Day*

Each day do something that takes you out of your comfort zone. Call someone you're intimidated to call, ask for something you want, do some research about how you can get into that dance class you've always wanted to take. Your risk can be small or bold, should have integrity and love for yourself and others, and is never something that is dangerous or that infringes on the rights of others. Celebrate your effort and your personal power—not just the outcome.

### d. *Visualize success*

Practice the risks you'll take by visualizing yourself achieving it. Conjure up the scene in your mind. What do you see, hear, smell, taste, and feel? What do you need to say or do? See others responding to you in a positive way.

- e. *Surround yourself with the positive*
- |                                    |                          |
|------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| Spend time with positive people    | Read inspirational books |
| Post encouraging quotations        | Play supportive tapes    |
| Write down your affirmations       | Keep a gratitude journal |
| Record positive thoughts on a tape | Pray                     |
| Read self-help books               | Practice daily           |
| Out-talk your negativity           | Avoid/decrease tv news   |
| Visualize a peaceful setting       | Smile                    |

***A man who flies from his fear may find he has only taken a shortcut to meet it.***

***--J.R.R. Tolkien***

### **3. Decision-making**

- a. *Focus on the No-Lose Model*  
Choices are different paths that have different opportunities for learning along the way. No matter what the outcome, we cannot lose.
- b. *Do your homework*  
Learn about the options you have. Research or consider what they have to offer.
- c. *Establish your priorities*  
Do some soul-searching about what you want out of life.
- d. *Trust yourself.*  
Learn to listen to your instincts about which way to go. It may come out as bodily clues, a feeling, a thought. Honor yourself and the good advice you are already giving yourself. And if you misread a cue, you learn something.
- e. *Lighten up.*  
Nothing is so important that you can't handle it. Whatever happens as a result of your decision, you will be able to deal with it.
- f. *Accept responsibility for your decision.*  
Finding the opportunity in every decision will help you to more easily accept the responsibility for making it and decrease the chance that you are angry or blaming of the world or yourself.
- g. *After making your decision, toss out your picture of how it's "supposed to be"*  
You can't control the future and unfulfilled expectations lead to unhappiness. Focus more on the opportunity of the way it actually is.
- h. *Don't protect...correct*  
Commit yourself to your decision and give it your full effort. If it does not work out, change it. There is value in learning that you don't like something. Change the path if you're confused and dissatisfied but know you have given it your all.

***Courage is not the absence of fear, but rather the judgment that something else is more important than fear.***

***--Ambrose Redmoon***

#### **4. Balancing your life**

a. *Enhance your commitment to each area in your life*

Contribution	Hobby	Leisure
Family	Friends	Relationship
Alone time	Personal growth	Work/School
Health	Spirituality	Other

b. *Set daily goals that reflect the areas in your whole life, to keep in balance.*

***Expose yourself to your deepest fear. After that, fear has no power...You are free.***

***--Jim Morrison***

#### **5. Saying “YES” to life**

a. *Yes = an antidote to fear. Say yes to opportunities for growth and challenge and to all the things that life hands us. Accept things both positive and negative. Understand that pain is a natural part of life and that you can handle it. Believe you can create meaning and purpose in whatever happens.*

b. *No = being a victim to life. Resisting opportunities. Tension. Apathy. Emotional upheaval. Powerlessness. Denial. Depression. Anger. Sickness.*

***Trust that still, small voice that says, "This might work and I'll try it."***

***--Diane Mariechild***

#### **6. Contributing**

a. *Empowerment through genuine giving, with no expectations of something in return.*

b. *Giving for the sake of giving is giving from a place of love, not from a place of expectation.*

c. *If give to get back, you'll just be "keeping score." If others don't give "enough" to you, can lead to resentment, anger, conflict with others, trying to control others, manipulation, feelings of entitlement, blaming others, seeking approval from others, or feeling used.*

- d. *A lifelong process. Easy to give when feel abundantly endowed but can't feel abundance in your own life without giving of your thanks, information, praise, time, money, and/or love. Contribute to feel abundance in your life.*
- e. *Ultimately, you must become what you want to attract. Emotional and spiritual reciprocity. The Golden Rule.*

***You must do the thing you think you cannot do.***  
***--Eleanor Roosevelt***

## **7. Filling the Void Within**

- a. *Befriending fear opens us up to our higher selves—a place inside that allows us to feel fulfilled. The higher self is loving, kind, abundant, joyful.*
- b. *Can choose between the positive higher self and the negative inner critic.*

### When I Choose To Listen To My Inner Critic:

I try to control  
 I don't notice my blessings  
 I need  
 I am sensitive  
 I am in turmoil  
 I am blocked  
 I don't know I count  
 I repel  
 I make a negative difference  
 I am bored  
 I am empty  
 I am filled with self-doubt  
 I am dissatisfied  
 I have tunnel vision  
 I wait and wait  
 I am helpless  
 I never enjoy  
 I am always disappointed  
 I hold resentment  
 I am tense  
 I am numb  
 I am weak  
 I am vulnerable  
 I am off course  
 I try to control  
 I am poor  
 I am lonely  
 I am afraid

### When I Choose To Listen To My Higher Self:

I trust  
 I appreciate  
 I love  
 I care  
 I am at peace  
 I am creative  
 I count  
 I attract  
 I make a positive difference  
 I am involved  
 I am filled up  
 I am confident  
 I am content  
 I see the big picture  
 I live now  
 I am helpful  
 I am joyful  
 I go with what is  
 I forgive  
 I am relaxed  
 I am alive  
 I am powerful  
 I am protected  
 I am on the path  
 I let go  
 I have so much  
 I am connected  
 I am excited

***Do not fear mistakes—there are none.***

***--Miles Davis***

## **8. Dealing with Loved Ones Who Resist Your Changes**

- a. *People get accustomed to interacting with you in a certain way. When you change, they may fear losing your relationship. They can be threatened by your changes.*
  1. *Reassure them that you know it is scary when someone changes—validate.*
  2. *Don't tolerate manipulations.*
  3. *Ask for their support.*
  4. *Believe that your loved one wants what is best for you and ultimately will love the changes you are making.*
  5. *Avoid aggression or passivity—strive for assertiveness*
- b. *Know that when we act aggressively or hostilely to someone who doesn't support us, we may be worried about our own need for approval or feel guilty for changing things for others. Our loved ones give us the opportunity to practice letting go of our own inappropriate reactions and to develop more responsible ways of behaving.*
- c. *If you can't reassure or reason with your loved one about their destructive behavior towards you, create some distance until you can. You may need to grieve the old relationship until you can open the door to a new one.*
- d. *You may outgrow some people. If your new energy does not awaken them to new possibilities or if they cannot support and try to thwart your changes, you may want to consider moving on. You can handle it.*
- e. *Make an effort to get to know people you admire and who are working on personal growth. It is empowering to surround yourself with strong, motivated, and inspirational groups of people.*

***Do the thing you are afraid to do and the death of fear is certain.***

***--Ralph Waldo Emerson***

## **9. Keep Motivated**

- a. *Be patient...what's the rush?*
- b. *Trust that all is happening as it should.*
- c. *Realize that when you feel you've stopped growing, you may just be pausing to consolidate information.*
- d. *Find others who will support you and grow with you.*
- e. *Practice the skills for befriending fear.*

***Feel the fear and do it anyway.***

***--Susan Jeffers***