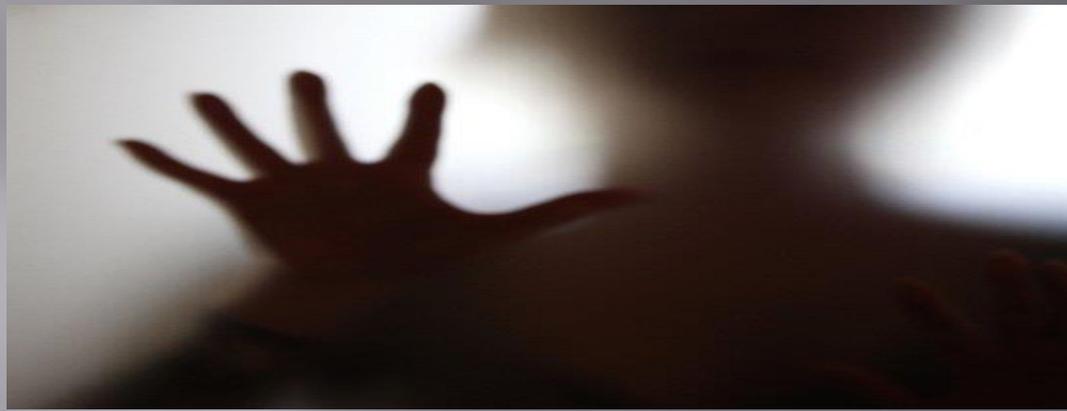




MANAGING MY FEARS

Fear can be paralyzing until you're able to recognize it for what it is....

Fear then becomes a motivator and a way to learn more about yourself.



Fear of the Unknown

- ❑ One of our biggest fears of the unknown future. We have anxiety over things we can't control, and worry about what tomorrow may bring.
- ❑ This may be based on a chaotic childhood, where you never knew exactly what was going to happen that day.
- ❑ We may worry for hours about an issue, creating a catastrophic ending in our minds and losing our Serenity over something we have no control over.
- ❑ Remember, 90% of what you worry about WON'T come true, and the other 10%, if it does happen, won't be nearly as bad as you thought.
- ❑ This is where our Faith comes in, if you can remember that we are NOT going through this all alone

Fear of Making the Wrong Decisions

- ▣ How do I decide which bills to pay when I won't have enough money to pay them all? How do I manage my checking account? I'm too overwhelmed emotionally to care for myself or anyone else.
- ▣ HAS ANYONE BEEN IN THIS POSITION BEFORE?



Fear of Financial Loss

- ▣ How can I make it financially when there are now two houses to maintain? I don't have enough money to pay my bills and feed my children. Why did I have to make bad choices, Now I have to pay money to my P.O. and fees to the court because of my actions.
- ▣ Don't turn to old habits to create new problems.



Fear of Loss

- ▣ Perhaps you're dealing with a custody battle over your children, or of losing them to the State because of your addiction.
- ▣ We can become so anxious that we actually create exactly what we're so fearful of by drowning our fears in drugs and alcohol



Fear of Success

We can become so overwhelmed by the expectations of our family, that we are actually afraid to move in the right direction.

- ▣ We may feel more comfortable "in our mess" because it is what we are used to. We may get so close to the top, and self-sabotage our efforts.
- ▣ It takes great courage to make the right choices, but it's worth it in the end.

Fear of Intimacy

- ▣ We've all been hurt by love at one time or another, and perhaps it even started with our first love, our parents.
- ▣ Once you've been hurt by love, it may be hard to let our guard down again.
- ▣ The problem with that is, you can build a wall around you so high that even YOU can't pull yourself out of it.



Fear of Rejection

- ▣ People are social creatures, and we all need to feel loved and accepted.
- ▣ Many of us are "people-pleasers" because of early childhood experiences in our family lives, and we will do whatever it takes to not feel abandoned or rejected again.



Fear of Change

- ▣ What changes are going to happen to me when I am clean and sober?
- ▣ Will I be able to find a new job?
- ▣ Will I be able to make new friends?
- ▣ Will I be able to think clearer or make decisive choices without second guessing myself.
- ▣ Give me an example when you made a positive change and it was hard to accept

How To Reduce Your Fear

1. Monitor your thoughts.

Watch for fear-producing emotions such as anger, sadness, jealousy and judgment.

To be negative is easy. When negativity is allowed to flourish, it generally will produce more fear.

Choose thoughts that produce emotions that make you feel comfortable in your body: love, happiness, peace, joy.

2. Place painful memories of the past on pause.

Just because something happened to you or someone else in the past and it had a negative outcome does not mean it will happen again. The pain of something that happened in the past is an indicator of the need for a change in direction.

Once you evaluate the memory, you will be able to see the situation more clearly, and if nothing can be changed, then *stop* thinking about it immediately. When you allow yourself to recall a fearful memory, you pull yourself out of balance.

Change what you are doing. Spend your mental efforts and energy on creating a new direction for you.

3. Do not hang on to your fears -- fear of illness, fear of financial loss, fear of losing someone, fear of death, fear of losing your "stuff," the fear of rejection or the fear looking stupid or weak.

When we choose fear, we are letting fear dictate our futures and we limit our options for greater security, peace and comfort. No matter what challenges life gives you, you can choose to respond in a new way.

4. Become calm. Work at being the "calm in the eye of the storm." We can prevent ourselves from becoming overwhelmed with the extreme situations surfacing all around us.

Regardless of what is happening in your life at this moment, know that you have the strength, courage and wisdom you need to move forward without fear.

5. Finding strength, balance and faith will save us from debilitating fear. As we know from experience, fear and Faith cannot coexist... you must choose.

Our thoughts, words, feelings and actions are more powerful than we think.

It is critical that we stay focused on the *positive* possibilities, and let the unrealized fear dissipate.

Let this moment be your starting point for a release of fear, and enjoy the peace and comfort that will take its place.