

## 24. Fear

For too many, fear runs deep, prevalent and persistent. U.S. culture is awash with it. Fear lurks like a monster beneath the surface all the time, rising and interfering daily with our healthy lives and living. We fear attack from boogeymen enemies and terrorists, losing our jobs, not having enough, not being good enough, getting sick, accidents, nature, animals, people on the streets, robbers, rapists, criminals, losing money, death, disasters, fire, climate change, evil politicians, losing Internet connectivity, cons, identity theft, germs and not getting credit for what we do. We're afraid to let our children be outside. We're afraid for our loved ones. Many of us experience fear every day.

Fear has a positive purpose. When there is an immediate physical threat, fear triggers adrenaline and gives us an edge, extra speed and power in fight or flight. When we first climbed down from the trees as monkeys, fear gave us an advantage in being able to successfully escape back to the trees if attacked. Since then, it's sometimes helped us escape from predators. Really, though, that's all fear is good for: escape from physical predators. Otherwise, fear inhibits and harms us.

When we experience fear, our abilities to reason and do anything other than escape are dampened. Our thoughts get muddled and disjointed. Our hearts race. Our breathing becomes shallow and rapid. We sweat. Our stomachs churn. Our attentions flit and eyes wander. We do not trust. We close up. Our health suffers. We're dragged down out of higher energies. Wisdom goes. We behave erratically. We pump up with adrenaline energy with no healthy outlet for it, and so we become sick. We feel bad. We give away our power to anyone who promises to alleviate the fear and discomfort.

And there's the rub. That is the human behavior exploited in our culture of fear. Keep people afraid, and we'll give away our power. So, let's keep people afraid, through religious beliefs, constant scary stories in the news, fabrications and amplifications of threats from amorphous terrorists, and setting things up so people really do have horrifying experiences with crime, loss, health, terror and safety.

News in the U.S. should really be called "Bad News"? Newspapers, radios and televisions dedicate their news presentations almost exclusively to things to be upset, scared and anxious about. We've had to scour the entire globe to find them, but here are the things that will keep fear alive today. Be afraid! Give away your money and power, to your government, to the police and prison systems, to your employer, to companies that provide insurance and security services, to your religious institutions.

Western religions share a belief that God is all-powerful and should be feared. God Is Mighty Scary. Grumpily, He hawkishly watches our every move and thought, always; and, if we ever make a mistake, He'll punish us worse than our most horrifying imaginings, not only now, but for all eternity, rubbing His hands in malicious glee, because God's good, so we better give money to the church and do what it says. Huh? That can only make any sort of twisted sense at all in a mind muddled with fear.

We should all live forever in fear and guilt, because the first prototype man didn't do what he was told in the Garden of Eden, and all-powerful vengeful God doesn't have anything better to do than sit around still being pissed off about it? People should live forever in fear and guilt, because the Romans and Jews killed Jesus, God's only Son, and God's going to get even at some point? What petty rubbish.

If an all-powerful, all-knowing God wanted another Son, He'd make one. He made everything else, yeh? If He didn't want His Son killed, He'd have stopped it. Adam and Eve in a Garden of Eden is just a story.

Jesus was one human being. Even if these stories were true, why would God hold a grudge for so long against people thousands of years later who are obviously innocent? Even if God is a Sour, Spiteful, Mean, Unforgiving Wretch who exists only to punish us in an afterlife, aren't we still better served by releasing fear, so we can perform better in this life, and maybe be punished less in the next?

Fear is disabling. Fear makes us weak. Fear creates suffering. Fear causes us pain. Fear makes us sick. We screw up and experience harm, because we're less functional in a state of fear. We forego opportunities when we're withdrawn, hesitant and timid from fear. We agree to be and do things opposed to our beliefs, values and principles when we're weakened by fear. We give to the very people who are creating the fear that leads to our sufferings the power to make us afraid. Fear is bad news. It's destructive. It holds us back, and down. It makes us low.

Fear is not rational. People 1,500 miles from the ocean are afraid of impossibly being eaten by sharks, but they queue up to get into the U.S. healthcare system, which is the #3 cause of death in the U.S.<sup>1</sup> We're afraid of being hit by lightning, which is incredibly unlikely, but we're not afraid to drive our cars, where we are much more likely to be harmed. We are afraid of foreign terrorists killing people, so we give away billions of dollars and important rights and power to politicians and their shadowy supporters to pretend to prevent that, when we're most likely to be shot by one of us at home who is alienated by anger, hopelessness and despair over our broken social systems, and we do nothing about that.<sup>2</sup>

Anxiety is fear without focus. It is resonant fear we cannot locate the source of. Anxiety is an epidemic source of health problems. Anxiety is endemic to modern life. Anxiety is a curse to be lifted.

In the U.S., in the richest economy to ever exist on Earth, as a society of human beings seeking to make our lives better, why do we still have poverty, hunger, homelessness, people dying of simply treated ills, crime, violence, guns and terror? If we can send a man to the moon, we can certainly solve these things. We don't, because too many who are ultimately in power in the U.S. want to keep us in a state of fear, because we are easier to exploit when we are afraid.

We put up with nonsense and do things we believe are immoral at work, because we are afraid of losing our jobs and incomes and falling into poverty and homelessness if we don't, like so many do, and those getting wealthy and powerful from that corporation benefit from our lack of integrity. We allow the most expensive and dysfunctional health care system in the world to become more expensive and dysfunctional every year, because we're afraid of not having health care and suffering because of it.<sup>3</sup>

We let a wealthy, powerful minority use government to loot us, kill a million Iraqis in war and sanctions, including half a million women and children, who never did anyone in the U.S. any harm, create lifelong suffering for our soldiers, and generations of problems in the Middle East, because we're so retarded by fears of terrorism we accepted clearly unbelievable lies about Iraqi weapons of mass destruction.

Like all, humans are energetic beings. We are ultimately energy in complex vibrating patterns. Fear is an energetic state. We have the power to choose our energetic states. Do not give away that power. Fear is a choice. We do not have to choose to be in the low energetic state of fear.

We can just as easily choose to exist in higher energetic states, like love, trust, openness and creativity. In a state of fear, we suffer and make bad choices. Why choose that? In states of love, trust, openness and creativity, we feel good, make good choices, and creates the worlds and lives we want.

*"I must not fear. Fear is the mind-killer. Fear is the little-death that brings total obliteration. I will face my fear. I will permit it to 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."*<sup>4</sup>

Stop fearing and giving away power! Be courageous! Choose trust, openness, love and creativity!

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<sup>1</sup> See *We Can Change Our Wicked Problems!* Chapter on Health and Healthcare, <https://www.wecanchange.us/health-and-healthcare>

<sup>2</sup> See *We Can Change Our Wicked Problems!* Chapter on Gun Violence, <https://www.wecanchange.us/gun-violence>

<sup>3</sup> See *We Can Change Our Wicked Problems!* Chapter on Health and Healthcare, <https://www.wecanchange.us/health-and-healthcare>

<sup>4</sup> *Dune*, Frank Herbert