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Controlled By Fear

Fear is an option. You have a choice to live in fear OR you can choose to trust yourself. Trust yourself that it is OK to fail, because even in the process of failing, you can find answers.

Good judgment comes from experience.

And experience, well that comes from making bad judgments.

However, if you are choosing to live in fear, at least identify what your fears are. Fear always has an object. It is the fear of something and it often comes in levels. The fear of speaking to a group of 500 people is the fear of screwing up and making a fool of yourself. → The fear of screwing up in front of a large group is the fear of rejection. → The fear of rejection is the fear of being alone and isolated. → The fear of being isolated is the fear of not existing. This bottom level, or root, is important to uncover if you are ever to totally get through your fear.

Take a look at the levels in your fears. Most people do not know what the root of their fear is. They are aware of only their surface fears. The fear of spiders is the fear of _____? Which is the fear of _____? The fear of a mouse is the fear of _____? Which is the fear of _____? The fear of loud, screaming fights is the fear of _____? Which is the fear of _____?

First step: Identify your beliefs, values, and expectations. This is not an easy job and it will take the average person months and even years to uncover all of them. This is a process of enlightenment; it is like peeling an onion. Every time you think you have found them all, you will find another.

Second step: When you have found the root of one of your fears, ask yourself what is the worst that could happen? Could I live through it if the worst happened? How likely is the worst to happen? Now, ask yourself what is the best that could happen? Could I live through it if the best happened? How likely is the best to happen? Some people are more afraid of the anastrophic happening than they are of the catastrophic happening! The worst seldom happens; the best seldom happens.

Sometimes, your fear will come from believing two contradictory concepts at the same time. For instance: Do you believe that “If at first you don’t succeed, try, try again.” Sounds like good advice that you may have received from a wise parent. BUT, have you also heard, “If you can’t do a job right the first time, don’t do it at all.” These two beliefs are absolute contradictions.

**Contradictory beliefs invariably lead to
Confusing and contradictory behaviors.**

Do you keep trying even if you cannot do it right the first time or even the second time? When do you quite trying, after the hundredth time, the two hundredth time? [Zsa Zsa Gabor finally stopped after marrying “ten abusive husbands.”] Her response, when asked about this, was “I guess I’m just unlucky.” Having a meteor fall on you is unlucky. Choosing to marry ten abusive husbands takes skill!

When you figure out what you are afraid of, allow yourself to become angry instead of fearful. Now, use that anger to make changes in your life so that you no longer have to be fearful. You have a choice to live in the past with your regrets or to live in the here and now, trusting that the mistakes you make in the future will simply be learning opportunities. “That, that I would do, I don’t do. That, that I would not do, I do.” Does that sound familiar? Have you found yourself saying “I am not going to yell at the children” and then you are yelling at them? What are your contradictory beliefs that produce this type of behavior?

You have no control over what has happened to you in the past nor over how you responded. You do have control today over what conclusions you choose to place on past events. What in your life is not working? What mistakes do you keep making over and over again? How many failed relationships have you had? How often do you feel depressed? How often do you feel lonely and/or isolated? How often has anxiety stopped you from achieving your goals? How often do you blame yourself (I really screwed up)? How often do you condemn and/or judge yourself (I am a real loser. I am so lazy. I am a shy person)?

Instead of looking at your behaviors as the source and evidence for your problems, start looking at your beliefs, values, and expectations. It is here that you will find the power to become what you say you want to be.

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Specializing in workshops on Relationships,
Depression, Anger Management & Anxiety

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