



Affective Center for Therapy

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CHANGING YOUR MIND CHANGING YOUR FEELINGS CHANGING YOUR BEHAVIORS

For the human being, *"Reality" is what you believe it to be*, and your feelings are a direct result of what you think. Out of your feelings comes your behavior. The men who flew the planes into the Twin Towers were doing what they believed was right. It was their reality and because they believed it was the truth, they acted on that reality.

If you do not like what you are feeling, if you do not like your behavior, change what you think. This is one of those things that is easier said than done.

Are you afraid of spiders, snakes, mice, big dogs, the dark, heights, emotional pain, rejection, the Government or conservatives? Do you see the world as safe or unsafe? Do you see yourself as being able to handle everything that the world throws at you? What are your fears? Are you tired of living in fear? If you do not want to be afraid, all you have to do is to change what you think.

Are you sure you want to change your mind? Many people say they do, but do not really want to change what they think. It is easier to blame others than to accept responsibility for your failed relationships. You have been thinking the way you have for years. Are you sure you want to change now?

Check to see by making a list of what you have given up because of your fears. Has your OCD behavior limited what you can do or where you can go? Has your Panic Anxiety put a crimp in your life style? If you have PTSD, how has it affected your relationships, and friendships? Do flashbacks of when you were molested make it hard to have open and honest relationships? Do your beliefs and fears limit you from living your life to the fullest?

Is it worth changing your long held beliefs so that your feelings change? If you keep doing what you have always done, you will keep getting what you have always gotten. How long have you believed that you must control your anxiety (fear)? How has it worked for you? What would happen if you changed your belief to "I **cannot** control anxiety?" So, I will stop trying to control it.

How long have you believed that people (mate, children, family and/or people who drive on the freeway) should think and act like you? Should these people live up to your expectations? And, there is your belief that people should do what you think they should do, not what they do. How has that belief worked for you?

It comes down to this challenge: You change your thinking or you lose out on the life that could be yours. If you chose to take up this challenge to change what you think, **your job will be:**

To provoke, in yourself, more anxiety and uncertainty than you believe you can tolerate.

**The only problem with sadness,
anger, hopelessness, anxiety,
anguish, misery, is that you want
to get rid of them. You cannot just
escape. They are the very
situation in which life has to
integrate and grow.**

Shree Rajneesh 1931 - 1990

It is by giving up control that you gain control. It is only by embracing that where you are is where you are, and what you are experiencing is what you are experiencing and that you will be there until you can be somewhere else. What you resist will persist.

Are you finding it hard to just snap your fingers and change what you think? Do not worry. Start with; *the only place you can be is where you are.* **It is OK to be uncertain, to have fear and anxiety, if that is where you are!**

In order to change, you need to accept that it is OK to be where you are and be willing to say:

- I want to become uncertain and have fear and anxiety about what is happening to me.
- I want to be uncertain about being strong.
- I want my uncertainty to last until it changes.
- I want my anxiety to make my heart beat faster.
- I want to be scared, fearful, and doubtful AND step forward anyway.
- I am not in control of what pops up in my thoughts, but I am in control of my response.

Winning Strategy

The second step is:

- Check to see if there are any obvious dangerous elements in your environment. Not all anxiety is bad. There are times when your anxiety bell goes off and you need to get out of there.

- If there are none, then don't pay attention to your anxiety/fear. Because 90% of the time, it is just a trick of your mind. Think of it as if your car alarm keeps going off for no reason. After a while, you learn to ignore it.
- Accept the anxiety and/or obsessive behavior when it happens as OK. Do this by taking the judgments off. Instead say, "Isn't it interesting that I am feeling this way. It has not killed me before and it is not going to kill me now. Brain, stop trying to scare me."
- Become the observer, as if you are watching someone else. Become the reassuring person, "It is only an anxiety attack. It cannot hurt me." It is the people who try to get off the roller coaster while it is moving that get hurt!
- Give yourself a reason to not react to the attack. Finish this sentence: "I want to confront and experience this anxiety because. . . ." You can reassure yourself by repeating these truths:
 - ✓ I am capable of handling whatever life throws at me.
 - ✓ Emotional pain is not terminal.
 - ✓ Fear has never stopped me from doing something I really wanted to do.
 - ✓ It is the cowboy who gets bucked off the horse that needs to get back on.
 - ✓ You get through fear by doing what you are afraid to do.
 - ✓ What you resist will persist.
 - ✓ This too will pass.
 - ✓ To repress a feeling is to give it unlimited control.
 - ✓ You become what you resist.
 - ✓ Anxiety cannot be controlled, so I won't even try.

After due consideration, you may choose not to change. No one said you have to change. It is your life. The question, as always, is: Is what you are doing getting you what you want? Without risk there is no gain, so at this point, you may want to look at what you want for your life and how much are you willing to risk to get it.

Entering your horse into the horse race will never guarantee that you will win. But, not entering your horse in the horse race will guarantee that you will lose!

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