

9th Allure Article – for Sunday, May 24, 2008

## **Facing the Fear**

Once you have a clear vision of what you desire to create in at least one aspect of your life, beware! “Fear monsters” may begin to pop up and try to deter you. Fear monsters come in all shapes and sizes. They lurk in the darkness and make scary noises.

It is easy to get paralyzed and lose hope when these fears howl. Panic sets in and speaks, “Am I crazy to think that I could create my dream?” Most of us become frightened and sprint at top speed away from the monsters. What we fail to realize is that running from the fear monsters is exactly what they want us to do. What if we tried a new approach with our fears?

Fear monsters have power over us when we run from them. Rather than running and hiding, what if instead, you pulled out your flashlight and a magnifying glass and got as close to the fear as you can? What if you were to examine the fear and know it as intimately as you know your dreams?

Who are these fear monsters anyway? Are they real beings out to ruin us? Or, are they merely mental constructions that we’ve been conditioned to accept as truth and consider dangerous to question?

Fears are overwhelming. They seem like impossible blocks to move beyond. Fear causes us to feel frantic: our hearts beat faster, we feel tense and overwhelmed. Maybe our fears even cause us to become immobile and depressed. We sit in misery and sorrow thinking that we just can’t achieve what we are aiming for.

Let’s look at fear closely so we understand it. Our fears typically come from unquestioned beliefs that we formed early on. Each of us carries beliefs we learned from our family, friends, society, church and the media (just to name a few). We gather these beliefs when we are young and aren’t even aware of the impact they have on us every day. Our beliefs cause us to think in certain ways. Our thoughts cause us to feel certain emotional states. Based upon our emotions, we feel a physical response in our body. Then, based on how we feel physically, we take action (or, maybe we take no action at all.)

Let me illustrate this from my personal experience. I grew up with a family that taught me money was scarce and that we had to scrimp and save to have enough. Even when we had money, we still saved every penny. We rarely spent money on enjoying good things. As a kid, I adopted the following belief without even knowing it: “Money is hard to come by so I better save every penny. If I have money, I better hold onto it just in case it runs out. Money is only for necessities. Spending for your enjoyment is wasteful.” There was constant fear in our house when it came to the subject of money.

Let’s fast forward into my adult years. I found myself paralyzed with fear whenever I’d think of making a career change. I was in a job that offered me a great salary. Even though I had a clear vision of my new vocation as a life coach, speaker and writer, my heart would pound when I’d think of taking steps towards bringing my vision to reality. Many days I would feel terrified of making changes. I’d say to myself, “Are you insane? Giving up a stable income would be irresponsible. How will you meet your bills if you go out on a limb and try something new?”

As you can see, my beliefs about money were causing my thoughts to run wild. My thoughts would cause me to feel anxious and overwhelmed. Terror paralyzed me: I would decide to stay where I was. I would suppress my dreams.

When I'd feel the fear, I'd often run from it or try to ignore it. The fear monster was persistent – it wasn't going anywhere.

It wasn't until I quieted myself and watched my thoughts that I began to understand the cycle – the belief, thought, emotion, physical response, and resultant action. I also began to ask the Universe for assistance in healing my fearful thoughts. I decided to invite my fears into my awareness and study them. As I listened to my inner guidance, new ideas began to emerge.

I invited my fears for regular meetings. They would come hoping to spook me. With each meeting I got to understand the fear a little better – I began to see those phantoms haunting me were actually soft, fuzzy monsters with big teeth but no bite. They looked scary but brought me gifts.

I asked myself, "Couldn't I believe that money was abundant rather than scarce? What if it was irresponsible NOT to pursue my dreams? Maybe my ideas about being responsible could be viewed differently?"

That's when the breakthrough came for me. Once I questioned my beliefs and realized that I could choose to view this aspect of my life with different eyes, I began to feel relief. When the fear monsters would speak, I would not try to lock them in the basement and go about my day feeling uneasy. Rather, I'd tell them, "I welcome you into my awareness. I can look right at you. I don't believe you anymore. I am forming new beliefs that support me."

Again and again as they taunted me and tried to drag me through worry or doubt to the past or the future, I looked them straight in the eye and said, "No!" Instead, I pulled myself back to the present moment and asked for help in choosing a new way to look at things. I was no longer willing to be the little captive bird, living in the cage of old, fearful beliefs. I began to take my cage apart one fear at a time and make it into a perch from which I could fly.

I've been encouraging you to dream big and get a clear picture of what you want to create in each aspect of your life. I want to be real with you – the path to your dreams has potential pitfalls. Is it easy to create the life of your dreams? Yes, it is – that is, it is easy if you have the courage to look your fears in the eye. It is easy if you will replace your draining, limiting thoughts one at a time with positive, powerful beliefs and thoughts.

I have come to see fear monsters as beautiful learning partners. They gave me the opportunity to become more conscious, to stretch my mind and heart, to expand myself and see the breadth and depth of my eternal spirit.

You are not your fear. You are much greater, much grander than any fear you feel. You only begin to know this as you sit and lovingly interact with your fears. When we shine the light of love and brilliance on our fears, they transform.

Your assignment this week is to observe your mind. Quiet your mind and be fully present. Watch for fear monsters. What do these monsters tell you? Write it all down on paper. Examine each fear. Ask yourself, "Why do I believe this? Who would I be without this fearful belief? What possibilities would open up in my life if I chose to believe something new?" Then breathe deeply two or three times and listen. Ask the Universe to help you find new beliefs to support you on the path towards your dreams.

### Food For Thought

Be Clear. Grow in your Awareness.

Release all beliefs you hold inside that are hindering your journey.

Stand face to face with them.

Look painful fears in the eye.

As you stare them down, their influence is lessened.

In each moment, begin to take back your power:

Face your fears: let them dissolve.

Let worry fade away.

Watch your anger slow its dance.

Let depression soften and gradually melt away.

Release them.

Thank them for lessons learned.

Exhale.

Breathe Deeply.

With Open space inside you,

Invite better partners to keep you company on your path:

Joy, Bliss, Love, Passion, Purity, Gratitude

Gentleness, Kindness, Boldness

Freedom, Exhilaration

Clarity.

Your Inner Light is growing brighter.

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