

Hello, everyone, I hope that you are creating awesomeness today. And before we dive into this amazing topic, I would like to say again, thank you to all of you who have touched base with me and encouraged me on this journey for podcasting. We are on iTunes now. And so if you are enjoying this podcast, I certainly invite you to leave a review. And I also invite you to shoot me a message and let me know what else you would like to be hearing about. There's so many things on my list right now. And I want to hear from you.

So today we are talking about fear. Now before we jump into a topic, I like to go right to the bare bones. And so I look up the definition. And so that's what I did with fear. And the definition that I got from the internet was, "an unpleasant emotion caused by and this is important, the belief that someone or something is dangerous, or likely to cause pain, or a threat". And I love this definition because it has that word belief in there. And it recognizes that this emotion that we have called fear isn't just something that happens to us, but that it actually goes through our brain first, and then we feel the fear.

Now there are a lot of really great sayings around fear. If you have ever heard this one. This is the acronym for fear false evidence appearing real. I really like that one because we can create whatever evidence we want in our own brains. And then there is the saying, "feel the fear and do it anyway", which of course I love, that's the name of this podcast. And then there's also the phrase "be fear less". I have to tell you, that's not really my favorite. That word fear less means that you are lacking fear. And don't think that we're supposed to lack fear. But when you look up the synonyms of fearless the words like bold, brave, gallant and courageous come up, so I can get down with that. If that's what you mean. You're saying fearless that someone is being brave or courageous, then I am going to go for the word fearless. But fearless, meaning that you don't have any fear is not the best way to think about it, at least in my opinion.

Because fear is a good thing. It's a good thing to have on multiple levels. First and foremost, fear is a signal literally a physical signal that we are in trouble that we are in danger. And our body was made like that on purpose. It's like hey, listen, here's some fear. And here's your signal to react to freeze to fight or to flee. And so when we sense danger, our bodies react. Your nervous system is alerted by the amygdala and stress hormones like cortisol and adrenaline are released and it gets your body ready to protect itself. These physical changes happen so that you can fight, flight, or run away or hide and freeze. And so they do keep you safe, and they keep you healthy, and it's programmed into your nervous system. It gives you the survival instincts that you need to keep yourself safe from real physical danger.

Episode #10: Feel the Fear and Do It Anyway

Now the problem comes when we feel fear, and there isn't a physical danger. And I want to submit to you that that fear could also be used as a good thing, if we know how to use it. And that's what we're going to talk about today. What fear is and how you can recognize it in your own body. And then we're going to talk about some common and then some sneaky ways that fear can show up when you really are not in danger, but it feels like you are and how to notice those situations. And then finally, I'm going to share with you how you can use fear to your advantage and have control over it instead of the other way around.

And in the last podcast I talked about fear being an integral part of the process of when you are daring to dream. When you are daring to level up and live a fulfilling life. Fear is a natural part of the process. And I also talked about the two main emotions that we experience as human beings, and they are love and fear. And the idea here is that all of our positive emotions are based in love that they are the sister of love. So if you think about contentment or peace, joy, freedom, empowerment, all of those positive emotions are linked to love. And then all of our negative emotions like worry and blame, revenge, jealousy, anxiety, all of those are linked to fear. So as we talk about fear, know that it is not just about primal fear as being afraid for your life. But also that fear shows up in many different negative emotions.

So let's start by talking about what fear is for you, and how you can recognize it in your own body. And one of the great ways to recognize it is to listen to what you are saying. And I want you to listen for one word in particular. I want you listen for the word "stress", as in, I am so stressed, or I am stressed out. I'm stressed about work is just about my family and my kids and getting everything done, or the stock market or the traffic or politics or whatever. Listen to yourself and listen for that word, because that is a key indicator that something is going on in your body. And from now on, when you hear the word stress, or use the word stress, only use it literally in terms of something that is physical. So think about the tension, or the exertion on an object that when you push on something like that stress. And then you can also use it in terms of noticing and recognizing the stress in your body, the physiological response, the reaction that your body has.

And so, a good way to think about this is, if you imagine your ancestors, right, when they see a dangerous animal, there's a physical stress response. So now they have to one run as fast as they possibly can, or two tense up all of their muscles and get very small, and hide, or three, get ready to fight. So those are stress responses. That's what stress is. And so I want for you to be able to differentiate between an emotion and the stress or the physiological response and what it feels like in your body. And being able to do that to discern between the physical sensations, those stress sensations in your body, and your emotions and what you're thinking about that is an amazing meta skill.

I'll tell you that sometimes I asked people, all right, well, how do you know that you're upset, or angry or even happy. And they'll look at me like I have two heads, they'll say because I am because I just know. And when I'm asking you to do is to dig a little bit deeper to be able to differentiate between what you are physically feeling inside of your body, whether it is a fear, emotion, or love emotion, and what you are thinking, I want you to be able to connect your brain to your body. And the reason that this is important is because your thoughts, create your emotions, your thoughts, create your fear, your thoughts create the energy in your body. And when you are aware of the energy in your body, that stress response to that fear, then that can be a signal for you to wake up. To go, oh, there it is, there is my stress response and I'm just sitting here at my desk, I'm just laying here in bed. How am I creating my own stress response?

And the really cool thing about this is as you start to pay attention, you'll notice what your stress response is like in different situations. So perhaps when you are preparing for a extremely important public speaking event, your stress may be in the form of an increased heart rate, or sweating in your body or your temperature rising. Whereas if you're laying in bed at night, and you're thinking about where your child is and why they're not home, that stress might feel like butterflies in your stomach. And so it's extremely important for you to be able to notice the stress response. To feel the stress response and feel the emotions and be able to differentiate between that feeling and what you are thinking.

And this really is the crux of it all, understanding the fears and the emotions are there because we've created them with our thinking. And it is so culturally acceptable to say that the reason that we are worried, overwhelmed, burnt out or stressed is because of X. And then you can fill in the blank. It could be the elections or your job situation, COVID, mask mandates, the fact that your business is booming and you can't find people to work. Or it could just be the pile up of work and dealing with kids and aging parents and marriage and divorce. And all of these daily activities, these daily quote unquote stressors that we all agree, stress us out. And that is the sneaky piece, understanding that there's this cultural agreement that we all should be stressed or afraid of whatever is happening.

And I want to be really clear here that I'm not saying that those things don't matter, or that we shouldn't feel anxiety or anger or whatever it is you are feeling. But the point is that I like to say the double red underlying point here is to recognize that in the midst of all it that you have at your disposal, this amazing, amazing tool called your brain.

And if you are conscious of when you are feeling fearful, or any of those negative emotions, if you are conscious of that if you use the fear in those moments, then you have the ability to access your thoughts. And this is easier said than done, especially when we are feeling a primal and intense emotion that we would call fear. It's that intense.

So I want to share with you that I was working with a client who was feeling an intense emotion of fear and it had to do with a situation with his daughter. His daughter had been diagnosed with ADHD, she was entering into middle school, and was experiencing a lot of anxiety and was trying to work with the teachers and it wasn't working and it wasn't working on time in the way that he wanted it to. And there was a lot going on in their family during this time. And so it's totally understandable why there would be fear around that. And as we were working through this and talking about it, I kept asking him, why? Or what's next? Or how come? To keep going and understanding what are the primal thoughts? What are the thoughts underneath that are causing such an intense emotion?

And the interesting piece here is that when we keep asking this question of ourselves, that we will run through, well, she's not gonna get the help she needs, she will not be all that she can be, she's going to be neglected by some people or rejected, she's going to be lonely, she won't be successful, she's going to struggle, she won't make enough money, she may not be able to take care of herself. And you can see that as you start to dig through all of the thoughts that they are all important that they're all valid, that they're all connected in some way or another to a primal instinct, the need for survival and safety and security, and love and belonging. And we can see why the emotion is so intense.

And the point behind all of this is to get to what is your primal thought, What is the need or the fear that feels so intense for you, because that is the source of why you freeze, fight, or flight. That is the reason why you may seek solace or comfort in alcohol or food or procrastinating or avoiding or fighting with your kids or your spouse or your colleagues or the traffic or getting angry or overly stressed. That primary thought that energy that emotion is uncomfortable. And our instinct is to get away from it, those primal instincts that we've talked about. And so if we know the source, then we are able to change it.

And so that brings us to how you can use fear to your advantage. How can you feel the fear and do it anyway. And by it, I mean you're next right action, a response instead of a reaction.

How can you choose a behavior that is in alignment with who you want to be and the results that you want to create when you are feeling negative emotions, when you are feeling fear, when you are really uncomfortable. And so the only thing that you get to remember is in the moment when you feel that sensation is to think, freeze, flight and fight.

And I want you to make it mean something different, not a reaction but a response. When you notice when you're aware of that energy in your body, I want you to freeze, go to it, pause the clock, don't do your next normal flight or getting away or making yourself feel better. Just freeze. And notice how it feels in your body. Get in touch with that physiological stress response. Notice it and the value in doing this is that you get to learn that you can do this emotion that it is just an emotion, and that you can handle it and that you don't have to run away from it. But that you can feel the fear and be with it. Freeze with it.

And then the second piece is to take flight but not flight as an horizontal runaway flight, but vertical flight to go up to literally bring your mind's eye up above the situation. And to notice what the external environment is. Notice what may have triggered your thoughts. Maybe it's somebody bringing up politics or what they noticed on the TV last night. Or maybe it's your daughter talking about what happened in school today. Or it might be your tax advisor calling you. Just notice what is going on and what triggers your fear. And we know now that what triggers your fear is your thoughts about any of those external circumstances. So take flight above and notice the external situation. And then of course, in that flight, notice your thoughts. Notice what you are thinking for you to trigger your own fear.

And the last is to fight. And what I mean by this is, when you have a stress response in your body, you've got adrenaline and cortisol going through your veins. Your heart is beating, you have sweaty palms, you know that physiological response. And so in terms of fighting, I want you to take that adrenaline and all that is going on in your body and use it, use it to your advantage. There is little difference between the physiological response between fear and excitement. So use that energy in your body, and say, instead of this being fear, I'm gonna label this as excitement. I'm ready to fight, I am ready to kick butt in this presentation, I am ready to make phone call after phone call to stand up for my daughter, I am ready to feel this emotion and take my next right action anyway, I am ready to fight for the life that I want to create. So as you feel the sensation of fear or any quote unquote, negative emotion in your body, use that as a bell as a ding, ding, ding, ding, ding, ding, ding, ding. Use that as a signal for you to freeze and notice what's going on.

To be conscious in the moment and to take flight and witness your external environment and your internal environment. And then use it to do your next right thing. Use the fear, feel the fear and do it anyway. I would love to hear all about the fear and the negative emotions and how you are using those emotions to level up. To dare to create an amazing life and to be the leader that you can be and to be the very, very best version of yourself. So go forth, feel the fear and create an amazing day and an amazing life.

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