

7 STEPS FROM FEAR TO HEALING

By Reverend Margaret Shepherd, MBA

A student once asked his old yogi master how he maintained such peace of mind and physical well-being. “Oh, my son, the yogi smiled, you only see the outside of my life. Inside my mind it is as if two powerful dogs are always waging war with each other.” “Wow,” said the student, “What do the dogs fight about?” The Yogi answered, “One is always leading me to a better life –good health, strong energy, creativity, wonderful relationships, and constant joy and peace. The other is always leading me away from that wonderful place, to a horrible place that is its opposite. He has only one method, but it is a very powerful one. He leads me to *fear*. Once I am afraid, I cannot move. I am stuck and I can only spend my energy worrying and being upset, or trying to prevent what I am afraid of. This dog causes me much suffering.” “Tell me, Master, which dog most often wins?” The yogi sighed, paused, then smiled and replied, “Whichever one I feed.”

Fear is the single most damaging, debilitating, detrimental energy you have. It interferes with your healing process, and your well-being in every area of your life. You cannot thrive when you are controlled by fear because fear stresses your immune system, clouds your thinking, and creates biochemical responses that harm you.

Fear feeds on attention. When you feed your fears your attention they become stronger. They gain power because you give it to them. What thoughts and beliefs in your mind are you feeding? Fears or faith? Worry or positive affirmations? Despair or trust in your own strength and power?

The Course In Miracles teaches that all our behavior is motivated by either fear or love. This doesn't mean romantic love, but universal love, the love that motivates goodwill, nurturing, respect, protection, gratitude, and kindness. Love always overpowers fear. Love always is stronger than fear. It's a universal metaphysical law. You can test it out yourself in your own life. What would it be like to think loving thoughts about your current physical condition, instead of fearful ones? Perhaps you might feel gratitude for how well your body serves your life, despite its limitations. You might feel glad for the personal growth your STD has brought you. Perhaps it has brought you closer to family and friends, forged a deeper spiritual connection, or caused you to take better care of yourself. Love is healing power. Maybe it seems crazy, but if you send thoughts of love instead of thoughts of fear to your STD symptoms, you will engage that healing power on your behalf. When you have a mind-set of love anything is possible. It is love, not fear, that creates miracles! So, I invite you to bring a loving heart to your condition, and try these seven steps.

7 Steps from Fear to Power

1. Look the bully in the eye, and don't feed him a sandwich.

Have you heard the saying “Feel the fear and do it anyway”? It's good advice. Your fears come from your ego trying to do its job. Eons ago when we were living in caves and had to be alert to neighborhood beasts who thought we looked like lunch, our fears were what saved our hides. The “fight or flight” response that fear creates is an instinctive protection for our very lives. But modern times are different. Our fears often lurk deep within us, but they operate the same as when we needed to keep out of the way of the neighborhood Mastodon. What fears might lurk hidden within you as you live with STD? None of these is fun to face, but it's worth the effort. Have you been feeding an “attention sandwich” to any of these? Fear of being disabled. Fear of being a burden on loved ones. Fear of no longer being productive. Fear of losing physical attractiveness. Fear of lessening quality of life. Fear of uncontrollable pain. Fear of your life being totally defined by your condition. If you have any “yes” answers, look at them now for what they are. Fears. They are not real experiences and they have no power over you unless you grant it. Don't grant it.

2. Stay in the present

Here is a good trick I've learned for managing fears. Just state clearly what your fear is, look it square in the eye, and realize that RIGHT NOW it is not true. If you train your mind to stay in the present, and don't go looking for trouble in a future that hasn't happened yet, that fear will NEVER become true! You can control your future by controlling your thoughts – right now...in the present.

3. Go on a diet

One path fear takes us on is the path of worry. Worry is like interest paid on a purchase that was never made. It is a costly expense that buys you nothing but trouble. There is a cancer patient in one of my mastermind groups. We have her on a worry-free diet. She is not allowed to worry. She must keep her attention in the present moment, and on her *ideal picture of health*. Every time she is tempted to go off her “diet” she uses her will to force her attention back to the present and to the positive. She is changing her thinking from fear to love. She moves from thoughts of fear to thoughts of what she loves – her ideal picture of perfect health. She is in remission now and feeling great. Follow her example and lose your “worry weight.”

4. Remember the truth

Here are two truths that can help you – a spiritual one and a metaphysical one. The spiritual truth: God is always guiding you to right decisions, protection, and well-being. You just have to pay attention. The metaphysical truth: If you project the energy of fear, the universe will respond with more to be afraid of. You put in the order and it gets filled precisely. The universe doesn't read between the lines. It takes your beliefs absolutely literally. There's no going back to redefine what you really meant to believe. What you

believe is what you get. So remember God is on your side and remember to think about what you want, not what you fear.

5. Affirmations

The truths in #4 is why affirmations work. Changing your thinking is a kind of psychological whistling in the dark. You move your attention from the imagined boogiemani in the dark alley who has you scared out of your wits, and keep your attention instead on the tune you are whistling. Shifting your focus has foolproof curative powers. Planting positive, constructive thoughts in your subconscious mind fools your mind into believing they are true. Soon they become true. Affirmations are positive, declarative present tense statements. "My health is improving every minute." "I am strong, powerful, and at peace." So, make up some good affirmations and get going. Write them down and keep them handy. Read them aloud at least seven times each day.

6. Spiritual practice

Think about it. An infinite Spiritual Presence created the oceans, computers, symphonies, your favorite cookies, your favorite relatives, and room service. Don't you think that Presence sure as heck has enough power to control all your irrational fears, and solve any *real* challenges that might come along? Here is a suggestion I promise will work. Don't tell your God how big your Fears are; tell your Fears how big your God is. You have a power within you -your inner spirit - that will override your fears and move you into a state of being that allows healing to happen. Whatever spiritual practice you prefer, make it a priority to stay connected to that Presence every day.

7. Think Bigger

We feel fear because we envision a scary experience, and we don't see any other possibilities. We feel trapped - powerless to prevent what's scaring us out of our wits. But you are never trapped. You always have more choices than you can see. It is empowering and freeing to remember this. I was so glad to see the broad offerings of healing methods represented at this year's STD conference. Western medicine retains its place as the leader, but alternative methods can complement and strengthen your healing path. Let this remind you that the universe has infinite ways to serve your well-being. It will provide for your every need if you let it. Begin to think beyond the limits you can see. Open your mind's eye to limitless wellness.

I can only imagine the daily challenges of coping with STD. But what I know for sure is that bringing an attitude of love to any of your fears is a sure-fire path to better days. As always, I send you my love and support, and encourage you to tell me how you're doing. www.reverendmargaret.com or 800- 264-9690. Get on the list to receive my free weekly inspirational email message, and other free writings. Be well, and keep smiling!
Love, Margaret