

DO NOT BE AFRAID TO BE AFRAID

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During this election time, we are all wondering AND worrying about the presidential candidates and just what would a change mean to all of us. This is only one of the many fears and worries that carry within our hearts from birth till death. Some are simple and easily pass, others seem to only increase in severity and prevent us from fully living life. One worries when we are apprehensive or anxious about something. As human beings there is a need to be in control of our lives. This need is rooted in wanting to protect our loved ones and ourselves.

Fear is a deeper level of worry. Fear brings with it anxiety and occasionally terror. Usually under the emotion of anger is fear. The anger is protecting us from being publicly vulnerable. When we are afraid it says, "I am not capable of handling this situation". Some fears are of great magnitude and many others exaggerated out of proportion in our minds or hearts.

Fears are usually centered on three categories of loss:

1. **The loss of love** – This could be the loss of self, our mental or physical well being; the loss of another's love or affection, support or caring; or the loss of the belief that you are loveable.
2. **The loss of control** – This could be the loss of strength, power, money, influence over others, or even access to someone who is in power.
3. **The loss of self-esteem** – This is the loss of our feeling of personal worth.

When a spouse dies, or a marriage ends, there is a long list of fears and worries that seem to overwhelm us. All three of the core fears happen simultaneously when there is a death or divorce. We become panicky because we are focus on the loss we have experienced and its forever impact on our daily lives. We cannot envision the outcome. There are even moments when we are paralyzed by fear. We try to keep busy so as to not to think or feel the truth of what is happening inside ourselves. Yet, in those quiet moments when we are all alone, we doubt we are capable of weathering this storm in our life. As time passes that best response to fear is to feel it, to understand why it is there, and to endeavor to work through it.

Fear and worries are a healthy response to living life. They are an internal alarm that lets us know that we need to be aware of what is happening around us. Find someone you admire and trust and share honestly with them. Put words around those feelings. Amazingly, once outside of ourselves, many fears and worries begin to diminish. Others may need some problem solving and action.

Remember do not be afraid to be afraid. It is not a sign of strength to act brave when you are frightened or apprehensive. The real courage comes in the honest confrontation.