

TO MOVE BEYOND FEAR

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Step 1: Be aware

Everything we experience in life, our joys as well as our fears, results primarily from our interpretation of things.

Our interpretation of things is based on our thoughts and beliefs about ourselves, others, and the world we assimilate during our life. Many of these thoughts and beliefs are transmitted by our family and our social and cultural environment, while others are our own creation.

Although we constantly assimilate new thoughts and beliefs, the ones we contemplate on a regular or daily basis are the ones we strongly identify with. They are part of our perception of our self or our self-concept.

Our self-concept contains numerous self-assessments or self-judgments that are often negative.

Our various fears – for example, of blood, heights, crowds, judgment, violence, failure, exclusion, etc., are thoughts and beliefs associated with danger, pain or death. But what makes our fears even more invasive is a strong tendency to pass judgment on ourselves because we can't control them.

The more we identify with our fears and judge ourselves for doing so, the stronger we react to them, emotionally and physically, and reinforce them.

The good news is: our thoughts of fear and judgments are just that, thoughts and they can be discarded.

The challenge is: we might strongly resist letting go of our thoughts of fear and self-judgments even if they make us miserable, because we unconsciously believe they are part of oneself and therefore letting go of ourselves or losing control over ourselves would equal death.

But that is not the case. No one ever died from letting go of their fears and self-judgments. Actually, letting go of our fears feels more like coming back to life!

So, it is crucial to be aware that we are not our fears and judgments. They do not define who we are. They are thoughts we assimilate and then confuse as being part of our own personal identity or self. But they are not and we can get rid of them. Our real identity or true self is completely free of fears and judgments.

Our true identity is the part of ourselves that is open, gentle, at peace and capable of seeing beauty, kindness and greatness in each one of us and in every thing of this world, beyond the appearances of fear, suffering and misery.

We all had experiences where a person or a situation appealed to the better part of ourselves or touched our heart deeply. These experiences speak of our true nature and self.

Step 2: Decide

Deciding to let go of our thoughts of fear and self-judgments is an important step. It means we are consciously taking back our personal responsibility over them instead of being a “victim” of them.

We are the decision makers. It is important to understand that the thoughts that preoccupy our mind, including our fears and judgments, are the ones we value and identify with.

When we decide to let go of our fears and self-judgements, we recognize them for what they really are: thoughts that are not part of our true identity or self.

Sticking with that decision requires awareness, determination and vigilance. The understanding and support of a friend or family member can be a big plus.

Step 3: Experience

It may seem difficult to let go of fears and judgments we have contemplated for a long time and that are omnipresent in our environment, among our relatives, or on TV and online. But it is doable.

Letting go of our fears and judgments is quite different from trying to control them. Whatever we try to control, we give it value and we reinforce its power over us.

Letting go of our fears and self-judgments means we recognize them for what they are, thoughts that we wrongly confused with our personal identity and that we don't want anymore. That's all. No control is involved.

It is the capacity to recognize our fears and self-judgments for what they are without judgment that lets them go. What we judge, we give it value and reinforce. What we don't judge loses value and eventually disappears. Experiment it and see for yourself!

Putting our attention on what we want rather than what we don't want can also be very helpful.

What we really want is what brings us joy, laughter, contentment, freedom, and peace. Actually, what we really want is opportunities to experience who we really are, or our true selves because that is where we find our joy, laughter, contentment, freedom, and peace.

We are so accustomed to focussing on and fighting for what we don't want that we may have to provide ourselves opportunities to experience who we really are and what we really want.

It is up to each one of us to discover what those opportunities are. They are definitely occasions for our inner beauty, kindness, and greatness to shine through and reach others.