

The farther away I get from my scary *cancer* diagnosis and recovery I am starting to forget what a grip it had on my entire being. But its lessons have not been forgotten. It seriously changed my outlook. Hanging out in the anxious state living as if I might be dying forced me to break free from limitations of constantly waiting for the future, to express myself completely. This moment - NOW - is where joy, my soul's full expression lives, not in the future. I had always held a little back to protect myself from pain or unpredictability. I had a childhood filled with some emotional dysfunction that bred some old control freak (ish) behavior that I had carried into the present, but not anymore! My mindset has shifted to a solid trust and an even deeper faith in sharing my authentic self.

This gift of profound fear showed me the way.



My resistance is gone. By speaking my truth it opens channels for other souls to connect with me in a powerful way and hopefully find some beneficial growth for themselves. Isolation and residual limited beliefs are *LEARNED* behaviors and I am now releasing them. Behaviors are just habits and I can learn new ones, just like everyone can.

There are lots of books and articles that show how to manage feelings but by having this personal experience I now understand, in a visceral way, that regardless of what occurs in our lives, significant meaning can happen by way of **tiny miracles** via our experiences good or bad. And things are VERY MUCH neither black nor white.

Imagine in front of you is a glorious buffet of food. It represents all the emotions to choose from as part of the human experience. There is a pile of fresh fear, some dried up

anxiety, soup of pure joy, deep-fried silliness and under the heat lamp is someone carving contentment. I'll take a slice! You CAN choose what you want, the vast array of items don't jump on your plate on their own. But it may feel like sometimes that we lose control over what our plates fill with. Depending on your comfort level and your beliefs you will choose those you like because of a habit or what you are used to. For instance maybe you would never choose mussels because it seems weird and uncomfortable and you haven't tried them. Besides, your family's comfort food was fried chicken. Generally you stick with what you know. You avoid the unfamiliar and challenging stuff.

This is a simple analogy but we "ingest" what is comfortable, even if that comfort zone is the familiar **Drama and avoidance we have lived with**. Because if you don't choose those, it might force you to address other issues that are even worse.

Having the FAITH in yourself to *limit the avoidance of the fears* is your path to resolution and confidence building.

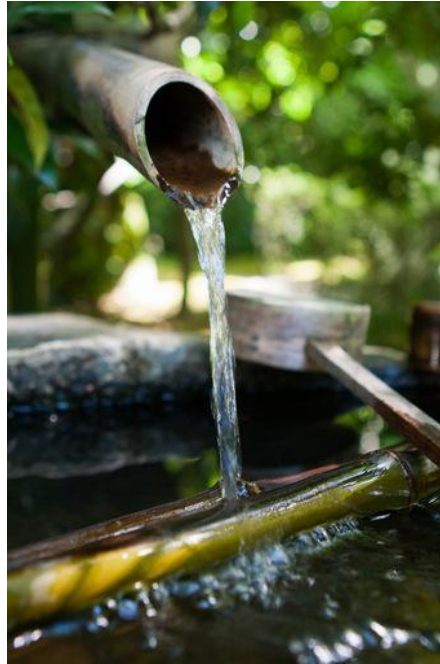
Once you get out of your comfort zone you will begin the healing process and see yourself managing it. In Fear and other Uninvited Guests, Dr. Harriet Lerner talks about it like this: *"If you pay attention, you may find that it is not fear that stops you from doing the brave and true thing in your daily life. Rather, the problem is avoidance. You want to feel comfortable, so you avoid doing the thing that will evoke fear and other disquieting emotions. Avoidance will make you feel less vulnerable in the short run, but it will never make you less afraid."* The buffet never goes away, and you can always work your way up to the mussels.

To embrace your courage AND reduce avoidance I have come up with several suggestions loosely divided into a couple categories. As these categories encompass many things and the length could get unwieldy I thought I would start with **Courage through Contemplation** now and next time **Courage through Action**.

- Courage through Contemplation -

This is by no means a passive activity. I would describe this as allowing for awareness with

intention. A new awareness will have a more profound impact on deeply set beliefs and subconscious drives that repeat the fearful and anxious mantras. I offer these ideas so you have options *that feel good for you*. We all learn uniquely and are at various points in our lives so there is not one perfect solution. It's an organic and fluid process. Like the Earth perpetually gliding through space repositioning itself every second relative to other planets and the Sun, we too are shifting, subtly but it is happening. Try these possibilities:



1. **Meditation:** Just as I discovered recently toggling back and forth through self-awareness and the expansive every changing Universe's impact on my life that I could release old outdated perspectives that limited my views on Time, Fear and Reality. Deepak Chopra in *Ageless Body, Timeless Mind* describes the process perfectly: "Fear creates rapid, shallow, ragged breathing.... On the other hand, positive emotions such as joy induce more regular breathing as the chest cavity relaxes. At a subtler level, entering into the silence of deep meditation slows the breath, and what spiritual masters call 'the rapture of God' ---contemplating Spirit directly --- is reflected in little or no breathing." ** Awareness of intentions, unhealthy patterns, areas of healing and possible solutions sometimes miraculously occur as the mind is quieted in meditation. Start with 10-15 minutes. Let go of expectations of what you have seen on TV or social media. Let thoughts pass by as your mind and body relax into the breath and the present state. Trust what insights you receive. Journal afterward.
2. **Prayer:** Asking the Angelic realm, your Spiritual Guides, ancestors or the Holy Spirit for guidance and peace can help in managing your feelings and for making room for miracles are all valid possibilities. Framing your request in the form of gratitude will

make your prayer more powerful. It reflects your emotional and physical state so the spiritual world can respond appropriately. Reaching out to the Spiritual realms can give great comfort and fill our Soul with the eternal understanding and a relaxation about our fears, that all will be well regardless of what we experience. It imbues the heart with a faith that we are never alone.

3. **Subconscious Awareness:** Addressing deeply held beliefs that determine your reactionary fears or anxiety can be an excellent and efficient way to shift your perspective. Hypnosis and other therapies are a relatively fast and a completely natural way to eliminate restricting beliefs about yourself and what you can accomplish. If you have always responded in a specific way to difficult feelings like fear or anxiety and avoided situations chances are that it will continue unless you have the courage to look at what repeating the old thought patterns has kept you from doing. I had to adjust my beliefs and ask myself some hard questions...what is really true about my fear and what are the facts? What is my imagination? How am I using past experiences to judge this outcome? Are my expectations realistic for me as an adult or are they reflecting childhood emotions?

"We are disturbed not by things that happen but by our opinion of the things that happen" ****

Epictetus

4. **Breaking the Bond with Emotions:** In Emotional Chaos to Clarity, Phillip Moffitt suggests thinking of your thoughts and feelings as separate from you and you HAVE A CHOICE in how you respond. When you are stuck in a fear do you HAVE TO identify with it? He suggests that you can learn to cope skillfully with them if you see them as impersonal in nature. *"Difficult emotions are indeed just like a storm: they arise due to causes and conditions, they may soak you and make you feel miserable, but THEY ARE NOT YOU."* ***** Many people live their mythology, *"I could never speak in public, or everyone in my family has always been depressed or I am not the kind of person who is very social, etc."* Repeating these family stories and beliefs reinforces your own limiting thought patterns.
5. **Ask yourself are you willing to imagine something different.** Is it possible that what you tell yourself is not the truth? Or maybe it's a baked in familiar story the family has mythologized? And can you know for sure that it is the truth? Is it because it has always been done?

Fortunately at any given moment you can change how you respond to thoughts, fears, anxiety, etc. **if you allow for a different reality to be true.** In many families, if you reject the "truth" then you are threatening everyone else's view of themselves and they will resist any change to *THE STORY*. It will mean they would be challenged to get out of their comfort zone and perhaps not play the victim or martyr or feel you might reject them somehow. This scenario is very common in homes where addiction and dysfunction is present. Letting go of

unhealthy thought patterns that keep you repeating fears or anxiety is difficult and there is usually a lot of push back from those not willing to accept a new reality. It becomes second nature because your brain and physiology was formed around this training. **You must decide what YOU WANT as your reality NOW as an adult** and how you will interact energetically in the world to get it. How do you value yourself? When you adjust your perspective, the Universe will respond and support the new pattern.

A couple extra suggestions to contemplate.....

If you find yourself in a fearful or anxious state, close your eyes and breathe deeply for a few minutes regardless of where you are just to ground yourself in your body. Notice your body's senses, are you trembling? Hand shaking? Heart racing or sweating? What do you notice around you at that very moment? Listen to your breath move in and out of your lungs and let your body relax into the feeling. After a few minutes of this ask yourself a couple questions:

- Imagine you are now 85 years old and nearing your end of life, looking back to this moment in your existence. Would you regret letting this fear hold you back? Is there something amazing you are putting off or whose time never came due to the fear? What could you have done? **Do you have the COURAGE to value your desires?**
- Now imagine your 12 year old self is staring right at you. What could you say to them to help them to manage their fear? What are you aware of that they need to feel supported? A hug or an adult size dose of wisdom? We all have a scared child inside of us somewhere and they need extra love sometimes and to be told **YOU CAN DO IT!** Give them the **COURAGE** they need. They hold the key to much of what keeps us stuck in fear and limitations. As your adult self share your wisdom and knowledge to help them to move forward.

Thank you and I hope you received some insights and even **Courage through contemplation.** You can release your fears and find a calmer way of life. Sometimes it takes just a couple baby steps that start the momentum. Give yourself credit for **ANY and ALL** steps you take.

If you would like to know more about the process of hypnosis, visualizations or any thing I discussed here please schedule a session at [Calendly.com/artsywisdom22](https://calendly.com/artsywisdom22),

Text: 480-242-4922

OR Email: artsywisdom22@gmail.com

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* Lerner, Harriet Goldhor. *Fear and Other Uninvited Guests: Tackling the Anxiety, Fear, and Shame That Keep Us from Optimal Living and Loving*. New York: HarperCollins, 2004. Print.adult self

** Chopra, Deepak. *Ageless Body, Timeless Mind: The Quantum Alternative to Growing Old*. New York: Harmony, 1993. Print. Carlsbad, CA: Hay House, 1997. N. pag. Print.

*** Virtue, Doreen. Introduction. *Angel Therapy: Healing Messages for Every Area of Your Life*

**** DeVrye, Catherine. *Hope Happens!: Words of Encouragement for Times of Change*. New York: Pocket, 2003. Print.

***** Moffitt, Phillip. *Emotional Chaos to Clarity: How to Live More Skillfully, Make Better Decisions, and Find Purpose in Life*. New York: Hudson Street, 2012. Print.