

Feel the fear and do it anyway

CAM Coach **Mark Shields** explains how to deal with the three main fears that may stop our clients making progress.

Life Practice coaches use many different techniques that can very quickly resolve phobias, anxiety and pretty much any fear that gets presented. Over the years we've observed that there are three main fears that most often inhibit success and happiness – both for our clients and ourselves.

Once we learn how to deal with these fears, our ability to achieve what we want tends to go through the roof.

Here are the culprits:

1. Fear of the unknown
2. Fear of making mistakes
3. Fear of exclusion

In my experience there is one major and often not understood reason as to why these three fears are allowed to hang around in our psyche longer than is useful: we forget, at great expense to our success and happiness, that we are mammals.

In all our human being-ness and spiritual-ness, the cornerstone of who and what we are is often ignored and misunderstood.

In our desire to “live in the now”, get to heaven or some spiritual realm and /or cajole cosmic white light into our chakra systems, we don't take the time to look honestly, frankly and thoroughly at the part of ourselves that, from an evolutionary perspective, is the most fundamental aspect of who and what we are. We can totally forget that in flesh and blood and brain we are a mammal; very evolved, spectacular, often miraculous, but yet a mammal.

When we allow this fact to sink in, enjoy it, thrive on it and align with it, we can make the most extraordinary changes rapidly and often very easily.

Let's take the first fear: fear of the unknown.

It makes complete sense that a mammal would have this fear. By staying in well-established frameworks of familiarity and security we are giving ourselves the best chance of survival. If we have worked out how to put a roof over our head, put food in our belly and support our family's basic needs, what else as a mammal would we need? Not much; like a cat or a dog we would be content and spend the rest of the time basking in the sun.

How about the fear of making mistakes? Again, a completely common sense fear to have. In the world of the animal, the mammal, a mistake could be fatal. If we make too many mistakes, we don't eat, we might lose our



shelter and we might not evade that predator. Making a mistake as a mammal has rather significant consequences.

Exclusion

To understand the fear of exclusion (aka fear of embarrassment and fear of social banishment), we need to understand that as a mammal we rely on our parents and the social group at large for our survival. I often use the example of a wolf pack. The notion of a lone wolf might seem romantic, but it's not. Chances of survival away from the pack are dramatically reduced. No protection, no team work for hunting success and no warmth in the cold night. That's why even powerful wolves who could make it on their own will subjugate themselves to the alpha male, the leader of the pack. If a wolf makes an unsuccessful challenge or is cast out for any reason, life starts to get hard, really hard, really quickly.

I'm sure you can see that our own experiences are paralleled in these examples. As humans (aka evolved mammals) it is a natural part of our being to have these three fears, and this for the most part is the major step in being able to overcome and transcend them – seeing the logic and reality of the origin of these fears.

Not personal

Realise that these fears are not personal to you. They are not caused by your childhood, or something that you did, or because there is anything wrong with you. They are fears that EVERY human being at some point has had to deal with, face and resolve (or not).

When we give ourselves permission to see these fears for what they are (core mammal survival mechanisms) and stop beating ourselves up about them (no point, they are simply logical responses to life events), we can start to transcend them with understanding and the compassion afforded by seeing things

as they really are.

Yes, there are techniques that can help us in moving quickly through these fears, but in my experience the techniques tend to fall short unless we have a solid grasp of these key understandings.

If and when you feel yourself in the grip of one of these fears you might like to try going through these three steps:

1. Acknowledge the fear: don't avoid it, just accept it.
2. Let yourself know that you are experiencing this fear, not because of childhood, or because there is anything wrong with you or because you don't yet have the secret to the universe, but simply because the mammal part of you wants security – and this is OK.
3. Let yourself know that despite the rational and logical reason as to the fear, another key part of being alive and fundamental to being a human mammal is to evolve.

To evolve we need to step forward into the unknown so that we can chart new territories, both within and without. We need to allow ourselves the opportunity to make “mistakes”, as how else can we learn? We can let ourselves know that when we let the possibility of exclusion become real, it is so that the possibility of inclusion into something greater is made possible.

In the title of her famous book published more than 20 years ago, Dr Susan Jeffers had it right: “*Feel the fear and do it anyway*”. These fears are normal; feel the fear and get on with life. ©PTM



About the author

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