



## **How do you face your fears?**

For most of us we all experience fear at some point in our lives. Fear can have a significant impact a person's career or personal life. While some fear is justified, such as walking alone late at night in a sketchy part of town, most fears can be overcome by **TAKING ACTION**. A useful way to think of our fear is the acronym of False Evidence Appearing Real.

It's when we feel powerless to do anything about our fear that our thoughts spiral into worst case scenarios that are not realistic. When we are willing to face our fears, and embrace our courage, we then have power and control. "Feel the fear and do it anyway" is my motto and has served me well.

Here are four common questions about fear:

**What's the best way to embrace my fears?** While there are several ways, one of the best ways is to face it and address your fears head on. When you only address something indirectly, you run the risk of scratching the surface of the issue and not conquering the entirety of the fear. Facing your fear head on can be scary and difficult, however in doing so, you are developing and embracing your courage. By shifting from fear to courage – you will be more resilient the next time.

**Is there a way to slowly accept my fears?** Yes, there's a process to accepting and embracing your fears and each person will go through this process differently. Depending on the individual the direct approach may not be preferred and doesn't necessarily mean it's the best way for everyone. A professional coach may be a resource to facilitate the best approach that is tailored for the individual. Each person is unique, creative and resourceful, so our ways of embracing fear is going to differ.

**What if fear still gets the best of me?** Don't get down on yourself! Embracing fear is a big deal and it takes a lot of courage and bravery to confront and overcome what frightens us most. Instead of getting overwhelmed and paralysed by fear, it can be helpful to "chunk it down". Break the fear down into manageable pieces. You don't need to conquer it all at once. Consider smaller steps and be persistent in moving forward.

**Who can help me face my fears?** Ultimately, embracing your fears is your own journey, but that doesn't mean you can't get support along the way. Rely on a trusted friend, a colleague, or a coach to support you as you muster the courage to face your fears and overcome them.



## Tips to manage your FEAR

- Recognize your fear and acknowledge the feelings. Remember that you HAVE thoughts, feelings and emotions; that's not who you ARE.
- Develop your inner ally to champion the courage you have so you can face your fear.
- Face fear with curiosity. Being curious is a way to discover what is actually true.
- Dwell in possibility; don't wait for evidence. ASK – What's another perspective? What is the evidence? What else is possible? What outcome do I want?
- Visualize your ideal way of being. What would life be like without this fear?
- Capture your fear on paper, it may help you realize they aren't as bad as you imagined and allow you to calculate the decisions needed to move forward.
- Consider how you can reframe your thoughts about the fear. Is this current fear realistic? What evidence do I have to support this? Could there be another way to look at this?
- Push away the “what ifs” and think about the “what is”. Shift into a positive state and practise living in the moment and not dwell in self created what if scenarios.
- Consider the choices you can create to address the fear step by step, “chunk it out”.
- Give up any perfectionist tendencies you may have. When we think in absolutes, right or wrong, black or white or being perfect, it can lead to negative thoughts – think about the possibilities and expanding choices.
- Take deep breaths (3 counts inhale, 6 counts exhale) to remove the fight or flight response from your brain and allow you to think clearer to address your fear in a creative way.
- Practice forgiving, accepting and love. Remember that we learn more from our failures than our success. Ask yourself – what am I learning in this moment?
- Get a coach and/or mentor! Often a coach can hear your fears at work before you do and can help you be your confident, courageous self!
- Don't allow your fears to control your thoughts. **Shift your fear** into something curious and positive and **take action!** The results you achieve in life are within your control, if you're willing to look inside and take the necessary steps.

*Michelle Scott is a professional coach that facilitates the change and growth her clients are seeking to overcome fears, build confidence and courage for continued success in their career and life.*