



## Fear

**What is fear? Originally, fear is our brain's alarm system to signal imminent danger. Depending on the person, fear paralyzes us or triggers mechanisms that allow us to physically and/or psychologically survive a perilous situation. Specifically, fear causes an adrenaline secretion in our body which enables us to run as fast as possible, fight as hard as possible to escape danger or to increase our strength tenfold to help someone. Unfortunately, our education, our environment and very often our imagination create fears, especially during our childhood, of dangers that are not real or that no longer exist once we reach adulthood. These fears, which are just survival devices in our brain, often prevent us from fully living the life we dream of.**

Our brain is organized around ancestral primary fears that we all feel at one time or another in our existence and which, too often, govern our lives:

– Fear of dying

Fear of dying is specific to every human being because, obviously, for most of us, we don't know if there is anything after death. Death is therefore a terrible leap into the unknown which, in addition, forces us to leave the people we love. This fear is therefore probably one of the most legitimate one in our brain, which is, above all, a problem-solving tool primarily conceived to ensure our survival. I have been afraid of dying for a long time, almost the first 30 years of my life, a fear that has come back in force for several months after my daughter's birth. Getting rid of death fear usually implies to go through a spiritual faith of some sort for it is impossible to know for sure if there is an afterlife and to escape this "danger" inherent to being alive. During my second therapy, around the age of 30, the psychiatrist who had been treating me for a few months helped me start to walk along this path.



Indeed, in my family, believing in something invisible or spiritual is seen as a mark of intellectual weakness, science being the only reliable source to explain everything. When I told my psychiatrist that I felt there was something else but that I couldn't allow myself to believe in it because it didn't feel right according to my family's beliefs, he simply asked me "Would it make you happier to believe in something?" I said yes and he said, "then do it". In my head, something clicked: I had obtained the authorization I needed from a "referring adult" to begin my spiritual quest. I then read a lot of books on the subject, including the very inspiring "Conversation with God" by Neale Donald Walsch, and forged my own beliefs about death that allowed me to come to terms with it and to get rid of a "problem" over which I had no control anyway. I now don't think about it that much, death will come when it comes, probably when I'm ready to leave, but I'm not afraid of it anymore.

#### – Fear of abandonment

Fear of abandonment usually comes from a fear often linked to a sometimes innocuous sometimes very accurate situation that we experienced during our childhood in which we felt forgotten by our parents or truly abandoned: lost a few seconds in a store, left for the first time with a nanny or at the nursery... This long forgotten since situation has created a precedent in our brain to which it systematically refers in the relationships we develop during our adult life. Fear of abandonment is the fear of losing the unconditional love our parents are supposed to feel for us; without it, we are lonely, vulnerable, lost, terrified children with no references whatsoever on how to "deserve" the love of the people we love the most. Fortunately, like all of our fears, this one is reversible providing, of course, that we identify it and bring its mechanism back to consciousness for dismantlement and replacement by an updated thought system. Because, if we are beings composed of 65% water, we are also 100% composed of love. This love is often well buried inside of us under layers of fear yet only impatiently waiting to come out of its hiding place! When we begin to take a benevolent look at ourselves without judging what we believe to be our mistakes and missteps, it is then that we begin the long journey to self love. When we succeed in filling ourselves with this love, for our qualities but also for all the defaults that make us who we are, highly endearing and lovable beings, so perfect in our imperfections, we are no longer afraid of being abandoned because we realize that love comes from within, not from outside. It took me years to understand this concept and its cousin: "Be yourself" and "love yourself". I understood the meaning of both sentences but I had no idea how to get there. It took me a long time to find who I was because social and family pressure always tried to make us fit into boxes that hide us away from our inner self. Learning to love the person we are is a long journey filled with kindness, compassion, tenderness and humor. Look at yourself as a mother or a father would look at his/her child playing in the garden, with amusement and compassion. With this attitude towards yourself, you will never again be afraid of not being loved, because you will already be loved. Moreover, you will love those around you all the better because you will treat them the same way.

#### – Fear of not being worthy/enough

Before achieving the ability to take a benevolent look upon ourselves, we tend, as we do with



others, to look at ourselves with arsh negative judgements and thus become our own worst enemy. Those judgements are rarely ours, they usually belong to our parents, the words they spoke to educate us and the aspirations they projected upon us. Of course, those judgements also come from the society we live in which has filed happiness and decency into marketing boxes: to be happy, you have to get married, have children, have money, have a job that pays well, have at least one orgasm a week, play sports, eat healthy food, be slim.... So, inevitably, when, for example, we like cakes more than tennis and we don't want to have children, certain boxes bring more guilt and judgement than happiness. How, under these circumstances, can we feel worthy to meet all that is invested in us by others? Perhaps, quite simply, by clearing ourselves from it totally and by identifying what makes us happy, and not society or our parents. This process involves doing a hell of a spring cleaning within our aspirations and beliefs to sort out which ones are truly ours and which ones are not.

If we follow our desires without taking into account others' but yet remaining benevolent towards them, we will necessarily be enough and worthy because we will follow our own path, filled with small and great joys and wonderful surprises, taking much less effort from us than trying to fit in too small a box.

When I was pregnant, a midwife once said to me: "As long as you take care of your baby with love, you can't do anything wrong." I think the same goes for our life, if we build our life with love and enthusiasm, we cannot fail to live up to it. Happiness is not a reward that we should expect from a higher authority, but a creation by ourselves for ourselves.

These primary fears are generally divided by our mind into daily fears abundantly fed by our governments and medias:

- Fear of running out of money, love, food,
- Fear of losing one's job,
- The fear of being left by the person we love,
- Fear of illness,
- Fear of being judged by others...

All these fears are linked to dangers that have no tangible reality... These are dangers that we imagine and project onto our future. They are usually expressed with sentences such as "I have the impression that" or "What will happen if...?" Probably only good things! Has life ever presented you with a problem that has not, one way or another, been solved either through your intervention or that of an outsider? Moreover, it is not possible to solve a problem that does not exist or does not exist yet, so why even bother? If you have to plan things for your life, why not focus on positive things or events? If you are to imagine something that does not exist, why not try to, at least, imagine something pleasant rather than not? Moreover, we are never really alone and isolated when facing a problem and, if, instead of being frozen by fear, we accept that the problem will end up being solved one way or another like all the previous ones in our life, the solution will appear in our minds almost like "magic".



Did you know that fear and faith are 2 expressions of the same mental process? Fear is a negative projection of an event or action, faith is a positive projection of an event or action. In neither case, these events have happened yet – nor might ever – so you might as well think for the better rather than the worse.

"I have the impression that" is also a negative projection of something; indeed, it is quite rare for us to say to ourselves "I am under the impression that everything is fine" while we often have the impression that "he/she doesn't like me" or "I am not up to it". I have regularly witnessed that "I have the impression that" is almost always followed by lie we tell ourselves, mostly unconsciously, other or self-judgement assessments not based on any reality, a bit like when we imagine a hidden meaning in someone else's innocuous sentence. When you start a sentence with this expression, always ask yourself where this impression comes from and if it is based on something tangible that you can verify. If not, don't validate this impression and prefer a sentence beginning with "I feel or I get the feeling that" which is based on a physical or emotional sensation and generally relates more to an intuition.

In reality, in our everyday life, unless we live with a physically or psychologically violent person, in a country at war or experience an exceptional event such as a car accident, we are never ever in danger. This sentence is important because, once we integrate this affirmation into our everyday life, our stress decreases drastically and the horizon of possibilities expands in an incredible way. For me, this realization was the first real relief in my life. While I was emerging from a severe depression and slowly rebuilding myself, a friend of mine encouraged me to read Louise L. Hay's book "Transform your life", in which chapters are interspersed with small benevolent texts that are invitations to view life without apprehension and to view ourselves with love and compassion. In this book, I discovered that, contrary to what I had always thought, because of the functioning mode inherited from my childhood, not only did Universe wish me no harm, but that I was evolving in a benevolent space in which I could create without fear the projects and the life that I wanted. It was a real revelation for me and the beginning of quite an adventure !

**I invite you to imagine the universe in which we evolve as a mirror that brings us all that we want the most, just like the one in Harry Potter. If our thoughts are focused on fear, Universe "thinks" that the emotion we wish to continue to experience is fear and so it gives us regular experiences that relate to what we are afraid of. On the contrary, if we progress serenely towards the goals we set for ourselves, benefiting from all the joys we encounter during that journey, then Universe walks hand in hand with us on this path and opens all the doors we need to reach our goals. But don't misunderstand me here, I am not saying that living without fear is an easy task: it took me several decades to get there, not without regular relapses, old reflexes from our mind tending to be tenacious! Nevertheless, it can be one of the many goals we set for ourselves to feel happy and free.**