

What Keeps You From Living Your Dreams? By Lisa Jimenez, M. Ed.

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Albert Camus, a famous author and philosopher, once applied names to the previous centuries. He named the seventeenth century as the century of math. The eighteenth was the century of physical. The nineteenth was the century of biology. Then, he shocked the public by naming the twentieth century the century of fear.

Along with this bold statement, came that of philosopher and poet, W.H. Auden. He called our time, "The Age of Anxiety."

Even the late Ann Landers exposed our fear when she was once asked, "Out of all the thousands of letters you receive each month, what problem is most dominant in people's lives?"

"It's fear!" she replied without hesitation. "People live in bondage with their fear. They're afraid of losing their wealth. They're afraid of losing their loved ones. They're afraid of being themselves. They're afraid of growing up and being responsible. They're afraid of life itself!"

What about you? What fear, hidden or known, is affecting your behavior and keeping you from living your dreams?

I have never met a person who hasn't had to face some degree of fear. In all the interviews I did for my book, *Conquer Fear*, every person had a story about how they, too, had to face and deal with their fear. What I began to notice is how similar the stories were! The names would change. The circumstances were different. But the fear was the same - and very real. I came to understand this profound truth:

The difference between mediocre success and a breakthrough success is your willingness to face and deal with your fear.

When your fear is exposed, you break its control over you. The reality is, fear was never intended to dominate your destiny or control your behavior. FEAR IS HUMAN. It is in every person's life, exists in every success story, and is part of growing. Fear isn't going away. It's not fear that keeps you from success. It's your inability to deal with it.

The first step in dealing with your fear is to change your beliefs about it. Change the way you think about fear and you change your reaction to it. Fear can be healthy. Think about it. It is fear that gives you the powerful adrenaline rush so that you will have the ability to flee from a situation that is truly unsafe or the same adrenaline rush to fight to win! Yes, fear is a gift, instilled in you to keep you safe and lead you to faith.

So what happened? Why do people allow this gift to negatively control their actions, their beliefs, and ultimately their lives? Well, it has a lot to do with making a distinct difference between your instinct and your intellect.

As a child you would react instinctively to fear. This was acceptable behavior for you then. But, over time, you developed habits of behavior that today cause you to react to fear instead of act. You react instinctively to fear by running from it, ignoring it, sabotaging your efforts, or quitting the very dream you said you wanted. These habits of behavior are programmed into you. To interrupt these negative behaviors you need to use your intellect and act in your fear.

Every person has fear. The successful have learned to befriend their fear. They don't react in their fear. They act in it - walking through their fear.

You might be saying, "Sure, Lisa. That's easy for them. But my situation is different!" That may be. But remember one thing. Every person has the same weapon to help them act in their fear. Every person has the gift of faith. The way to befriend fear is to neutralize it with its opposite - which is faith.

Is your faith stronger than your fear?

Where faith is dominant fear is silenced. Faith is like a multivitamin on steroids! It is faith that fosters hope, courage, boldness, and conviction. These are all the ingredients you need to conquer fear.

The headline of a recent USA Today read, "Faith is more important than food." That was the conclusion of a remarkable medical report, which studied the correlation between stress and ulcers. The report cited that ulcers were by-products of anxiety, worry, and fear. It went on to discuss how faith is the most powerful cure for a patient suffering from an ulcer.

Even the medical community recognizes the power of faith. To an ulcer patient writhing in pain, faith is more important than food. But, this truth applies to healthy people as well. It applies to parents doing all they can to raise healthy, happy kids. It applies to spouses trying hard to keep their marriage alive, passionate, and adventurous. Faith applies to professionals working to build their business.

The bigger the goal - the bigger need for faith.

But what really is faith?

Webster's definition of faith is "belief, trust, or reliance." The Apostle Paul's definition is "Faith is the assurance of things hoped for and the conviction of things not seen." Do you have the assurance of things hoped for, and a strong conviction that, you have all you need to make your life work?

Cultivate your faith and live your life like you've already won. Walk into that job interview like you've already got the job. Ask that girl out on a date like she's already said yes. Ask for that sale like you've already made it!

Albert Camus, W.H. Auden, and Ann Landers exposed our fear. Fear exists. But you can conquer fear and neutralize its power by cultivating your faith. Have an assurance of things hoped for and a conviction of things not seen and you will create hope, boldness, and courage, and begin living the life you dream of!

Make it a great and productive day!

--Lisa Jimenez, M.Ed.

Visit www.Conquer-Fear.com and start living your dreams today!