



FEAR

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What is the definition of FEAR? My online dictionary says, “To be afraid of someone or something as likely to be dangerous, painful, or threatening.” Another definition says, “Fear is a distressing emotion aroused by impending danger, evil, pain, etc., whether the threat is real or imagined; it is the feeling or condition of being afraid.”

What are you afraid of? We are all afraid of many things – some of us are more afraid than others. I’m going to list some of the more common things people fear.

1. Flying in an Airplane	2. Public speaking	3. Heights
4. The Dark	5. Death or Dying	6. Water - Drowning
7. Failure	8. Rejection	9. Spiders
10. Commitment	11. Dogs or Cats	12. Snakes
13. Doctors or Dentists	14. Needles	15. Being Alone
16. God - Religion	17. Abandonment	18. Clowns
19. Falling	20. Change	21. Germs
22. Crowds	23. Being Touched	24. Caves - Tunnels
25. Tight Spaces	26. Open Spaces	27. Girls or Boys
28. Lightning – Thunder	29. Illness	30. Ghosts
31. Running out of Money	32. Your Appearance	33. Bad Weather

The above list has been pretty standard for most of my life but in recent years our greatest fears have changed. Here is the list for 2015:

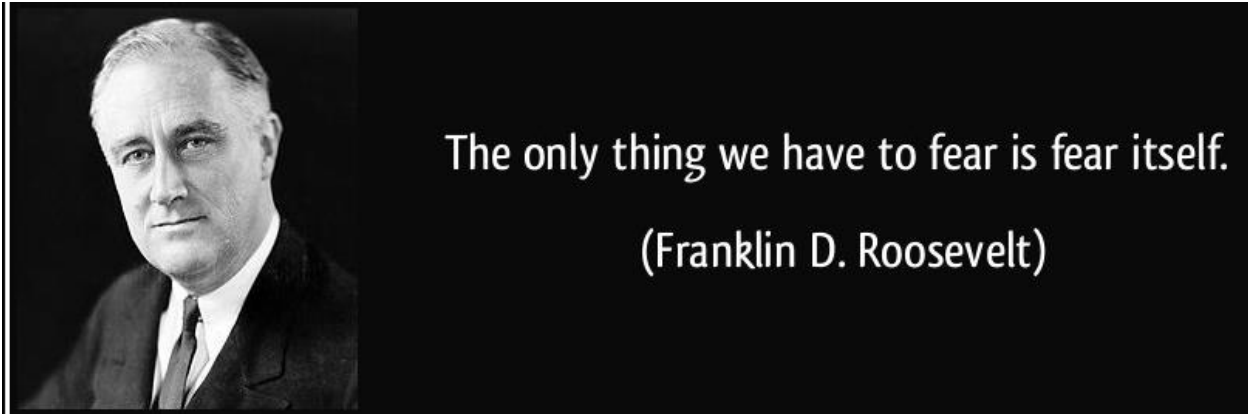
<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Terrorist Attacks3. Government Corruption5. Cyber-Terrorism7. Bio-warfare9. Identity Theft11. Obamacare – Health Care Issues13. Gun Control15. Civil Unrest17. Illegal Immigration19. Natural Disasters21. Robots and Drones23. Crime25. Pollution27. Hillary Clinton	<ol style="list-style-type: none">2. ISIS, Taliban, al-Qaeda, etc.4. Syrian Refugees6. Tracking of Personal Data8. Nuclear Attack10. Economic Collapse12. Global Warming14. Epidemic of Infectious Disease16. Electric Grid Attack18. Drought or No Water20. Overpopulation22. Artificial Intelligence24. Technology - Hackers26. Islam Religion and Muslims28. Donald Trump
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See how the list has changed. Terrorism is now the world's greatest fear!!

Never ever forget the 9-11 terrorist attacks. Our current President might not know this but the United States and most of the world has been at war against Radical Islam Terrorists since that day.



Yes, our greatest fears used to be flying in an airplane, public speaking, or going to the top of a tall building. Now we have more deadly things to worry about. Between terrorism and Hillary Clinton, things have gotten very scary!



President Franklin Roosevelt famously asserted, "The only thing we have to fear, is fear itself." I think he was right: Fear of fear probably causes more problems in our lives than fear itself.

Let's learn more about fear and being afraid of things. Fear is actually a vital response to physical and/or emotional danger—if we didn't feel it, we couldn't protect ourselves from legitimate threats. But often we fear situations that are far from life-or-death, and thus hang back for no good reason. Traumas or bad experiences can trigger a fear response within us that is hard to quell.

A simple and useful definition of fear is: An anxious feeling, caused by our anticipation of some real or imagined event or experience. Medical experts tell us that the anxious feeling we get when we're afraid is a standardized biological reaction. It's pretty much the same set of body signals, whether we're afraid of getting bitten by a dog, getting turned down for a date, or getting our taxes audited.

There are only five basic fears, out of which almost all of our other so-called fears are manufactured. These are:

1. Extinction—the fear of annihilation, of ceasing to exist. This is a more fundamental way to express it than just calling it "fear of death." The idea of no longer being arouses a primary existential anxiety in all normal humans. Consider that panicky feeling you get when you look over the edge of a high building.



Fear of Dying or Death



Soldier lost both legs in Afghanistan

2. Mutilation—the fear of losing any part of our precious bodily structure; the thought of having our body's boundaries invaded, or of losing the integrity of any organ, body part, or natural function. Anxiety about bugs, spiders, snakes, and other creepy things arises from fear of mutilation.

3. Loss of Autonomy—the fear of being immobilized, paralyzed, restricted, enveloped, overwhelmed, entrapped, imprisoned, smothered, or otherwise controlled by circumstances beyond our control. In physical form, it's commonly known as claustrophobia, but it also extends to our social interactions and relationships.



Miner Trapped in a Tunnel



Girl is Rejected by her Friends

4. Separation—the fear of abandonment, rejection, and loss of connectedness; of becoming a non-person—not wanted, respected, or valued by anyone else. The "silent treatment," when imposed by a group, can have a devastating psychological effect on its target.

5. Ego-death—the fear of humiliation, shame, or any other mechanism of profound self-disapproval that threatens the loss of integrity of the Self; the fear of the shattering or disintegration of one's constructed sense of lovability, capability, and worthiness.



What are your greatest FEARS?

Think about it. What are you most afraid of? I know, you didn't think I was afraid of anything but I'm sorry to say that all normal human beings experience fear, anxiety, stress, and being afraid of certain things. I will list 10 of my greatest fears below (in no particular order):

1. The worst way of dying that I can imagine is to be trapped in a small narrow underground tunnel and not being able to move – similar to the picture of the miner above. The sheer terror of slowly suffocating or starving to death is probably my greatest fear.

2. The next worst way of dying that I can think of is getting blown to pieces by a terrorist bomb. Getting severely injured and living would even be worse.

3. I must confess that I have always been afraid of public speaking. I have had to do it many times as part of my job but it was never easy for me. I have found that the best way for me to give a speech or a briefing is by using no written text or notes. I memorize what I want to say and just get up there and muddle through as best I can.



4. Like most people, I feel a little uneasy when I'm at the top of a tall building like the Empire State Building in New York City or on cliff overlooking a deep canyon like the Grand Canyon in Arizona. I also have no desire to live in a high raise apartment building. I need to be in a place on the ground floor where I can go outside with my dogs whenever I feel like it.



This might not be a good job for me!!

5. As I get older, I feel blessed to still be in good health at my advanced age. But, there are times when I think about death and what horrible disease or condition will finally do me in. I do fear having a stroke or some other disease that would ruin my quality of life as I know it today. This includes any disease that would take my mobility or thinking ability away. I saw my dad go downhill fast after he got sugar diabetes and having a couple of strokes. He died at age 62. I would just as soon die peacefully in my sleep when my time here on earth comes to an end.

6. I fear that our President, the U.S. Congress, and many major government departments like the Department of Homeland Security are incompetent, have their own agenda or just too lazy to do their jobs. Terrorist groups like ISIS are cutting innocent people's heads off and conducting terrorist attacks all around the world (most recently in Paris and San Bernardino). Yes, this ragtag group of bloodthirsty Islamic Muslims is terrorizing the whole world and what is the most powerful nation (the United States of America) in the world doing about it? I will answer that question for you – very little.

7. Computer Hackers!! These cyber terrorists have stolen our credit card number three times and maxed out the card before the bank and/or I

discovered what had happened. This creates a major hassle for me. You have to through every charge with the bank rep to identify the ones charged by the hacker. There are several documents and forms you must fill out. Then the bank tries to get these charges reversed. Credit card companies and banks have a limit that you can be liable for. It has cost me about \$500. And each time, your credit card is frozen and then cancelled, you have to wait for a new card to be issued.



Terrorist Attack in Baghdad



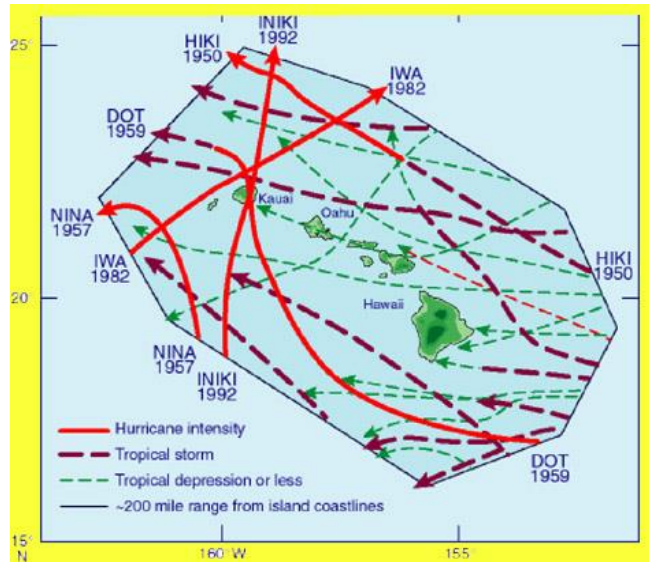
Terrorists Bomb Train in Madrid

8. I do fear that ISIS or another Islamic terrorist group will get their hands on some nuclear and/or biological weapons. We know that these idiots love to kill people and would not hesitate to use them on Israel, Europe and the United States.

9. Falling down. Did you know that falls are the leading cause of death due to injury among the elderly? Yes, it is true. Over 33% of the elder population over the age of 65 falls each year, and the risk of falls increases proportionately with age. At 80 years old, over half of all seniors fall annually. The most common injury is hip fractures but in many cases, the person hits their head on something hard and dies. I have fallen down one time (on Super Bowl Sunday) in 2011 at age 70 and I managed to break my right foot in three places. Since then, I have been much more careful – especially when running in the rain or going down the stairs.



10. Hurricanes. The chances of a strong hurricane hitting the island of Oahu is small but it certainly is possible – after all, Hawaii is out in the middle of the Pacific Ocean where hurricanes are occurring on a regular basis. During the Hurricane Season (1 June to 30 November), I do have a small fear that a hurricane will come to Hawaii and blow down our house.



Oahu has never taken a direct hit by a major Hurricane

Well, how does your list of fears compare with mine?

Story Time. Fear parable with Nasrudin



Legend has it that Nasrudin was walking alone at night when he saw a group of people approaching in the far distance. Instantly, his imagination began to toy with him: "They are surely robbers!" he thought. "No, why just robbers? Murderers, cutthroats! About to set upon me, a lonely traveler, leave me for dead and steal all my possessions! How are my wife and children going to cope without me?!"

Nasrudin's heart began to pound. His mouth became as dry as his palms became wet. He shook from head to toe and found himself breathing like an unfit man running to the finishing line of his first marathon. Having thoroughly terrified

himself, he stumbled into a nearby graveyard and cowered shaking inside an open tomb, awaiting his terrible fate.

Meanwhile, the harmless strangers, worried by his dramatic behavior, approached him and looked with concern down into the tomb. "What are you doing down there?" they asked. Nasrudin, calming down quickly, said: "Well, put it this way: I am here because of you and you are here because of me!"

Imagination is a tool to be used, but how many people misuse it to torment themselves? Imagination and emotionality are closely linked and what we imagine can feel very real to us (even when it isn't at all). To fear is one thing but to let fear grab you by the tail and swing you around is another.

**Stress, Fear and Anxiety:
What is the Difference?**

An example may be the best way to illustrate the differences between these very similar emotions.



Imagine the following scene:

Picture yourself walking along on the sidewalk, enjoying the nice, sunny weather. You are about to cross a quiet street. You come to the corner, and step off the curb into the street. Suddenly, a car comes rushing toward you!

Your heart races, your breathing rate increases, and with a surge of adrenaline, you leap out of the way! It was a near miss.

After jumping out of the way to safety, you pause for a moment before continuing your walk. You are shaking. Your palms are sweaty. Your knees feel weak. Your heart is still pounding, and you are breathing heavily.

Eventually you resume your walk, and slowly your heart rate and breathing return to normal, the shaking stops, and you feel like your normal self again.

The next day, you are out for a walk again. You enjoy the beautiful day. As you step out to cross the street, you suddenly experience a pounding heart,

trembling, and a great sense of fear! Your mouth is dry, your chest aches, and you feel dizzy. But there is no car coming.

Now let's consider what is going on in this scenario, looking at elements of stress, fear and anxiety.

Suddenly, a car comes rushing toward you! This can be referred to as a stressor (an event that causes stress), signified here by the presence of physical danger.

Your heart races, your breathing rate increases, and with a surge of adrenaline, you leap out of the way! This is the body's stress response in action. You experience fear.

You are shaking. Your palms are sweaty. Your knees feel weak. Your heart is still pounding, and you are breathing heavily. These are the continued effects of the stress response, brought on by the stress hormones that were released to allow you to effectively jump out of the way.

Eventually you resume your walk, and slowly your heart rate and breathing return to normal, the shaking stops, and you feel like your normal self again. In the normal course of the stress response, you react physically to danger, and then return to normal and the stress symptoms go away.



The next day, you are out for a walk again. As you step out to cross the street, you suddenly experience a pounding heart, trembling, and a great sense of fear! Your mouth is dry, your chest aches, and you feel dizzy. But there is no car coming. This is anxiety. The body experiences all the symptoms of fear, but there is no real danger.

Remembering the danger you were in the day before is one of the causes of anxiety symptoms that you are experiencing.

The links between stress, fear and anxiety are the body's fight-or-flight response, the mind's interpretation of events, and perceived danger. Stress, fear and anxiety can be quite similar.

In the example above, you feel fear in response to danger and experience stress. Later, you experience anxiety when you have all the same symptoms as you do when you are afraid, but there is no real danger.

Fear = a feeling of doom, unease, or apprehensiveness in response to imminent danger.

Anxiety = a feeling of doom, unease, or apprehensiveness when no danger is imminently present.

Stress = the body's response to danger (or stress-provoking events) and the associated symptoms.

Do dogs and other animals experience emotions such as fear?

Yes. Most of us dog lovers can read emotions in our dogs (wagging tail means happy, cringing means afraid and so forth).

Although dogs don't have or express as many emotions as humans, they do have feelings of love, joy, anger, and fear. Other emotions a dog can experience are guilt, pride, and shame.



How can we overcome stress, anxiety, and our fears?

We all experience stress, fear, and anxiety from time to time. Feelings of fear and concern that something bad may happen can ruin day to day life, making it difficult to relax and enjoy the present moment. Sometimes anxiety passes when its source fades away, but for many people it lingers, taking the joy out

of life. So, how can we overcome stress, anxiety, and our fears so that we can move on and enjoy life once again?

There is no sure fire way of doing this but the experts have come up with a list of things you can do that might help you reduce the anxieties in your life.

1. **Breathing correctly.** Quicker, shallower breathing is the first trigger which catapults all the other anxious symptoms into action. So by controlling breathing you control all the other anxiety symptoms as well. I know, you hear a lot about 'deep breathing' to help you relax and reduce anxiety, but what you really need to do is purposely breathe out longer than you breathe in. This will make your body calm down right away (regardless of what tricks your imagination is playing on you).

2. **Eliminate or reduce anxiety-inducing food and/or drink from your diet.** Coffee, Alcohol, and Sugar can be the leading causes of anxiety in your life. Eat a more balanced diet of mostly fruits and vegetables. Sorry, I don't care what the expert say, a few beers do wonders for me to "unwind" from a stressful day.

3. **Exercise more.** Regular exercise relieves symptoms of everyday anxiety and also helps to treat anxiety disorders. It improves feelings of well-being both in the moment and for hours afterward. I agree with this one.



4. **Do something you love.** Often times anxiety builds up when you don't get a chance to detox from life's problems. Take at least 30 minutes during your day to practice a hobby or past time which brings you peace. This may be reading, sports, playing music, art, writing, or anything really. Giving yourself an outlet will help to remove the anxiety from your mind both immediately and in the long run.

5. **Use a different part of your brain.** When we become very anxious, it's harder to think clearly. But if we force ourselves to use parts of 'the thinking brain', this will dilute the emotion and begin to calm you down.

6. Induce relaxation at home. When you're at home you should be totally anxiety free; your home should be your sanctuary. When you are dealing with a lot of anxiety, take some time and relax at home. Take a hot bath, listen to calming music, play with the dogs, and avoid anything that might worsen your anxiety. Make sure that you give yourself ample time to enjoy these things throughout your week.

7. Don't overwhelm yourself. If you keep a busy schedule and bring work home with you from the office, you're likely often overwhelming yourself and creating more anxiety than is necessary. Keep a schedule of your necessary activities and cut everything else out for a bit. Giving yourself alone time to deal with your anxiety will help you to overcome it in the long run.

8. Get control of your imagination. Fear and anxiety thrive when we imagine the worst. We developed imagination to be able to project into the future so we can plan ahead. However, a side effect of being able to imagine possible positive futures is being able to imagine things going wrong. A bit of this is useful; after all, there really might be muggers or loan sharks. But uncontrolled imagination is a nesting ground for anxiety and fear that can spoil otherwise happy lives.

9. Get lots of sleep. Lack of sleep prevents your body from clearing out excess cortisol from your system. Cortisol is a hormone, which in high levels, is responsible for causing anxiety and stress. Make sure that you're getting between 7-8 hours of good sleep every night. Try going to bed and waking up at the same times every day. This will help to regulate your sleep cycle, which will help you to get better nights of sleep.

10. Confront sources of anxiety you can control. There are many different situations that induce anxiety, and it's helpful to pinpoint exactly what might be making you anxious and take steps to confront it. If you're behind on doing your taxes, for example, you may feel like you've got a lead weight around your shoulders until the chore is finally done. Keep a journal to help you figure out what exactly is making your mood dip. Writing down your thoughts can often reveal sources of stress you hadn't yet acknowledged to yourself. Even if a particular source of anxiety feels as though it is out of your control, you may be able to change something about the situation to make it feel less stressful to you.

11. Avoid sources of anxiety you can't control. If a certain type of situation makes you feel anxious, it's OK to simply avoid it. If you hate flying, and don't feel this fear is ever going to abate, it's OK to drive (unless you live in Hawaii). Know your limits, and practice self-preservation. If certain people in your life cause you anxiety and you don't feel comfortable confronting them, make changes so that you don't have to be around them. If your work is stressing you out, take a time during the day where you turn off your cellphone and laptop to remove yourself from the anxiety they cause. If you know you get anxious being glued to your email because of work, take it out of your life for a bit.



12. Practice meditation. Relaxation and meditation routines are very effective at lowering anxiety levels. There are many different types of meditation, so it's best to experiment with a few different methods and choose the one that makes you feel the most comfortable and relaxed.

13. Try visualization. This is a process of clearing your mind of anxiety-inducing thoughts and images and replacing them with peaceful thoughts and pictures. Try using guided imagery to picture a place that you feel relaxed and safe in. As you picture the scene, focus on the details so that your mind is fully immersed in the place of your imagination. Forcing your thoughts away from your anxiety will calm both your body and your mind, and prepare you for dealing with whatever is causing you your anxiety.

14. Treating Your Anxiety Medically. Try a natural remedy - Certain herbs, teas, and supplements can decrease symptoms of anxiety. If this doesn't work, you may need to see a doctor or a psychologist or a psychiatrist.

If all those things don't work, you are out of luck and might as well admit it – you are a hopeless nervous wreck. You might as well go to the bar drink your troubles away.

The question I get asked the most often about all these articles I write is – How do you decide what to write about? Well, usually something happens that triggers my desire to learn more about whatever that might be. For this article on FEAR, it come from watching President Obama addressing the nation from the White House Oval Office.



It was on Sunday, 6 Dec 2015, and its purpose was an effort to quell fears that the U.S. is particularly vulnerable to terrorism following last week's mass shooting in San Bernardino, CA. Here is my analysis of the president's 14-minute long speech:

- **He started the speech by inferring that all Americans feared and were afraid of ISIL.**
- **The president then attempted to tell the American people what the government was doing to combat ISIL and other terrorist groups. He didn't tell us anything we didn't already know – there was nothing new.**
- **He talked about the San Bernardino massacre and used this tragic event to call for better gun control. Really – does he think this would prevent terrorism?**
- **He spent the last 10 minutes lecturing us Americans on how great the Islam Religion was and telling us how we should be treating the Muslims.**

- **Obama said we should also welcome with open arms the Syrian refugees who want to come to the United States. Great!! We know that some of these Muslims are terrorists or will become terrorists. Do you know how many Syrian refugees the richest and biggest Muslim country in the Mideast (Saudi Arabia) has taken in so far? You guessed it – Zero.**

No wonder the president’s approval rating dropped to an all-time low of 30% after this speech.

Here is what I think. Americans do not fear and we are certainly not afraid of these cold blooded Radical Islamic Muslim killers. America is the Land of the Brave and we will stand up to any country or group of thugs that threatens our freedoms and our way of life. What we are is mad as hell at our Muslim loving president and our “politically correct” do-nothing government officials for their actions in going after these killers and protecting American citizens here at home and abroad.

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