



FEAR



by Dr. Frank Crane

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It is safe to say that no good work was ever done in Fear.

Until you have struck the shackles of Fear from your HANDS, you can do nothing.

Until you get the grip of Fear loosened from your MIND, your brain is not efficient, and you cannot remember well, think straight, nor imagine constructively.

Until you purge the poison of Fear out of your HEART, your emotions instead of giving you power and pep will cause you only shame and confusion. Fear is your greatest Enemy.

It is a Ghost. It is nothing at all. But it is no less terrible for all of that.

It is this Ghost that knocks the cup of success from your lips just when you are about to drink.



It is Fear that reaches out its ghostly hands to strangle you in a crisis, just when everything depends upon you.

It is fear that tangles your feet, hangs like a millstone about your neck on your journey, dims your eye so that you cannot see the truth, roars in your ears until you cannot hear the music all about you, fevers your blood, unstrings your nerves and pours its senile impotence into your cup of life.

You have one big battle. It is to conquer Fear. That done, the world is yours, your own will come to you, and the stars in their courses will fight for you.



How Fear Spoils All Your Life

If you will think a bit, you will see how Fear spoils all your life.

LOVE is “The Greatest Thing in the World,” and it is Fear that turns the Heaven of Love into the Hell of jealousy and Suspicion.

Don’t be afraid to Love, and to believe that you are loved. Unfortunately it is easy to imagine any one hates you, and hard to think any one, loves you. But you must be bold to believe in Love if you would be happy.

You may be deceived if you trust too much, but you will live in torment unless you trust enough.

“He that believes in everybody may be bitten, but he that suspects everybody will he devoured.”

And Fear makes SENSITIVENESS. Sensitive people live in perpetual torture. Everyone seems to be sticking pins into them and stepping on their toes. They are a misery unto themselves and a nuisance to everybody else.

The root of all Sensitiveness is Fear.

Our BAD MANNERS, SARCASTIC SPEECHES, AWKWARDNESS and other things whereby we make enemies and get ourselves disliked, arise for the most part from shyness, which is another name for Fear.

Is it not distressing and embarrassing to have anyone about that is everlastingly hemming and hawing and apologizing and fumbling and hesitating? Very well — don’t be that kind of a person. It is nothing but cowardice.

Stuttering, stammering and other SPEECH DEFECTS are caused by Fear. The first thing the expert does, to cure you, is to teach you not to be afraid. For you stammer because your



words are inhibited, that is, stopped by Fear.

All joy arises from being Natural. We are Happy only when we can be our real self. And Fear is the power that depresses self. It makes us impotent to be HAPPY.

Hence we become AFFECTED, for Affectation, Posing and “Putting On,” all amount to being afraid of expressing our real self.

You can have no CONTENTMENT nor peace of mind until you drive Fear out of the home.



How to Get Rid of Fear

Now how can we get rid of Fear? Let us take some plain, simple measures of common sense.

Let us use all our will power, brains, judgment and imagination to attack this foe.

IF YOU ARE AFRAID OF ANYTHING WALK RIGHT UP TO IT !

WHEN you were a child and were frightened at night by a terrible Big White Thing waving its arms at you, and you walked up to it, and saw that it was only a shirt hanging on the clothes line and flapping in the wind, your terror was gone and you laughed.

And, even now, things that from a distance seem most alarming are not very dreadful when we face them squarely and examine them. For instance, there is a certain Great Man whom you have to see. You fear you are going to be tongue tied in his presence. But if, in your mind, you go up to him before you meet him, and look closely, and see that after all he is only human, and eats and drinks and is glad and mad like the rest of us, you will go to your interview naturally and with self-assurance.



Nothing is so bad when you get to it.

“I have seen a lot of troubles in my day,” said an old man, “and most of them never happened.”

[2] FAMILIARIZE YOURSELF WITH THINGS OR PEOPLE THAT CAUSE YOU FEAR.

FAMILIARITY breeds-assurance.

The difference between Paderewski and the girl just beginning to take piano lessons is mostly — the amount of Fear. The artist master has rubbed all his timidity out by practice. The beginner is full of it.

The country boy is confused in the city simply because he is not used to it. The street gamin enjoys dodging around automobiles and playing in the streets because he has done so all his life. The city boy gets panicky in the woods because it is all strange to him.

So if anything causes you shyness or timidity, do it, and keep on doing it, until the unusualness of it wears off.

[3] DON'T TALK OF BEING AFRAID.

DON'T mention your timidities and impotencies. Don't say “I can't do this” and “I can't meet such and such a person.” Don't say that you would be embarrassed to death to meet this society lady, or that university professor, or this judge, or that bishop, or any other Magnificent One.

And if at any time you have been embarrassed and humiliated and have made a fool of yourself, don't speak of it afterwards.



Our words have a profound reflex action upon our minds.

Do not repeat the formulae of Fear, such as “I can’t,” “I am afraid,” “I know I shall fail,” “I always just miss it,” “That’s just my luck,” and the like.

These sayings seep into your soul and poison you.

Repeat the formulae of Courage.

Say, “I can,” “I’ll do my best, and that’s all anyone can ask,” “No matter what happens, I will keep calm, and sure, and master of myself,” “It’s all in the day’s work,” and go on smiling.

[4] DON’T PAY TOO MUCH ATTENTION TO EXTERNALS.

Be self-sufficient.

Quit thinking about Luck, and Pull, and Influence, and Circumstances, and Other People.



This whole problem of success is bound up in You alone. You are going to sink or swim according to the kind of spirit in you.

The one big, important and essential factor in your life is — You.

Keep your courage up and no man can daunt you. Keep your body healthy and disease germs will not harm you.

Keep your conscience clean and you will need be ashamed to look no man in the face.

Always bear in mind that your ultimate triumph depends upon your grit, your discipline, your industry, your skill, and upon nothing and nobody outside of you.

Don't pin your hopes on others helping you.

If you get boosts and favor, be thankful and go on.

If you get no help — go on just the same.

It's a queer world. Everybody will help the self-sufficient man and knock the beggar.

If you want to borrow a hundred dollars, act as if you had a million. Everybody will come running to lend you.

But act as if you really *needed* twenty-five cents, and we all turn the cold shoulder.

“To him that hath shall be given.”



There's just one person who is going to make you or undo you, and that is — You.

[5] CULTIVATE THE HABIT OF DECISION.

DON'T be rash. Think things over. Don't hurry. Examine all the probabilities in the case.

But get done. Settle the matter decisively. And act with firmness.

You will never know what is absolutely the best thing to do, in any given case. No mortal does. All decisions are based not on perfect knowledge, but upon preponderance of probabilities.

Weigh the matter. Consult the law of averages. And decide quickly in favor of the side which weighs the more.

For if you go on forever hesitating and indecisive, your will becomes flabby, you lose your clearness of vision, and Fear creeps in.

All great minds, all strong characters, all successful men, are persons of rapid decision.

[6] USE YOUR INTELLIGENCE.

If you Fear anything, examine it carefully. Analyze it. Scrutinize it carefully.

At least, know what it is that alarms you.

For most of the things that cause us panic, are the things tinged with Mystery.



It is the Unknown, not the Known, that terrifies. The only reason we fear Death is because we do not know what it means.

*“And thus the native hue of resolution
Is sicklied o’er by the pale cast of thought.”*

WE fear what we do not understand, what we cannot see clearly, as children are afraid of the dark.

Hence, whatever you fear, sit down and examine it carefully.

Drag the dreaded thing out into the light. Master it in your mind.

It may help you to write down succinctly just what it is you are afraid of. You will find that in stating the matter clearly to your own mind, your fears will vanish.

[7] REMEMBER IT IS ALL IN THE DAY’S WORK.

THIS life of ours is given us to live, one day at a time, not all at once.

We are workmen “by the day,” and not “by the job.”

Whether you are ultimately to succeed or not, and what is at last to become of you, is none of your business.

That is God’s business, or Destiny’s, or Fate’s, whatever you are of a mind to call it.

All you have to do is to do the work laid out for you this day.

You are a Common Soldier in the ranks of humanity; you are not the General.

The Great Plan you do not know. All you need to know is your orders for the day.

To do your work, in that small corner where you are placed, that is enough. Then you can sleep. And in the morning



you can do the next day's work. You don't have to climb any hill, nor cross any bridge, until you get to it.

Most of the Fear that spoils our life comes from attacking difficulties before we get to them.

It is all right to have caution and foresight, to look ahead and plan, but if you see trouble coming, or disaster, keep cheerful, do your next duty, and when the issue does come, you can attack it with your full force and confidence.

[8] LEARN TO LET GO.

LEARN to relax — Study the art of turning your attention to something else.

If you think of a thing too long you “go sour”; you lose your sense of proportion; you become morbid.

Learn how to divert yourself. Go to the ball game, see a movie, play a game, read an interesting story.

Of course, you can divert yourself too much, till you have no power of concentration.

But also you can concentrate too much, till your mind loses all its spring and freshness.

You often get a better hold upon a problem by going away from it for a time and dismissing it from your mind altogether.

[9] KEEP UP YOUR BODILY HEALTH.

BE a good animal.

We are all fundamentally animals after all. Whatever brain and soul we have is lodged in the flesh.

And the first essential in acquiring a strong, courageous and triumphant personality, is to have a sound, clean, normal body.

Don't neglect exercise. Cultivate outdoors.

Do not overeat, nor get fat, nor otherwise slump physically, for that is the sure road to slumping mentally.



Discipline your body, if you want a keen and disciplined spirit. Don't drink too much, nor smoke too much, nor indulge in too much "softness and needless self-indulgence."

Else you become flabby. And flabbiness is the hotbed of Fear.

[10] THINK RIGHT COSMIC THOUGHTS.

THINK right about the universe.

You have your place in it. You were born for some purpose. You are needed in the universal scheme as much as the tree is needed, and the star.

Many a soldier has got rid of Fear by believing that he will not die till his time comes.

There is a sensible and sane view of Fate.

Nobody knows what to-morrow may bring forth. But we can believe. And if we believe strong, favorable and triumphant things, it puts sureness into our hands, courage into our heart and clear sight into our mind. While if we doubt, or fancy failure, humiliation and disgrace, it unnerves us and makes us weak.



It is no part of the purpose of this writing to preach religion, but this much can be said to all:

WHATEVER YOUR CONCEPTION OF GOD MAY BE, BELIEVE HIM TO BE YOUR FRIEND.

ALL the superstitions, persecutions and religious manias have come from imagining God to be our Enemy.

Think! He made you. He has a purpose for you. Believe that He is with you and well disposed.

No single thought in all the world is of more value to put life and cheer and power into a man than the thought that the great Being who made this universe is FOR us and not AGAINST us.

