

Chapter Three

Conquering Fear

“Do not be afraid”

Genesis 15:1, 21:17, 26:24, 46:3
Exodus 14:13, 20:20
Numbers 14:9, 21:34
Deuteronomy 20:1, 1:21, 1:29, 3:2, 3:22,
7:18, 18:22, 20:1, 31:6, 31:8
Joshua 8:1, 10:8, 10:25, 11:6
Judges 6:23
First Samuel 12:20
2 Kings 1:15, 19:6, 25:24
1 Chronicles 22:13, 28:20
2 Chronicles 20:15, 20:17, 32:7
Isaiah 10:24, 37:6, 40:9, 41:14, 43:5, 44:2,
44:8, 54:4
Jeremiah 1:8, 40:9, 42:11
Ezekiel 2:6, 3:9
Daniel 10:12, 10:19
Zachariah 8:13, 8:15
Mathew 1:20, 10:26, 10:28, 28:5, 28:10

Luke 1:13, 1:30, 2:10, 12:4, 12:32
John 12:15, 14:27
Acts 18:9, 27:24
Revelations 1:17, 2:10

“Don’t Be Afraid”

Genesis 35:17, 43:23, 50:19, 50:21
Judges 4:18
Ruth 3:11
1 Samuel 22:23, 23:17, 28:13
2 Samuel 9:7, 13:28
1 Kings 17:13
2 Kings 6:16
Nehemiah 4:14,
Isaiah 7:4
Mathew 10:31, 14:27, 17:7, 5:36, 6:50
Luke 5:10, 8:50, 12:7
John 6:20

To conquer fear is the beginning of wisdom. Bertrand Russell

One day, a long time ago, the author was at the county fair with his three year old son. The day was filled with joy, and together, father and son took in all the rides at the fair, even the “big” rides that three year olds were not supposed to ride. There was so much fun and playing, both boys felt physically ill from being thrown about like rag dolls. During a break in the activities, while taking in a drink of water, the two hands that held each other throughout the day separated. In an instant, father and son could not see each other. The three year old boy was lost.

For a frantic 60 seconds or so, both boys screamed for each other, and they found each other with the help of a little old lady who befriended the young boy and kept him from wondering farther away. Shortly after hearts calmed, the day was ended and all went home.

Two years later, at a different county fair, the same two ventured out to take in the rides; this time, the younger boy, now five years old, was terrified of the rides. On one ride, he screamed so loud the operator stopped the ride, let the two off, and continued the ride for the other patrons.

Billy was a young man of about twenty one when he thought he found his dream girl in a nightclub. Things went the way things do, and Billy felt more like a man than he had ever felt

before, holding his new dream girl in his arms in her apartment at 2:00AM. Then the pounding started on the door. Turns out, this woman had befriended another man who thought it was his job to sit and hold her. He broke down the door and pushed a ten inch knife under the nose of poor young Billy. Billy managed to persuade the man into letting him leave without a scratch, but the man he felt he was ten minutes earlier was lost.

Jane felt that her search for the perfect mate had finally ended. She and John did everything together, including laugh! But Jane started to worry that maybe her mate would be happier with someone else. Jane became a little despondent compared to her former self and slowly, her fear gripped her, and she started interrogating John about his whereabouts whenever she met him for lunch or he came over for dinner. Until one day, he came over for dinner and announced it wasn't working out, that he did not feel as comfortable with her as he once did, and that it just wasn't any fun anymore. The relationship was over. Jane's fear became her reality.

No one visited the wounded soldiers as often or as regularly as Lincoln. Interestingly, he almost never traveled with a security team or even a bodyguard. On one such visit in 1863, the president was returning alone in the dark when a sniper's bullet tore a new hole in his hat. Lincoln said he thought it was a hunter's stray bullet, but given the this occurred shortly before the battle of Gettysburg and after the cover of night had enveloped the air, it is a safe bet that this was an attempt to assassinate the president.

The very next week, Lincoln saddled his horse again and went to visit the soldiers. He continued this activity until his death from a different assassin's bullet on Good Friday, 1865. Lincoln's empathy for all the soldiers is legendary. Where and how the war would have ended with another commander-in-chief is impossible to say, but it is easy to speculate the war would have gone on longer and even more would have lost their lives. Lincoln lived not in fear, but with a stark realization that everything was exactly as it is supposed to be.

Lincoln had two very specific and profound teachers who, because of their guidance, changed the entire world forever without ever knowing it. Who were these teachers and what lesson did they teach? His mother, who taught him to always respect every other person; to see the world from their shoes, and his step mother, who came into his life about age ten. She taught Lincoln how to believe in himself, as well as empathy for others. Because his own mother passed away when he was very young and his step mother had so much in common with his own mother, it was not difficult for young Abraham to accept his step mother or her lessons.

Lincoln wanted for everyone else that which he wanted for himself. With these thoughts, and with his ability to live without fear, he was able to lead the country through its darkest four year period. He had every right to be afraid. No one would have second guessed his decision to avoid riding at night to visit the wounded soldiers.

We all have stories of being afraid.

There are eighty nine references listed above in both the old and new testaments which clearly define that the authors of the Bible had an important message on this subject. No other phrase is

repeated so often in the Bible. Only the subject of love shows up more than not being afraid (the word love occurs four hundred forty four times). Sure, the Bible tells us not to be afraid, and it even tells us what to do instead of being afraid, for example, “Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid,” (John 14:27) or “Do not be afraid, and keep on speaking” (Acts 18:9), but it seems to come a little short of *how*. Fear is the single most difficult obstacle to overcome in any worthwhile project.

Without saying so specifically, the Bible is telling us who controls our thoughts. The Almighty gave mankind control of only one thing. With that control, you, as a member of mankind, have been able to make the world what you want. Only mankind has been given the ability to think. All other creatures fall victim to instinct. *You* can think. Every single thing that has been created or recreated by man since the dawn of time started with a thought. Being afraid is a thought, and as such, you can tell it to go away. But you cannot tell fear to go away, that will merely make it manifest. Instead, you must bring courage. By bringing the opposite, you create what you want. If you are cold, you do not tell the cold to go away, you add heat, which makes the cold go away. If you are hungry, you do not tell your hunger to go away, you add thoughts of satisfaction, which dispels the hunger.

We live in the greatest time in the history of the earth, with enough food for everyone, in a country where there is enough food for everyone to eat twice. Abundance is everywhere, and within the grasp of everyone. Safety is common. We can have, be and do whatever we want. There is no question that we live in the greatest country that has ever existed. But ninety five percent of us are crippled because we are afraid. Tom Jackson, better known to everyone as Stonewall Jackson, arguably one of the top three generals of the civil war, was quoted to say, “you may be whatever you resolve to be.” Why would anyone resolve to be afraid?

How would you like to have a million dollars? Sure you would. That is why you are reading *The Rags To Riches Project*. But are you ready to do what it takes to be wealthy? Are you ready to conquer your fear? Many say that they are ready, but come up short on the requirements. Are you ready to add the self discipline necessary to do what it takes to have a million dollars? Fifteen years prior to writing *The Rags To Riches Project*, the author discovered the first key to success: you must *decide* on a goal (more on that subject in chapter five) and after you decide, you must do whatever it takes to accomplish the task to succeed in fulfilling the decision. After discovering the key, T-shirts were made which proudly displayed “Just Do W.I.T.” Sometimes – nearly all the time – in order to do W.I.T., you must put aside your fear, and act as if you were not afraid.

In the spring of 2007, a help wanted ad appeared in the market of Minneapolis and St Paul via the Internet. The ad appeared for twenty four hours only and this was the entire content of the ad:

If you read only one job listing this year, let this be it.

Do you seek a comfortable lifestyle? Do you enjoy the commitment of working 9-5 for a large, old company? Are you looking for a job with benefits? Is two weeks enough vacation for the first year of employment? Is \$75,000 enough for a first year salary?

Then keep looking.

What we are is a small company with big dreams, and bigger goals. What we offer is far more than you can even imagine for yourself. What we are currently doing is learning. What we are looking for is a small group of people interested in learning.

Oh, and we are filming the entire project for a Reality TV show. We have a national sponsor and an experienced film crew with projects you may have already been enjoying on tv.

We are looking for people of all walks of life. We are accepting applications from young, old, affluent, destitute, educated and non educated people. We would like to have applicants from all races, beliefs, and marital stats.

What we will do is learn all that takes to be wealthy. We will study, we will work, we will learn, and we will EARN. You will be PAID for the work you perform while we are filming this show. No one will ever be asked to do anything illegal, immoral, or fattening.

And we will record the entire process for a reality based TV program or movie release.

You will learn about business. You will learn about real estate. You will learn about marketing, technology, and communications.

You will learn about you and the people around you.

Successful candidates will set themselves a goal of one million dollars within twelve months.

All participants who complete the program will achieve this goal.

I'd wish you good luck, but I'm sure luck won't have much to do with it.

If you are ready to change your life, send us an email. The email should include your name, phone number, and a two or three sentence paragraph telling us why you think you are a good candidate for our program.

Actors, singers, and actor/singer coaches encouraged to apply.

We will require you to deliver yourself to Egan, on a bus route, at least five days a week, possibly six, never seven. Off street parking will be available for those with a car.

How many people do you suppose replied to that ad? Would you believe the ad generated more than one hundred emails and phone calls from people who were interested to participate? It did just that. And how many of those do you suppose actually showed up for the job interview? Would you believe only eleven people showed up for the interview? And how many people were hired for the position? Would you believe only six people came on board to participate. And of those remaining six people, how many completed the year long task of becoming millionaires? Zero. Not a single person who started out wanting to participate in the program even lasted more than a month. They were not willing to do W.I.T.

Why would such a wonderful thing as becoming wealthy, without doing anything or being asked to do anything illegal, immoral, or fattening, generate so few people who actually wanted to participate in the program? One word defines the answer: fear.

Kristopher said he wanted a better world for his children. Torrey and Kim were boyfriend and girlfriend who each wanted a better life without crime. Keith wanted to be on TV. Tyrone knew there was a better way to wealth than anything he knew, and his 6 years in prison proved he had been doing it wrong. Gary was already somewhat successful, but wanted more. David actually said he thought it was a scam and he wanted to see it for himself. David just received word of his own layoff and needed a job. Ryan was a world traveler and wanted to help the SteLuTec Foundation (the charity overseeing the project). Chris said he had tried everything else and this looked like a good idea. Barbara came with Ivan, who was an immigrant from Jamaica. All came with dreams equal to those of these others. All came not knowing what to expect. All came with a way out before they even walked in the door. One said they would start after finals, another said they would be there after work, one said her boyfriend said no, one said his girlfriend said no, one said after my mother gets better, one said let me fix my car first. There are so many reasons not to start. But the example from the Master Teacher says:

When Jesus saw the crowd around him, he gave orders to cross to the other side of the lake. Then a teacher of the law came to him and said, "Teacher, I will follow you wherever you go."

Jesus replied, "Foxes have holes and birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has no place to lay his head."

Another disciple said to him, "Lord, first let me go and bury my father."

But Jesus told him, "Follow me, and let the dead bury their own dead."

Mathew 8:19-22

Jesus said, "Let the dead bury their own dead." Why would he say that? How cruel is it to say such a thing to a person whose father had just died? How do the dead bury their own dead? Those who are quoted here in the Bible said they were ready to follow Jesus (or be wealthy), but were they really? Were they ready to throw off their sensible reasons for "not yet" and become the people they truly wanted to be?

The word 'dead' in its first instance refers not to people actually dead, but people who are spiritually dead. The second 'dead' refers to those who have actually died. But it is the first group that is the important group. It is this first group who are people who can think, and can change their own lives, their own destiny. Armed with this knowledge, we can then understand what Jesus meant in actual language. He meant for us to stop making excuses. All of these are good reasons; finals, mom is sick, car is broken, boyfriend, girlfriend, etc, etc, but all are excuses to fail. Each and every one is a reason not to succeed. Jesus was teaching not only the way to Heaven, but the way to happiness here in this world as well. There is not a single mention of any of the apostles being unhappy in the Bible. There is no single reference to Jesus being unhappy with Himself or His life in the Bible. (He is sometimes unhappy with those around Him, as in the overthrowing of tables in front of the temple, but never His own life.)

Just as all these are reasons to wait, or to not go, there will be many who come to the author to learn the ways of courage and success. Some will make a postponement excuse, and because it is natural to want to help everyone, it is sometimes necessary to "shake the dust off your feet when you leave, as a testimony against them (Mark 6:11). Not everyone is willing to be helped.

Be careful of that trap as you move through your new world without fear. Sometimes you must leave people alone, and leave them behind.

You know, in the grand scheme of things, when we can look to history for answers to our present, we can see the leaders of their own time in our history books, we can study the words they used to describe themselves and those around them, and we never see any successful person of any race, creed, or color at any time in history, who says, "I wish I would have waited to become successful."

For those who did show up in answering that help wanted ad, it did not take very long for their reasons to quit to make it into the conversation. The goal of the program is very specific: live happily ever after.

The first step in the program for those who did show up, was to talk to people they did not know in a practiced and controlled environment. This practice was created as part of the program because so many people suffer from a fear of public speaking, and the conquering of this particular fear can be seen in any person who is considered successful. Think for just a moment about any person, anyplace on the planet, that may be considered successful, and you will quickly realize that while their politics may be different from yours, their ideas may be different from yours, their eloquence may be lacking something, their ability to get up in front of people and speak is clear. Our program began with people making phone calls to discuss a charity which helps children. Just a phone call. How difficult is that for you?

Gary, who was already comfortable financially, like nearly every other person who showed up, could not bring himself to make a phone call to a person he did not know. He was afraid of someone hanging up on him; like that would take away his birthday.

The second step in the program was to speak to a group of people in an alcoholic's anonymous meeting. A three minute speech on any topic they wished, as long as the message was positive. These two things, more than any other thing, drove the people away. They could not conquer their fear of talking with other people, and instead chose to go on with their lives, not being millionaires, and not being happy. After that the last person had left the program, not a single phone call had been made, and not a single word of any speech had been drafted. We had spent a month trying to motivate the players, but none ventured into the first phase of the training. No one would pick up a phone.

Research shows that people respond to two types of motivation: positive and negative. Of these, the basic motivators number seven on the positive side and two on the negative side. Of those two on the negative side, one has been discussed in chapter two (revenge) and the other is fear. While we did touch on fear in both of the previous chapters, it will be our intention to dedicate this chapter entirely to fear.

Lincoln received many death threats while president, and even started to receive them before his inauguration. His security detail, the famous Pinkerton Detective Agency, persuaded Lincoln to take a different train to Washington, to wear a different hat than he had ever worn before, and a

cape. While he made it to Washington alive enough, but news of his costume made it to the press, and Lincoln took those cartoons personally.



What do you suppose is the most common first word learned by children who speak English? It is, "No." Why would this be? Perhaps your parents said, "no, you can't have that, you might hurt yourself." Or maybe, "no, you can't go there." Or "no, you can't watch that," or "no, that's not something you can eat," or "no, you can't climb that tree," or even, "no, you can't have ice cream before dinner." No, no, no. Our parents, and we parents, have learned from our parents before us, how to say "no" in an effort to keep us safe. Unfortunately, no one is safe. Even if you never get that BB gun, you still may put your eye out.

Those of us who grew up in strict Catholic or Christian homes may remember the classic, “don’t do that or you’ll go to hell.” Guilt and fear go hand in hand when using negative factors to teach our children or to motivate anyone. Watch an advertisement for a political candidate and you will see seven out of ten ads say how bad it will be if the other guy is elected; only three in ten say how great it will be if the candidate in the ad is elected. Fear works. It is most likely the single greatest motivator known to humans. Yet, we must rise above it, because the motivation we get from fear takes us the wrong way.

Guilt works by allowing us to fear anything that *might* happen. This is particularly true of an event that “might” happen to someone else, “if you don’t (insert your favorite verb here) for me, I’ll be homeless; my spouse will leave me; it’ll hurt my family; your parents may die;” or any other bad thing that could happen to any other person.

We are all alive today, and as living beings, we will experience a variety of things as we journey through this thing called life. We will find ourselves injured. The author is wearing a bandage on his thumb as he writes this paragraph because of a mild injury suffered yesterday. Two weeks ago, the author attended a funeral of a good friend. The country is at war, the economy is bad, the banks are (or should be) closing down, the insurance companies are bankrupt, and the list goes on and on. There are many ways for us to be hurt.

There are people who will actually go out of their way to hurt you. Why? Well, perhaps they believe that is their calling, but nonetheless, they will hurt you. They will actively work against your dreams. They will tell you “you can’t do that.” They will remind you, “that’s just crazy; you can’t afford that,” or, “remember the last time you tried that?” They will hurt you. You need to protect yourself from them, and realize they will always be there. No one who reads *The Rags To Riches Project* will actively work to hurt you, because they understand the self esteem already discussed, and perhaps lack of self esteem is the cause of why people will hurt you. You must rise above this. Never allow yourself to be reduced to their level.

Who among you has never had a dream that was lost? Who among you has never stubbed your toe? Who among you has never skinned a knee, or contributed any amount to an argument or fight? The author is not suggesting here that you not protect yourself, only that life is designed to throw things at you that are designed to hurt you. Sometimes the things thrown at you come from sources that should not be throwing things at you. Sometimes it is your teachers, parents, or siblings throwing things at you. Sometimes, you will throw things at yourself.

Billy knew he wanted to be a singer. He was very young, maybe nine or ten, when he first started to imagine himself on a stage in front of hundreds or even thousands of people who came just to hear him sing. His desire to be a singer was his most important reason for being. He was about twelve when he got to audition for the school’s Christmas play; he was to be one of the three wise men. In front of all his classmates, without any practice or rehearsal, the author started to sing. Almost immediately, the children in the classroom and the teacher (a Catholic nun) told Billy to sit back down. The rumblings in the classroom under the breath of the students suggested that Billy would never amount to much of a singer, and in fact, Sister Noel suggested that from that point forward, Billy “just move your lips when we sing in church.” A very painful

moment, indeed! This event sparked a fear that would follow young Billy for 18 years, when, after extensive lessons with a very gifted teacher, he once again stepped in front of a crowd and parted his lips to sing. (Well, the crowd was only 6 people, but he stood and sang!)

Fear can be very real very crippling, and almost always, it is based on false education. Our job is first to identify the fear, then the cause and finally to apply new knowledge so that the fear will dissipate. Remember this phrase and repeat it often: the serenity to accept the things I cannot change, courage to change the things I can, and the wisdom to know the difference.” This chapter is about wisdom.

A quick Internet search will reveal just how real this concern is over fear, what fears we have, and apparently, what we are willing to spend in order to remove fear from our lives. The irony here is that there is truly only one way to remove a fear from our mind, and that is to change how we think about it. It is irony because the one and only thing in this life that we can control is our own thinking. It is interesting to note, that many of these fear “cures” may actually be fears of things people did not know they were afraid. Only after seeing the name of the fear in writing did the person actually decide to be afraid. This particular phenomenon is known in medical circles as hypochondria. The fear becomes the self fulfilling prophecy: fear breeds fear.

Nearly any school child knows how to be afraid. Being afraid is what we are taught from very early in our lives. Even those of us who would believe we are doing our best to raise our children without fear use it to direct our children to the appropriate behavior, ironically based on our own fears. Have you ever told your child there will be a consequence to their behavior? Sure, we want to be positive with our reinforcement of rules, but even this reinforcement is a negative one based on fear. We are teaching our children with fear as our primary tool. Whenever there is a “consequence” we do not remove fear, merely do we remove the physical abuse part of parenting that comes with “spanking” or any other form of corporal punishment. The truest way to teach our children without the use of fear is simply to lead by example. Children do what they see their parents do. If you wonder why your six year old yells and screams, how does your spouse behave? Our children treat us the way our spouse treats us. If your children see their parents afraid, they will learn to be afraid.

Motivating tools come in all sorts of shapes and sizes, and we tend to use those which to us seem the most comfortable; the most familiar. Familiar: as in, like a family. Pun intended; did you get it? (This is an example of the fear of change. We will discuss that in detail shortly.) Most psychologists agree, babies are actually born with only two fears; and this includes you. Only the fear of loud noises and the fear of falling are innate. This means that all other fears are *learned* behavior. Perhaps a teenager with claustrophobia has developed that fear because he or she experienced a “consequence” for bad behavior of spending hours alone in their room. Here are two lists of ten fears found at the websites noted. Can you imagine what real life experience could ‘teach’ you to fear these things? You will notice how the above mentioned innate fears are somehow missing from both groups.

The Phobia Fear Release website (www.phobia-fear-release.com) lists ten common fears as:

1. Spiders.
2. being evaluated negatively in social situations.
3. flying.
4. intense fear and avoidance of any place or situation where escape might be difficult or help unavailable
5. being trapped in small confined spaces.
6. heights.
7. vomit.
8. cancer.
9. thunderstorms.
10. death or dead things

Coachville has another top ten list (www.topten.org/content/tt.bjb.htm):

1. Failing.
2. Success.
3. Being Judged.
4. Emotional Pain.
5. Embarrassment
6. Being Alone/Abandoned.
7. Rejection.
8. Expressing Our True Feelings.
9. Intimacy.
10. Unknown

What happens in a person's life when they are subject to fear? As we discussed earlier, almost every fear can be attributed to something that was learned incorrectly. Take aerophobia, for example, which is a fear of flying. Statistically, your odds of being involved in an airplane accident are about one in eleven million, while your odds of being killed in a car crash are one in five thousand. You are far more likely to be killed on the way to the airport than you are on an airplane. Time Magazine reported (12/4/06) that "more than 500 times as many people die on U.S. roads as in airline accidents." So why does aerophobia even exist?

It exists because we are taught to fear flying on airplanes or one of the elements involved in the act of flying. We are taught by the media which feeds us negative information whenever a plane does crash. While plane crashes occur only sporadically, the crash will dominate all the news outlets for hours constantly and sometimes days. The author suggests that you stop watching the news on television, listening to news on radio, and reading news in the papers and magazines. The single greatest favor you can do for yourself is to stop learning the wrong thing. We are taught the wrong thing because somewhere someone found a way to make money on your fear. Flight insurance must be one of the greatest grossing parts of the insurance industry. As well as the insurance companies, the media also makes money when we are afraid.

A perfect example of media and the damage it can create occurred in 1890. Americans native to the soil on the continent, already sequestered on reservations for more than fifteen years, created for themselves a new religious belief which incorporated within it a dance. The Rags To Riches Project does not have the scope to cover all the details deserved by the Americans native to its soil, so the short story is, Sitting Bull embraced the dancing religion and the government ordered his arrest. When he resisted passively, he and seven others ended up dead. The army of the day – and the government – became concerned over a potential uprising, led by a leader named Big Foot.

Big Foot had surrendered, for all intents and purposes, and he and his followers were being escorted to another location when the entire group stopped at a place called Wounded Knee. The problem for

everyone was that there was no uprising; only dancing. Noted historian Robert M. Utley puts it this way:

Reporters flocked from all over, but when they got there, there was no fighting, there was no war, so the newspaper correspondents had nothing to write about. They gathered each morning at the traders' store at Pine Ridge and concocted the day's dispatch embroidering on a war that did not exist.

In addition to this report, the History Channel program titled "the Real West: The Final Clash: Wounded Knee" narrator Kenny Rogers states, "The press had created a situation that didn't exist, but the threat of an Indian war sold papers, so they continued to fabricate stories."

Because of the high tensions created by the newspapers, what happened at Wounded Knee is alternately called the last battle of the Indian wars, or a massacre. Three hundred fifty Natives were surrounded and being escorted by more than five hundred trained soldiers. Of the three hundred fifty Natives, only about one hundred were fighting age men; nearly two hundred fifty were women, children, and senior citizens. When the shooting started, the army chased those who were running for cover with the army's new automatic weapons. Big Foot, the Native's leader, was suffering from pneumonia throughout the two day event, but his suffering ended at Wounded Knee, as did the suffering of nearly three hundred and fifty, almost entirely unarmed Natives. All this was the result of a few writers who were more interested in selling newspapers than calming fear.

We have a multitude of stories from history telling us, teaching us not to be afraid. While this is so, ninety five percent of us choose to live in fear. We get caught up in scarcity. We have a president who tells us we are in the middle of the worst financial crisis since the Great Depression, and our crisis could change to a catastrophe! These are primary reasons why we choose to live in scarcity. When the leader of the most free, most abundant country at the greatest time in the history of mankind tells us we are doomed, how are we supposed to respond? The author suggests that you do not participate.

Every movie playing at every theatre is designed to frighten us in some manner. According to today's top movie ticket sales, the number one movie is a horror film about the making of a reality TV show in which the main characters find themselves locked in a building with a woman who is more animal than human and has very sharp teeth. Number two has the most famous actors in Hollywood acting in a movie about a CIA agent who discovers a terrorist's plot. Number three on the list is about two people who have never met, yet their every move is being monitored by a third person who has an ulterior motive. In each of these three movies, the common element is fear. In some cases, fear is used to tell the story, in others, fearful images and storytelling are used to actually frighten the audience. This is just the beginning.

Every story published in the newspaper is frightening the readers; it is designed that way. "Oh, isn't it awful?" the husband may report to his wife, "That poor fourteen year old boy was murdered today. He was in the wrong place at the wrong time." What does this serve? Sure, we need to know some news about the world around us, but we do not need to be inundated by it. The author reports that today on the radio, the story was actually heard about the above mentioned boy in the

wrong place at the wrong time. The radio announcer went on to mention gangs and gang activity. Are there people who need this? Perhaps, but the author lives 30 miles away, and is not among those people whose lives changed by hearing this news. Why was it necessary for the news announcer to tell the author about this very bad news? It is fearful and unnecessary. The author changed the radio station.

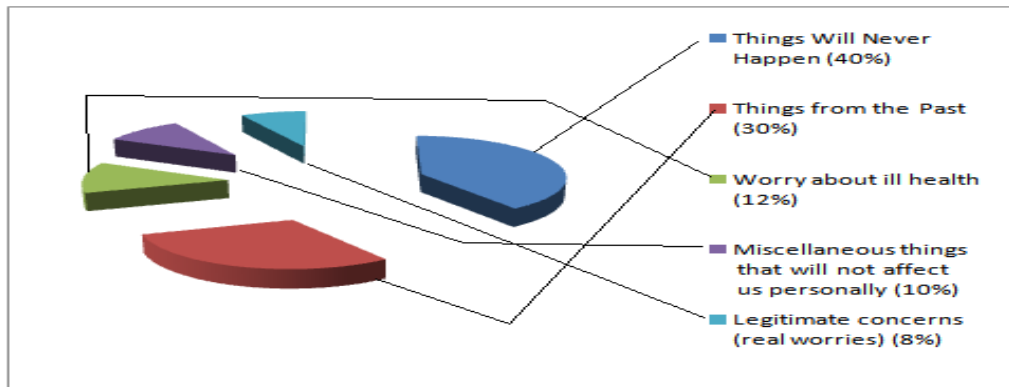
The media does not stop there. Every ounce of news is negative and full of fear. Even local news of the very fortunate lottery winner (of course, the only lottery winners who make the news are the very big winners) may be announced, and it may not be immediately negative, but certainly, after you hear about the lottery winner, you may hear something like, "I hope they don't suffer the lottery curse!" Our media is currently perpetuating news of a bad economy. The author has decided not to participate. *The Rags to Riches Project* is designed to work even though the media would have you believe the economy is bad. The ideas taught throughout *The Rags To Riches Project* will work no matter what. The negative images and the fear perpetuated by the media do not affect the outcome of *The Rags to Riches Project*. Additionally, the secrets taught here will work no matter where on earth you are. No matter what; no matter where; and no matter who you are. The only circumstances by which these ideas will not work is when *The Rags To Riches Project* is given to the person who has not learned to read. And remember, one who does not read is no better off than one who cannot read.

Fear in humans began as a good thing; a protection device. Humans would fear the sound of a wild animal with big teeth and an empty stomach. Fear heightens our senses. Fear puts us into a more alert status. These are the good elements of fear. If a lion is about to change your life into his lunch, fear is a good thing. The earliest humans, however, did not suffer from anxiety. There was no fear or worry about those things that we cannot control. There was no worry about those things which did not have a direct affect on us personally. We may lose sleep because our son, daughter or brother is serving the military in the Iraqi theatre, but the only thing that our worry will change is our blood pressure or the status of our ulcer. These fears and many others are what we wish to handle in this chapter. Our motto: grant me the serenity to accept the things we cannot change, the courage to change the things we can, and the wisdom to know the difference.

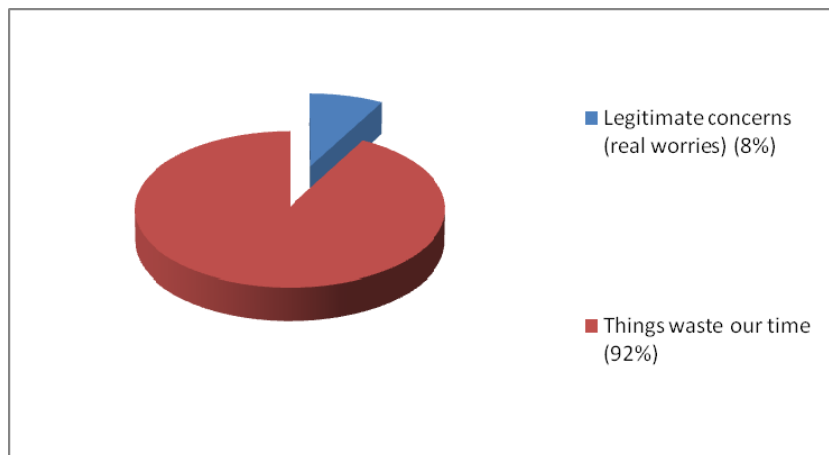
The author imagines a time when, before language became as popular as it is in recorded history, some caveman came home with the news that his hunting buddy was devoured by lions on the hunt that week. He tells the story to the decedents' mate, who in turn, tells the neighbor. The original hunter (the story teller) sees all this happening and something strange starts to happen inside him. He feels good about himself, because, even though he has brought home very bad news, everyone is looking at him and thanking him for telling the story. Pretty soon, this "hunter" decides he likes feeling this good about himself when others look to him for stories, so he stops hunting and just tells stories. Of course, he has to eat or he will starve, so he eats the food offered by others while he tells stories. Soon he is so good at telling stories, he can tell the story whether it is true or not. He often finds that the meals he is served while telling his stories are better if the story has less truth! He teaches his sons to tell stories and eat the food of the people who will listen. This was the birth of media.

Of course, the preceding paragraph is just hypothesis, but the news media is in the business of making money. As such, they need to propagate those stories which attract the most attention. You are reading *The Rags To Riches Project* in an effort to become one of the top five percent of the people in the world; the media feeds on those in the bottom ninety five percent. How much do you need to watch the news? Remember the Wounded Knee massacre story earlier? There were no radios or televisions in 1890. How much worse could it have been if there were?

A.J. Cronin was a doctor who gave up his stethoscope to author such works as *Hatter's Castle*, *The Keys of the Kingdom*, *The Stars Look Down*, and *The Citadel*, so he does not speak without some knowledge. He defines our worries like this: Forty percent of those things we worry about are things that will never happen. Another thirty percent are things from the past and are unchangeable. Twelve percent of that which steals our energy is health related; we worry we will become sick (and usually do). A full ten percent of our worries occupy miscellaneous things that do not have an immediate affect on us personally, and lastly, only eight percent of the things we worry about are things that are legitimate concerns which hold a course that is alterable by us. These worries are pictured like this:



Allow a simplified restatement: ninety two percent of our worry is useless. The next diagram explains it even more effectively.



Further, of the eight percent that we do worry about, that is legitimate, and changeable, most is spent simply on worrying and not on deciding to change or move in any direction away from the thing!

The author asks the reader, does this make sense? Why should we continue to worry? If we would all stop worrying, how much free time would that allow for us? What would invent with all your extra time? What would you build? What would you discover?

Nothing matters and what if it did? John Cougar (1980 recording title)

Writing serves an interesting purpose in handling fear as well. Simply make a list of those things that create fear in you. Through writing you will be able to see those things which inspire fear. You will be able to draw upon your experiences to create a new method for dealing with old issues. You may use this to reevaluate those things that caused the fear to live inside of you. You may, for example, see that the ideas you had of your spouse being interested in someone else are really nothing more than your own imagination moving without guidance. As you come to grips with this, (and concentrate your thoughts on those characteristics about your spouse you truly love) your relationship with your spouse will improve. This may be an oversimplified cure for jealousy, but sometimes, simple is best.

Additionally, your spouse (if you have one) should be included in your problem solving activities. However, as someone who is involved with your problem solving, your spouse need not be a part of your list making. He or she should make his or her own list and each of you should be allowed to work on this alone, and bring your ideas to share at a later time. If you both start your day at the same time, perhaps part of your first moments could be spent alone, then come together for a few minutes of brainstorming your new ideas before you get involved with the rest of your day. Always remember, this is not a contest. This is simply exercising your mind first, so that your goals may be achieved later. There is no wrong answer when you come together. There should never be a cross word or a jealousy between spouses. More will be explained in chapter seven about sharing your ideas with your spouse and with other people that you know.

Any fear that you have can be explained away. As mentioned in the first chapter, there are only two emotions available for your company throughout the day. You may only be in love or in fear. Let us use the previously mentioned list to discuss some simplified reasons for fears. The first on the list was the fear of failing. Well sure, we all wonder how nasty it will be if we do not accomplish that which we attempt to accomplish. But by wondering and worrying about this, it becomes true very quickly. We have failed before we even start. Sister Mary Tricky says, "Fear is faith that it won't work out." Sister Mary must have had this fear in mind when she spoke.

Ask yourself, if you are afraid of failing, why would you ever stop working on your goal? If your biggest fear is that you will not accomplish a thing, the logical conclusion is that you would work and work and work and work to see it through! The idea that the fear comes from not accomplishing the thing seems to the author as though you should be too afraid to fail; too frightened of failure to ever stop working!

Are you afraid to fail? Have you avoided going into business for yourself because you were afraid your business would fail? (If you answered “yes,” you were correct!) Did you have an idea for new widgets in the shower, but never put it into action because you were afraid it would fail? Where would the world be today if you would have put your idea into action? Where would the world be today if all those people who had ideas that never came about would have actually brought their ideas into fruition? Remember, if you are not falling down, you are not learning anything new. And if you are not learning anything new, what are you doing?

Fear of success is interesting, and there was a time when the author suffered specifically from this. It is easy to say out loud, “Who could possibly be afraid of success?” but the numbers of people who are afraid specifically of success is a large number of people who need increased self esteem. Fear of success is created when a person gets close to success, sees their bank accounts improving, notices their spouse loves them, notices their children love them, and then feels they are not good enough. “I am not good enough to have all these wonderful things in my life. I know they will leave me, so I had better push them away.”

Fear of success comes from an inner, subconscious belief that you just are not good enough in the first place. You could ask the same thing about either self esteem or the fear of success: “is my self esteem healthy and strong?” or “am I afraid of succeeding?” The answer to either question tells a much bigger story than just the little bit printed here on these pages.

Creative thinkers and “blamers” (as the author likes to call modern therapists) can come up with a myriad of excuses for the fear of success: How do you handle the money? How do you handle the friends? What about charities? What about paying all those extra taxes? How do you keep your success? All of these sound like good questions, but ultimately, each one is a predetermined excuse to fail and blame your failure on something other than the truth: you chose not to succeed, because you did not think you were worth it.

Look close at all these blaming questions. Can you see one common denominator? Which question is not steeped in fear? Fear of money, fear of giving, fear of not having enough, fear of other people’s fear, fear of the government. Honestly now, let’s not waste any more time.

Ultimately, there are three real fears that need be addressed by us. All other fears will fall under these three fears. The fear of staying the same; the fear of change; and the fear of opinions of others are the only fears we truly need to face. All other lists of fears can fall into these categories. Fear of poverty, fear of staying sick, fear of not getting the promotion at work, and fear of failing can all fall under the fear of things staying the same. The house guest that drives you crazy and will not leave falls under this fear as well. Fear of spiders, flying, growing old, getting a new job, being successful, and death are all fears of things changing. What others think of your clothing, what your mother thinks of your new job, and whether your spouse will like the color of the new car you just purchased are all fears of opinions; or being afraid of what “they’ll” say. It is interesting to note that this particular fear is number two on the first list and both numbers three and five on the second list of fears that were listed earlier in this chapter.

The most important concept to be understood here was introduced in previous chapters: you can only spend the day with one of two emotions; love or fear. Love never hurts; only fear hurts. When you choose to be in love, pain goes away. Pain can only be experienced while in a state of fear. Let us not confuse pain with sadness; that is something else. Sadness is real, natural and unavoidable; fear; not so much.

Let us imagine we are living each day in love. Every little thing that occurs from waking in the morning until you lay your head down at night is exactly the way it should be, and sleep is perfect, too. You feel comfortable with every breath you take, every morsel of food you eat, and every drop of every beverage that crosses your lips. Utopia, you ask? No, it is the way you live *in love*. You do not worry about the phone call from your mother. You do not care what the boss has said in a memo at work. You spend not a single second wondering if you will be healthy tomorrow. There is no fear, worry or dread. You do not worry about growing old. You do not worry about change; in fact, as John Kennedy said, “Our only security is our ability to change.” You welcome new things, you relish old things, and the opinions of others have no bearing on your day. You feel good about yourself and your world just the way it is, and you strive every day to help other people. This is living each day in love.

Wayne Dyer, the noted psychologist and author, explains it this way in his work *How to Be a No Limit Person*, “No limit people are excited about the unknown.” Between Messer’s Dyer and Kennedy, we can realize just how perfect it is to approach new things. We have nothing to fear but (as Franklin Delano Roosevelt explained in 1933), “fear itself.” You can walk through your life living in love, understanding that everything is exactly as it should be.

Change is inescapable. Suffering is inescapable. Victor Frankl, in his groundbreaking book about the holocaust, refers to it as “unavoidable suffering.” We cannot worry or fret our way out of it, through it, or around it. Since it will happen, and since it is associated with change, let us embrace it! Surely, whatever awaits us on the other side is glorious and worth experiencing. Let us charge forward! Let us live our lives the way nature and God intended! Let us experience the liberty that comes from taking the charge of our life! There is no greater thrill than living (and, by the way, no better way to say thank you to God than to use His gifts to the fullest)! Thomas Jefferson referred to it as an “inalienable right” to follow the “pursuit of happiness.” By using the word “pursuit” he is implying that we must go forward to experience it. We cannot enjoy the pursuit of happiness without constant change – constantly moving forward.

People and circumstances come into our lives smoothly – like water flowing within the banks of a river. God puts people into our lives when we need them to be in our lives, and removes them when the need has passed. Our pain come from trying to bring them in too early, refusing them when they show up, or hanging onto them when it is time for them to go. Remember, love is never painful, only fear hurts. That is not to say that sadness will never come to you if you live your life in love. Sadness and pain are not the same things.

Young Billy remembers a time of days long since passed, before there was ever a hint of wisdom in the young sparkle of his eye, when the love of his life announced she was no longer the love of his

life. This is a perfect example of one young man living in fear and wanting desperately to hold on to the young woman of his fancy.

On the night she made sure Billy understood, he first turned to drinking. When that did not work, he tried a late night motorcycle ride with stripes of cold tears searing their lines into his face, with temperatures dropping to the thirties Fahrenheit on that night. Finally, arriving home at nearly 4 in the morning, still crying, this broken young man stumbled into house, still struggling to hang on to this relationship that was gone.

He made it into the house, and then collapsed on the floor, unable to find any more strength in his body even to remove his motorcycle helmet, still strapped to his chin. The condition held by Billy as he lay there on the floor was so desperate that even the movement to go into the kitchen for a knife to use in an act of suicide would have been a positive step. And after nearly two hours of crying and praying for God to simply end his life, a cry rang out loud and clear, "God, if you're there, you better prove it right now! I have no reason to continue living!"

While it is true that such a prayer is very sad all by itself, what happened next was a single and simple catalyst without which you could not be reading *The Rags To Riches Project*. The black lab, Billy's pet, which was sleeping through all this in another room, got up, slowly and surely walked to Billy lying on the floor, licked his face twice, and walked back to his slumber in the other room.

Immediately, Billy got up, removed his helmet, and went to sleep. When he awoke, he had a new vision for the day and his life.

There is a reason for everything and a purpose for every action. Our pain is created by us trying to make it happen too early or keeping a thing around when it is time to go.

Another illustration is painted with the old story of a man who lived a long time ago, in a land far, far away. The old man lived quietly with his son who was a fine young adult, and it was just the two of them, along with his fine white horse. The horse was so fine, in fact, that the king was made aware of it and sent his messengers to purchase the horse from the old man. The old man shook his head to the messengers' dismay, "I cannot sell my companion," he said, and the messengers left sadly.

But the old man's neighbors were quick to judge. They knew a good thing when they saw it, and approached the old man, calling him a fool for not taking the money. They told the old man he could have lived like royalty, never worrying about money again. "I do not know," the old man said slowly, "I only know some men wanted to buy my horse, and I did not sell. I do not know that it was a good thing."

A day or two later, the old man awoke and found his horse had run away in the night. Again the neighbors were there with their opinions and comments, telling the old man he was surely a foolish old man now, for he has neither the horse nor the money! "I do not know," he said surely, "I only know that some men wanted my horse, I did not sell, and now he is gone. I do not know that it is a bad thing," and he went about his business.

A few days had past when the horse returned to the old man's home, bringing with him six more horses from the wild. The neighbors were once again unafraid to share opinions with the old man, saying he was right after all; now he can train these new horses and profit from them. "I do not know," he said, "I only know some men wanted my horse and I did not sell, then he ran away and came back. I do not know that it was a good thing."

The next week while working with the new horses, the son was thrown and broke both legs. Immediately, the neighbors were there to help the old man form opinions of the event, saying to him that he was right after all; it was not a good thing! Now his son's legs were broken and he cannot help the old man with his work. "I do not know," the knowing old man began, "that it is a bad thing. I only know that some men wanted my horse, I said no, he ran into the wild and returned with six more and now my son's legs are broken. I do not know that it is a bad thing."

Ten days went by and the old man was still nursing his son with his broken legs when the messengers from the king arrived with the news of the war with the neighboring country. The advancing army was the strongest army the world had ever known and was nearly assured a victory in the war. All able bodied young men were conscripted to go and fight on the front lines to defend the country and almost certainly perish, but the old man's son had two broken legs and could not go. The neighbors were there with tears, telling the old man how right he was, and that it was a good thing that his son had broken his legs. "I do not know," the knowing old man began, "that it is a good thing. I only know that some men wanted my horse, I said "no," he ran into the wild and returned with six more and now my son's legs are broken and he does not have to go to war. I do not know that it is a good thing."

This story demonstrates how prone we are to judgment. Being afraid of change, or of things staying the same, are equally crippling, and never productive. There is nothing to fear. Being afraid of things changing is behavior that is just wrong. Imagine your own life, and the times when a change was thrown down on you. Can you now look back at the events of that time and understand how other events, great events, could never have occurred without that first, seemingly catastrophic change taking place? Have you ever been fired from a job, only to find a much better job later; one that you would have never known without first being fired? Perhaps you know someone with current circumstances.

"To be thrown upon one's own resources, is to be cast into the very lap of fortune; for our faculties then undergo a development and display an energy of which they were previously unsusceptible." Ben Franklin

Change should never be feared; after all, it is our only security, as eloquently stated by John Kennedy.

Another dimension of the fear of things changing could be called the fear of growing old. Growing old is one of the most natural occurrences mankind will experience. A brief examination of historical figures demonstrates that nearly all inventions, creations and accomplishments ever completed by any man occurred between the ages of 45 and 75. Given this bit of information, it

seems logical that the age to desire should be between 45 and 75! Thomas Edison created most of his patents during these ages. Nearly every single one of the American presidents was in this age group, and if they were not when they were elected, they were while in office! The best books are written by authors in this age group. The best parents are in this age group. Only athletes competing in the very physical sports excel before they get to this age group, however, that is a very small group of people and many of them go on to accomplish much greater things when they are older. Alan Page, for example, was a powerful leader for the Minnesota Vikings football team in the 1970's, leading the team to two Super Bowls, who became a justice on the Minnesota Supreme Court. Look around your neighborhood at those who you consider successful. How many fall into this age group? Growing old is aspired, not despised.

The opposite of change is staying the same. You may be poor; reading this in a library, having not bathed in weeks, thinking, "I am most definitely afraid of things staying the same!" Well, congratulations! By reading *The Rags To Riches Project*, you are effecting change. You will not be the same anymore. You cannot be the same anymore. Nature will not allow you to stay the same.

You may wake up from a deep slumber in the middle of the night and find a poison filled spider crawling on your chest. Do not be afraid of things staying the same. This circumstance will change. Any arachnid scientist would agree that the spider wants to be somewhere else as much as you want it somewhere else. You could almost just go back to sleep. That circumstance will not stay the same. Of course, the author is not a scientist studying the behavior of spiders, so you may wish to consult such a scientist if you wake up and find a spider on your chest. Knowledge will always conquer fear.

The Chinese use two brush strokes for the word 'crisis;' one is for danger, and the other for opportunity. In a crisis, beware of the danger, but watch for the opportunity.

Richard Nixon

The greatest cure for any fear is knowledge. If you are actually afraid of spiders, read a book about spiders. You may end up liking them so much you become an arachnid scientist! Even your fear of change – or your fear of your own future, dissipates with knowledge. You do not want to be poor anymore? Read books about making money! (Of course, there will be more on that subject in chapter nine.) Are you afraid you will be alone and no one will love you? Learn to love yourself and people will flock to you. Are you afraid you will be trapped with the same person forever? Learn a few small things about that person that you truly enjoy and only think about those things! You will be amazed at what happens in your relationships when you concentrate on the things you love about that person.

If your fear is simple and easy, like being afraid to grow older, or if your fear is complex and sophisticated, like everything listed on those two top ten lists earlier in this chapter, find knowledge

and your fears will go away. Did something go “bump” in the night and it has you awake and afraid? Go look at the noise, and you will sleep peacefully again after you learn what it was.

There is no such thing as too much knowledge. You are always able and hereby encouraged to better that which you already know. Remember the words of William Cowper, “Knowledge is proud that he knows so much; wisdom is humble that he knows no more.”

The juxtaposition of this truth is that we humans have an unmistakable capability of rationalizing our thoughts. We must be very careful with our thoughts. We must have others who are in our lives working with us to help us accomplish those things that are important for us individually and collectively. We may be tired, and tell ourselves that we have done enough, when the reality is that we have not done enough. We may believe that we are behaving and making decisions without fear, but an outsider will remind us that we are moving in the wrong direction. This is the result of our personal rationalization ability.

In the vast universe that science describes as home to all the billions of stars we see in the sky on those wonderful clear nights, it may take one hundred million light years to travel from one end of the stars to the other. From either one of those stars, the earth is completely invisible. Everyone who lives on this planet becomes infinitesimally small. Now, with this in mind, what is it that frightens you?

When you conquer your fear, you are free to do the things that you believe will make your life happy. No fear means a positive mental attitude. No fear means more time to concentrate on those things in which you believe. As Ben Sherwood, author of *The Survivors' Club*, says in his study of people who survive things extraordinary, “Faith is the most powerful and universal survival tool. Period. End of sentence.”

Through the practice of faith, and the knowledge that those things that frighten us truly do not frighten us, we will hold our positive mental attitude and move forward in a manner consistent with all those who are considered successful in their lives. Each and every one of us will become successful.

We were put here for a reason. That reason is to help other people. Anything that hinders us on our path to helping other people makes us less in the eyes of our universal Creator. We owe a debt to be all that we can be. If we decide to accept things the way they are, we are not paying that debt. We must work to make our life and the lives around us better. And we can pay that debt first, by not being afraid.

All fear is learned behavior, except falling and loud noises. If you make a good, soul searching list of your fears and you can not specifically remember learning it, the most likely source was you parents or parental figure before you were five years old. You will have to take steps to change your subconscious mind.

Behavior therapists will tell you that if you repeat an activity without interruption for seven days, it will become habit. Earl Nightingale suggests thirty days. The author suggests that all activities, habit or otherwise, are a reaction to a thought. Change your thoughts and habits will also change. Think about things as though you were not afraid and your habits will follow suit. If you continue this level of concentration when doing things, it will become your habit to live without fear.

Do Whatever It Takes.

Turn off the news; put down the paper; read more books on the subject that causes you the most fear.

Now, let us move our efforts to learn more about developing purpose...