

A full-page background image featuring a silhouette of a person jumping over a cliff edge. The scene is set at sunset, with a bright orange and yellow glow on the left side of the frame. The sky transitions from a deep blue at the top to a lighter blue near the horizon. The ocean is visible below the cliff, with gentle waves. Overlaid on the image are several semi-transparent geometric shapes in shades of blue and green, creating a modern, abstract design. The title 'BATTLE YOUR FEARS' is prominently displayed in the upper center, and the author's name 'FAITH WOOD' is at the bottom left.

BATTLE YOUR FEARS

FAITH WOOD

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Introduction

What are you scared of?

Everybody has some fears and worries – as humans, we're programmed to feel fear as a natural response to threats in order to protect and look after ourselves.

But, what happens when your fears begin to take over? Fear can control your life and keep you from following your dreams, prevent you from taking risks, and stop you from living the life that you want and doing the things which you desire.

But...

It doesn't have to be this way! Fear can hold many people back, and one of the biggest mistakes that you might be making right now is taking your fear at face value.

What you need to understand is that fear can be both real or imagined, and it's hard for your body and brain to differentiate between the two. Let's look at two different situations to put this in perspective.

Imagine that there's an angry bull racing towards you, and you're wearing a red t-shirt. This would be real fear. You have every reason to be scared if you're being charged at by a furious horned animal!

Now, imagine that you've just turned the lights off after watching a particularly scary horror movie. You know that you're absolutely safe in your home, but you still can't shift that nauseous feeling in your gut when you think about some of the scenes from the movie. This fear is imagined.

Fear can be a product of two different things – it's either due to reality, or a product of your imagination. In general, real fear will be felt by both you and others around you, and imagined fear will be personal to you alone. Imagined fear is generated by your beliefs and individual perspective of the world, which is why some people have fears which are completely incomprehensible to others.

For example, a person who fell into a lake as a small child may have a fear of water even into adulthood, whilst somebody who's never had a scary experience with water could be a professional swimmer with absolutely no fear of scuba diving in the sea. This is because water in and of itself isn't something to be fearful of, but your personal experience could make it scary for you.

In general, the fears which hold us back are these imagined fears which are personal to each and every one of us. Just because they're imagined, however, doesn't mean that they're not real – they certainly feel very real to the person who is feeling them.

Conquering the fears which are holding you back relies on you getting down to the source. Discovering what causes your fears is key to facing them head on and taking control of your own life and happiness. Figuring out what you need to do to push your fears out of your life and no longer allow them to hold you back will involve putting everything into perspective and sifting out the irrational fears from the rational ones.

Once you know where it is that your fears come from and how to deal with them, you'll become a braver and stronger person. Fear and anxiety can severely hold you back, and taking the steps to gain control over them and no longer allow them to rule your life is a process which will take time, effort and patience – but it will all be worth it in the end.

In this book, you'll learn how to:

Identify the causes of your fears;

Determine which fears are rational and which are not;

Swap your negative thoughts for positive ones;

Challenge yourself to take risks;

Use imagery to alleviate your fears;

Use talking therapy to help you control your emotions, and

Practice daily meditation to reduce stress.

Many fears are a product of your own mind, whether it be going to the dentist, flying in a plane, or public speaking. Some fears are caused by a bad or even traumatic past experience, whilst others can be the product of influence from other people.

However, no matter how your fears were established, conquering them is entirely possible when you use the right steps and strategies.

Before you begin, it's vital to understand that you will need to be patient with yourself. Fear is an extremely strong emotion, and the 'fight or flight' response generated by chemicals and hormones in the body can lead to different physical responses which can make facing and conquering your fears extremely difficult.

When you decide to conquer your fears, you need to be aware of what this entails – at some point, you will need to face them. Although the prospect of this is initially terrifying for many, by the time you are ready it won't seem

quite as bad. This is why it's important to be patient with yourself and resolve to take small steps towards achieving your goal of fearlessness.

Being kind to yourself is crucial when you are learning to conquer your fears, although you'll need to get a healthy balance between self-care and self-motivation. Finding the balance between the two will involve changing your mind-set to include more confidence in yourself and a kinder attitude towards yourself and your feelings. Many of us beat ourselves up for feeling fears that we deem irrational; it's crucial that you stop doing this and instead accept your fears rather than trying to fight them.

Accepting your fears is the crucial first step that you will need to take before trying any of the following strategies. Fighting a mental battle against yourself and your fears can make it significantly more difficult to gain any positive benefits from any of these strategies, which is why learning to be accepting is key. Learning to accept your fears can even create a sense of calm and positivity which you can't gain from fighting them.

Take a deep breath, and tell yourself that you accept all of your fears – even the ones that you think are silly. Repeat this process as many times as you need throughout your journey to fearlessness!

Chapter One: Searching the Source

Determining the source of your fears and anxieties is the first step that you will need to take in order to eventually be able to take control of your fears and manage them efficiently.

Knowing what is causing your fear is crucial to finding the solutions that you need, and at this point it is essential to prepare for some serious self-evaluation as well as the need to be completely honest with yourself.

You should also be aware that you may need to revisit some unhappy memories, therefore it's vital to choose a time when you are feeling calm, relaxed and energised before you begin to explore the reasons for your fear.

Discovering the reasons for your fear can also help to improve your confidence. For many people, not quite knowing why they're scared of something can lead to even more feelings of fear – have you ever been scared of fear itself? This is why it's important to invest time to do some serious soul-searching and delve deep into your memories to discover the sources of your fears, even the worst ones.

Self-Evaluation

In order to discover the source of your fears, it's important to self-evaluate. This process involves asking yourself a number of different questions, such as what your biggest fears are, what triggers feelings of fear and anxiety in you and which memories invoke the most anxious feelings in you.

The process may be difficult and could take some time as you unearth memories that you may not want to remember, therefore it's important to take your time, be kind to yourself and give yourself a lot of self-love.

You may find it helpful to go through this process with a trusted friend, family member, or even a professional therapist.

An easy way to help you to determine the source of your fears is to write them all down on paper. No matter how small or insignificant you may believe your fears to be, jot them all down in front of you, in order of the worst to the least.

Then, write down what you think may be the source of your fears next to them. For example, if you are afraid of driving due to being in an accident, write 'driving – traffic accident'. If you come to a fear and you're not sure why you feel it, don't worry – just concentrate on the ones which you can determine the source of for now.

Possible Sources

When it comes to the source of fear, there can be a range of different reasons. You may feel fear due to something that you have experienced yourself or a traumatic experience which you have been through. If you have been through a frightening experience, it's highly likely that you'll feel fear as a response to a similar situation or in fact anything which reminds you of it.

This is why it's important to jot down the different things which trigger feelings of fear in you, as memories can stick around even from the earliest years of childhood – it's not uncommon for people to still experience fear as a response to something reminding them of a situation that they experienced as a young child.

Learned Fears

Along with things which you have experienced, other people's experiences and fears can also contribute to your own emotions and determine what you are fearful of. You may find yourself fearful of certain things even if you yourself have no reason to be as the result of influence from somebody who you are close with.

Take this as an example. Let's imagine a little girl who is bitten by a dog. Although she is not seriously hurt, the incident is painful and quite traumatic for her, and because of it she develops a fear of dogs which remains with her as she grows up and she remains scared of dogs well into her adult life.

As an adult, she has a child. Still fearful of dogs, she won't let her child play with any dogs and crosses to the other side of the road with her child if she sees a dog walker approaching. Because of this fear, her child learns that dogs are to be feared; subsequently growing up scared of dogs themselves even though they have not personally had a bad experience with any dogs at all.

Think about some of your fears – do you feel them because of a parent or sibling who does? Growing up, was your mom or dad scared of flying, going to the dentist, or did an older sibling display fears of a certain animal because of a bad experience that they had? Some fears can be learned from others, and it is important to distinguish these learned fears from the fears which you have developed due to your own experiences.

Friends and Family

Some people can also develop fears due to something that they have seen a close friend or family member go through. For example, you might see a close friend crash their car and spend a long time recovering from their injuries.

Even though you may not have been directly involved yourself, the trauma of sharing in their experience as a friend and seeing first-hand what they have been through could be enough for you to develop your own fears regarding driving.

It's important to understand that this type of fear is normal – just because something hasn't happened to you directly, understanding how it feels due to being close to someone who has experienced it is likely to invoke feelings of fear and anxiety in many of us.

You might also develop feelings of fear and anxiety for the other person who you are close to – for instance going back to the car crash example, you may feel fear for your friend when they begin to start driving their car again. Again, this is normal and part of having a healthy relationship with somebody who you are close to.

However, it's important to understand that if your fears grow, you could end up holding both yourself and the other person back from living life to its full potential and successfully recovering from the traumatic experience which you saw them have.

Tackling All Your Fears

Because the reasons for and sources of fear can be so diverse, it may take you a while to get down all of your different fears on paper and understand where they are stemming from. It's vital to realise when you are doing this that your fears may not always be for yourself, and sometimes the source of them is not always something that happened to you.

For example, you may be fearful when your child begins to go to school by themselves as you have heard about kidnappings on the news.

Even if some fears aren't taking over your life and are not at the point of holding you or others in your life back, it's a good idea to list them all so that you can decide which fears need working on and which ones you are at a healthy point with.

Knowing which fears you are dealing with in a healthy manner can also help to serve as an example for what you want to achieve with the fears which are causing more problems for you.

When tackling your worst fears, it's helpful to be aware of the things you do when faced with the fears that you manage well so that you can make the effort to consciously implement these strategies.

Chapter Two: Finding Rationality

It's common knowledge that some fears are more rational than others, but we still feel the irrational fears nonetheless. Describing these fears as 'irrational' does not, however, mean to say that the fear is not 'real' or that it's 'wrong' to feel such a fear.

Irrational fears tend to be personal to an individual and can often feel just as bad, if not worse than many fears which would be described as 'rational'.

A big mistake that many people make is thinking that their 'irrational' fears are silly. When you are determining the causes of your fears, it's crucial that you don't overlook any fears which you think are not really a big deal or something that you shouldn't really be scared of.

After all, it's often the irrational fears which hold us back the most. Be kind to yourself, and be assured that no fears should be embarrassing – usually, there's a good reason for why you feel them.

What are Rational Fears?

In general, a fear would be described as 'rational' if you have a good reason to be afraid. If something is going to cause harm to you or others or could even result in death, it's perfectly rational to be afraid of it – think back to the charging bull example which we used in the introduction!

Rational fears are fears of real, possible consequences – fears of genuine danger. For example, a person with a fear of heights – or indeed even a person who isn't scared of heights – would never jump off a high cliff, as such a jump could potentially be highly dangerous.

Some fears have a finer line between the rational and irrational. For example, if you are afraid of spiders this could be both rational or irrational depending on the type of spider. Whilst there are dangerous spiders in the world, for the most part spiders tend to be relatively harmless.

Once you have identified a spider as being harmless, any remaining fear of the particular spider becomes irrational. On the other hand, if a spider is identified as dangerous, it would be perfectly rational to be fearful of it.

Realness of Irrational Fears

When you are determining whether or not your fears are rational or irrational, it's vital that you understand that irrational fears are no less real than their rational counterparts. No matter how irrational a fear may be, it still has the capacity to affect us in a physical way, causing shaking, nausea, sweating or shivering.

A big mistake that many people make is thinking that their irrational fears are 'bad' fears. Believing that irrational fears are ones which you should feel embarrassed to have is one of the biggest obstacles which could get in the way of your conquering your fears and overcoming them.

Because in order to truly overcome your irrational fears you will need to learn to accept them, feeling embarrassed of them will do nothing but hold you back. Instead, it's crucial that you understand that there is nothing wrong with irrational fears; no matter how silly they may seem to you they are both normal and perfectly acceptable.

Understanding where your irrational fears come from is crucial to accepting them and learning not to be embarrassed or feel silly because of them.

For example, somebody who has been bitten by a spider and fallen ill as a result is well within their rights to develop a fear of spiders, even if it becomes irrational.

Shyness

Shyness is something which very often crosses the line of both the irrational and rational when it comes to fear. For example, a bullied schoolchild or employee may feel perfectly rational fear when speaking to a classmate or co-worker – the fear that they feel is backed up by their past experiences which prove that it almost always doesn't end well.

However, what may well be rational arguments when approaching some people may become irrational with others.

Take for instance a child who is bullied at school – fear of speaking to the perpetrators may be completely rational, however it will become irrational when the child begins to feel fearful of speaking to almost anybody, including people who have always treated them kindly.

Irrational fears very often start off as perfectly rational fears which eventually grow out of proportion and become irrational in many different situations. This is important to understand when you are determining which of your fears are rational and which are not.

For example, if you were teased as a child at school, your fears to speak to classmates then was both justified and rational. However, still experiencing this fear as an adult when speaking to co-workers or others who have never teased or made fun of you means that your fear has crossed the line over into the irrational.

Understanding that irrational fears often have a rational source is vital when you're trying to develop a better knowledge of your fears in order to accept and conquer them.

Example – Public Speaking

The fact that many people fear public speaking more than they fear death is just one of the biggest examples of irrational fear. Experiencing physical responses such as uncontrollable shaking before speaking in public is the type of reaction which one would expect from a truly terrifying situation – for example, a parachute jump – and is clearly not a response which is either rational or helpful.

But, many people who do fear public speaking cannot help the way in which their body responds to the level of fear and anxiety which they feel.

Some fears and anxieties regarding public speaking are perfectly rational to feel. In short, fears of public speaking all tend to amount to one big issue – the idea that speaking in front of a person or group of people has the potential to seriously embarrass you and could even have an effect on your success or even your career.

If the people which you are speaking to hold an influential part in your life, the chance that you could perform in such a way that could cause these people to want to influence your life in a negative manner is a rational reason to be anxious.

However, this crosses the line when your anxiety begins to take control of you. Ironically, becoming too fearful of public speaking could end up becoming a self-fulfilling prophecy and your fear could be the one major factor which causes you to perform badly and results in the one thing which you were afraid of – embarrassment.

Tackling Irrational Fears

When you begin to tackle your irrational fears, it's vital to build up your confidence with baby steps. Looking back to the public speaking example, if you're terrified of speaking in public it is probably not going to be of much use to you if you force yourself to make a speech or presentation in front of hundreds of people.

However, practicing in safe environments that have no consequences no matter how you perform can help you to build up your confidence and eradicate your fears. For example, speaking in front of supportive friends or family members can help you to realise that public speaking isn't all that bad and provide you with the confidence that you need to speak in front of more important audiences.

Self-confidence is often the key to conquering fears such as the fear of public speaking, which is why it's important to determine which fears stem from a lack of confidence in yourself. Then, work on your self-confidence – improving it will help you greatly when it comes to conquering this type of fear.

Chapter Three: The Power of Positive Thinking

Fear is one of the biggest contributors to thinking negatively in life. Fear can cause us to always see the bad side of situations and constantly expect the worse, resulting in our living a less fulfilled life than we hoped for and even holding us back from achieving our dreams.

Fear can stop us doing plenty of different things that we'd love to do – for example, maybe you have always wanted to visit Europe, but your fear of flying gets in the way each time you try to get on the plane. The negative thoughts regarding air travel are stronger than the positive ones about touring Europe, eventually taking control and limiting you to what you can do with your life.

Switching your negative thoughts for positive ones is a process which may take a lot of time. Some people are naturally more optimistic than others; but even the most optimistic people on earth can still find themselves thinking in an extremely negative manner when it comes to their fears and anxieties.

Overcoming negative thinking is a vital step to overcoming your fears, as learning the strategies and methods which are vital to replacing negative thoughts with positive ones can help you gain control of your fears and anxieties when they start to creep up on you.

Practicing Gratitude

Saying 'thank you' is one of the simplest and easiest things which we can do, often resulting in people saying it mindlessly without taking a minute to step back and practice real gratitude. Practicing gratitude daily can help

you to create a more positive mind-set and completely transform your attitude towards life.

In and of itself, practicing gratitude won't suddenly transform you into a fearless person. But, it can have a significant indirect effect on your fears by giving you the means to become more positive and think more optimistically about a range of different situations. When you practice gratitude you become a happier person, and naturally the positive thoughts and mind-set will follow.

Practicing gratitude helps us to see situations in a more optimistic manner, lessens panic and also invokes feelings of empathy whilst lessening feelings of regret, envy, jealousy and even fear. Practicing gratitude enables you to see situations that once may have been scary for you in a more positive light, minimising the negative thoughts and anxiety which you feel.

How to Practice Gratitude

When you begin to work on practicing gratitude, it's important that you do it for the right reasons. Forcing yourself to feel grateful for things simply because you hope that it will diminish your fear will have no real effect, and the majority of the time you'll be faking it – which won't have any effect on your fears at all, unfortunately.

Instead, learn to practice gratitude in order to become truly thankful for what you have. Put aside thoughts of your fears, and see becoming a more grateful person as something completely separate from your goal of conquering your fears.

In time, your newly positive mind-set will naturally contribute towards helping you view your fears in a more optimistic light, subsequently enabling you to be in a better position to overcome them.

At the beginning, practicing gratitude will for many people mean that a conscious effort has to be made. If you have fallen foul of negative thought patterns and chronic pessimism, it's going to be difficult for you to begin to change these habits and start to be more thankful for what you have and think positively about the future.

Begin by making small changes and using strategies such as taking five minutes out of your day to write down everything that you're thankful for right now. Even if you're having a particularly bad day, you'd be surprised at all the things which you can still be thankful for.

Some days you may only feel thankful that you've got your health or a roof over your head – but these are things that many people don't have. Practicing gratitude helps you to learn not to take things for granted. In turn, you'll begin to see everything more positively – even the worst of your fears.

Changing the Tone of Your Thoughts

Changing your mind-set to one which is more positive is absolutely crucial to conquering your fears. If you think negatively most of the time, feeling fearful will naturally become more intensified with negative thoughts and emotions such as 'I can't do this', or 'if I do this, something bad will happen'.

Learning how to change the tone of your thoughts is all down to knowing how to recognise negative thoughts and replace them with positive ones. As with practicing gratitude, this will also take a conscious effort on your part. For example, you could write a 'thought swap list' which could read something like this:

‘I can’t do this’ – swap for: ‘I will try my best to do this’;

‘Why is this happening?’ – swap for: ‘This is happening for a reason, and I’ll find that reason’;

‘I’m a failure’ – swap for: ‘I’m not ready to give up trying’;

‘I’m going to have a hard time adjusting to this’ – swap for: ‘I’m ready to tackle the challenges I’m about to face!’.

In your list, include all the negative thoughts which you frequently find pop-ping into your mind, and come up with a more positive alternative. Each time you start to think negatively, you’ll know exactly what you should be focusing on thinking instead. It’ll take time to get used to but eventually, you’ll begin to view things more positively as a force of habit.

Chapter Four: Therapies

When you're trying to conquer your fears, there is no reason why you should be going it alone. Fear is a very difficult thing to overcome, and achieving your goal of fearlessness is significantly harder if the fears which are holding you back stem from traumatic experiences in your life.

This is why you should never say no to accepting help when you're trying to overcome your fear. Help doesn't always mean speaking to your doctor or a psychologist – you can find a lot of help and support from friends and family members who are willing to do what it takes to assist you in conquer-ing your fears and gaining control over your anxiety.

Talking Therapy

Talking therapy is one of the best remedies for many different emotional and mental issues, with fear being one of them. For a large number of people, getting the things which scare and worry them off their chest and out in the open provides a lot of relief and can help to alleviate the burden significantly.

Talking to a therapist or other trained professional about your fears provides you with a safe, non-judgemental environment in which you can be open and honest about your worst fears and the ways in which they affect you. Opening up in this way will then provide you with answers as to why you may feel this way along with the opportunity to learn more coping methods or strategies which are tailored to you as an individual.

Talking to friends and family members is also another great way to get help and support on your journey to fearlessness. However, if you're planning on speaking to family or friends, it's vital to make sure that you choose the right people to confide in.

Steer clear of anyone who is likely to mock your fears – choose friends or family members who have an understanding attitude and an open mind, who you can trust to give you the support you need and have your back. Speaking to friends and family about your fears can help to bring you closer, as chances are that the people you speak to will also have fears that they too want to overcome.

This can help you to create a ‘buddy system’, where you support each other and take on new challenges together. Having somebody by your side can immediately make facing scary situations a lot easier.

Using Imagery

Another type of therapy which you can use to help you conquer your fears is image therapy. There are many different uses for image therapy, and it has helped many people to conquer conditions such as body dysmorphia, conquer phobias, and enabled people to achieve some of their main goals in life.

Using imagery as a key to help you overcome your fears can be as simple as imagining images in your mind. Picture how you’d like to be, facing a situation which you are fearful of without succumbing to your fears. For example, if you’re scared of dogs, picture yourself petting a cute and cuddly puppy.

The more you do this, the more appealing the idea may become. Looking at cute, happy pictures of dogs – there are loads online! – might also help you to overcome this fear. Of course pictures aren’t the real thing, but the more you expose yourself to them, the better chance you will have of realising that the subject of your fears isn’t actually all that scary.

Images for Motivation

Using images can also help to motivate you to conquer your fears. Let's say, for example, that you are terrified of flying. This could be because of a bad experience that you've had in the past on a plane with bad turbulence, or maybe it's because of your fear of heights. But, you'd love to vacation in Thailand. So, what do you do?

The first step to conquering your fear of flying is to begin thinking more positively about it, using the techniques mentioned in the previous chapter. Then, you can start to use image therapy to gain the motivation that you need to conquer your fear of air travel and achieve your dream of taking a vacation in Thailand.

Look at pictures of the destination that you dream of visiting, and imagine yourself there. It feels good, doesn't it? Go one step further – print out your favorite photograph, and stick it to your refrigerator door so that you can see it every morning when you go for breakfast.

As you begin to build the motivation to conquer your fears, the desire to achieve your dream will become bigger than the fears holding you back. This process will work for any destination – not just Thailand!

Whatever it is that you are feeling afraid of, for the most part you'll be able to find images that are able to contribute to your overcoming it. For example, if you're scared of heights, you can find images of people standing on cliffs or high-up balconies – nothing bad is happening to them, and they'll most likely look quite happy in the photograph! It's also vital to remember that the mental image which you create in your own mind is crucial to your success.

When you create a mental image of yourself overcoming your fears or achieving your goals as a result of conquering your fears, you should always create the image in a positive light.

If you start to create negative images, use the techniques for swapping your negative thoughts for positive ones covered in the previous chapter. At times, you might also need to take a break and start again when you have a better mind-set – this is perfectly OK, and you should be proud of yourself for realising when you have to do this.

Chapter Five: Challenge Yourself

Everyday

Once you have begun to accept your fears, discovered their sources and started practicing different strategies and techniques to help yourself think more positively on the journey to being fearless, you'll also need to begin to challenge yourself.

Challenging yourself doesn't mean that you'll need to immediately walk straight into a situation that is terrifying for you – in fact, quite the opposite. Learning to effectively challenge yourself to do something should begin with challenges that you're not afraid of taking on, and slowly work yourself up to a level where you are comfortable challenging yourself to face your fears.

The Meditation Challenge

First of all, you should challenge yourself to take steps to improve your life and well-being as a whole.

Challenging yourself to take part in activities which will reduce stress and encourage positivity is a great start, as there's nothing to be fearful of and doing so will actually help you to be in the best position to eventually conquer your fears.

The first challenge that you should be facing is 'The Meditation Challenge'. Daily meditation is far from scary, in fact it is highly effective in helping to reduce stress, alleviate fear, and make you feel happier and healthier overall.

When you meditate, you learn to become more connected to everything around you, and in turn you'll be less fearful of the things that you face in your everyday life.

This challenge is an awesome one to start with, as you'll be able to prove to yourself that you can do whatever you set your mind to. The positive benefits which you will experience when you practice daily meditation will definitely make the challenge worthwhile, leaving you wondering what you're missing out on by not challenging yourself to do other things as well.

Working Up to Bigger Challenges

Once you have challenged yourself to practice daily meditation and have seen the benefits, you'll most likely be wondering what else you can challenge yourself to do that will also improve your life.

New challenges should be entirely up to you – but remember to work yourself up to the risky challenges gradually, and begin by challenging yourself to do things that you're not terrified of.

Challenging yourself to conquer the smaller anxieties or fears that don't necessarily render you shivering and quaking is a great idea. For example, if you're planning to get fit but are anxious about visiting the gym (but not to a point where it is taking over your life), challenge yourself to take a class, or even have a one to one with a personal trainer.

Gradually, challenge yourself to do more and more until you are confidently working out regularly. This can work for any situations or activities which trigger a little anxiety or worry.

Tackling your smaller, not-so-significant fears first enables you to lay the foundations and build up the confidence that you need to take on and conquer your bigger fears which hold you back.

Challenging Yourself to Take Risks

You should only challenge yourself to take risks by entering into situations that you would normally find trigger fear when you feel fully prepared. Throwing yourself into a fearful situation head-first when you're not ready could have serious repercussions.

Before you start to think about tackling the bigger challenges, you'll need to ensure that you have taken all the necessary steps to fully prepare your-self. By now, you should have determined the source of your fear, accepted your fears, and trained your mind to switch negative thoughts for positive ones.

You should also have participated in the relevant therapies such as talking therapy, image therapy, and meditation to give you the motivation and calm that you need to tackle the biggest challenges of all – facing your fears.

If you are sure that you are ready, you can begin by setting yourself small challenges to help ease yourself into tackling your fears. You should always remember that if you begin to feel overwhelmed or the fear takes over, the best thing to do is to remove yourself from the situation and take a deep breath.

Doing this doesn't mean that you've failed – in fact, it's the complete oppo-site – by removing yourself from the situation, you've regained control over your emotions and given yourself the time that you need to get your com-posure back.

Once you feel ready to try a second time, you can take the risk again. This type of method will ensure that the physical symptoms of fear don't begin to get to you. If you start to feel any physical symptoms such as nausea, shaking or sweating then get out of there, and try again later.

Examples

Everybody has different fears, so there's no one-size-fits-all example of how to challenge yourself to face your fears. But let's look at some examples of how to face common fears that you may or may not experience.

If you're scared of flying, for instance, don't challenge yourself by booking a long-haul flight half way across the world. Instead, book a short, national flight to another city in your country – an area which you can return home from by another method of transportation if you don't feel ready to go up in the air again.

As you begin to feel more confident, you can increase the lengths of the flights you book until you're ready to take the long-haul flight to the destination that you've always dreamed of visiting.

Here's another example – you're scared of dogs. So, don't force yourself to go and pet an extremely angry-looking guard dog who's growling at you. Cuddle a cute, harmless puppy instead! As your fears begin to alleviate, you can challenge yourself to approach bigger dogs – with the owner's permission of course.

Last example – if you're afraid of water, don't challenge yourself to dive straight into the deep end of the pool. Chances are that you'll just begin to panic, and you'll go straight back to square one.

Instead, take baby steps. Take up swimming lessons with a qualified instructor who will look after you, and stick to shallow water where you're not in any danger. Each time you visit, challenge yourself to swim out a little further. If you have to wear armbands for support, then wear them and rock them! Remember to embrace whatever it takes to help you face your fears.

By the time you have worked on your mind-set to transform it in to the best ever for fear-conquering, you'll be feeling a lot more confident in yourself to tackle your fears head-on and stop them from taking over your life for once and for all.

But, the trick is not to get overly confident – taking on too big a challenge at the wrong time could do nothing but set you back. The best way to approach facing your fears and challenging yourself to take risks is to do it one step at a time.

Conclusion

Now you have all the information that you need to help you on your way to becoming fearless and unstoppable.

The first thing that you'll need to do once you put down this book is come up with a plan of action. Your plan of action should include everything that you've learned so far, along with anything personal to yourself which you think will help you achieve your goals of fearlessness and confidence.

Think of your plan of action as a step-by-step guide to help you in your daily life.

You could even set it up as a daily timetable to stick to in order to make sure that you're doing everything that you can. For example, it could go something like this:

Morning: Meditate for fifteen minutes, write list of things which you're thank-ful for today, and look at pictures that help you.

Afternoon: Talk to a close friend about your plans and your progress, and write another list of everything that you're thankful for today. Make sure to show gratitude to at least one person!

Evening: Challenge yourself to do something you've never done before, even if it's something really small. Search for survivor blogs online to read stories of how other people have overcome their worst fears as a way of motivating yourself. Before bed, write another list of everything that you're thankful for.

This is just an example – the one which you lay out for yourself might be completely different. The most important thing is that your plan of action

is something which you can follow daily and which includes activities which will help you develop a more positive, confident mind-set.

The truth is, fears are a very personal thing – and conquering your fears will be something that is extremely personal to you.

This is why you shouldn't worry if some of the tips from this book don't work too well for you – everybody is different and what might be working amaz-ingly for one person could be useless for another.

For that reason, don't get stressed out or worried if you feel that you have to change your plan of action somewhere along the line. Discovering what works well for you and putting it into action is crucial to conquering your fears and will help you to get the best results.

But, this doesn't mean that you shouldn't at least give everything a try – you never know what might actually work unless you've tried it!

Conquering your worst fears is absolutely possible with the right strategies, mind-set and help. You've got this!

Need more support? Reach out to Faith Wood or visit her website: www.imind.ca

