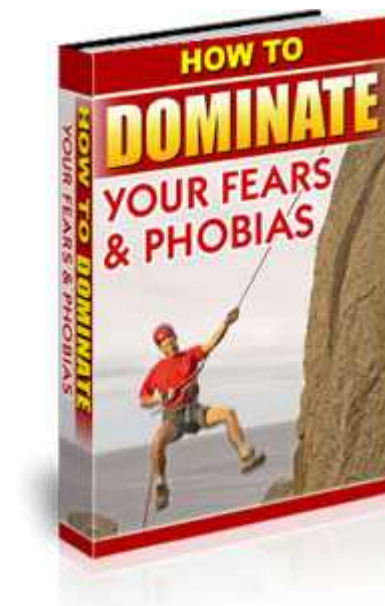


# How to Dominate Your Fears and Phobias



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# Introduction

Have you ever encountered a similar experience such as the one below?

You and your family went out for an excursion. Everybody was excited to plunge into the cool water except you. You peeked into the pool and then backed out. The mere sight of it gave you the creeps. After a short while, you heard an explosion. You felt light-headed and your heartbeat started to go crazy. The loud sound sent the chills up to your spine. You felt the urge to run but you couldn't — your difficult breathing was in the way.

What can we do about our fears? Can we stop them? Is there a way to use them to our advantage?

This book aims to help you dominate your fears and phobias. It's time to be in control of them and use them to your advantage, and not the other way around. It's time these negative reactions stop possessing you.

Some books claim to eliminate all your fears, even your worst fears. But there are some types of fears that you must keep. Not all fears are harmful. Some can even save your life.

Deep and stubborn fears cannot be eliminated by simple techniques. You must know how to weaken them before you can dispose of them permanently.

Often times, there are no easy solutions to such problems. This book teaches you effective techniques to control and even befriend your fears. You can treat them as temporary friends rather than permanent enemies and tormentors. Turn them into allies rather than captors. Then, when you have mastered the ability to conquer them, you can easily kiss them good-bye.

Radical solutions to embedded problems require radical attitudes and mindsets, which in turn require radical changes. Thus, you must be willing to change radically before you can start using your fears and phobias to work for you, while eventually getting rid of them. Carefully follow the mental and emotional exercises in this book for effective results.

# Chapter 1

## Fears and Phobias

When you think that some things, people, or places can produce undesirable consequences when you are near them, that's the result of *fear*. When you think some things, people, or places can do things that can result to major harm, pain, or even death to you when you are near them, that's the effect of *phobia*. Fear can produce an overly self-protective and cautious individual, while extreme phobia can entail feelings of death.

Phobia has an element of fear. Fear per se is not phobia, but it can lead to phobia if it worsens. Unchecked fear, when fed with more imagined dangers, may soon turn into phobia. Most phobias are extreme fears.

Some phobias can haunt us as long as we allow them. Their power over us is entirely dependent on our capacity to handle them. We can give them the power to dictate what is dangerous for us, or we can dominate them to our advantage.

### ***The Role of Fear***

Fear is really designed to warn you. It is your biological security alarm to keep you from treading unknown territory unprepared. If you re-discover the true role of fear in your life, you would find it a real friend in times of danger.

Fear is not meant to forbid you. It means to warn you for early preparation. Fear tells you to think twice before you launch into an adventure. It gives you

time or another chance to prepare so that you can be better equipped the next time around. This is the correct perspective on fear.

For instance, the Bible is replete with warnings for the Jews to fear God. This was not to stop them from going to God. The fear was to make them extra careful about approaching a holy God.

Children are also trained to fear their parents, especially the father in a patriarchal setting. This is not to stop them from approaching their parents, but to keep the kids disciplined, in order to please the parents.

A trained dog fears his master so much, and yet it fondly approaches him with excitement. The master is delighted by a trained dog's correct behavior.

## ***Types of Fears***

All types of fears have the element of a stern warning: the “think twice” principle. Healthy fear makes you carefully prepared for a try, but alarming and debilitating fears make you stay out of it all. In the sense of making you prepare carefully, healthy fear is an optimistic feeling, while alarming and debilitating fears are pessimistic. Healthy fear instills wisdom and respect, while alarming and debilitating fears result to tyranny.

### **1) Healthy Fear**

You fear someone you highly respect. In this sense, fear is a byproduct of wisdom and high esteem. You don't fear the person because you are afraid of him. You fear him because he excites admiration and reverence. You fear the

president of your country, for instance, because he is a figure of power and authority. You dare not offend the president, yet you like to meet him personally. You appear your best when he is around, carefully shake his hand, and make sure that you say only nice things. Then you tell everybody the honor of being able to meet the president personally. This fear has a way of bringing out the best in you. Fear, in this sense, is actually *awe* or *wonder*.

In the same sense, a young man who has romantic feelings for a young woman may have some kind of fear whenever he approaches her, more so when he faces her parents. But this fear doesn't stop him from pursuing his good intentions for her. Likewise, an employee, even without having committed an offense, may fear his boss. Yet, he keeps reporting for work everyday. Job applicants also experience the same with their interviewer. Just the same, they go ahead with the interview. School children often fear their teachers and principals (oftentimes even more than their parents), but these students enjoy school. It is said that children treat school as a second home, and teachers as their second parents. Healthy fear births respect and propriety in relationships.

Nevertheless, once healthy fear is consistently fed with wrong information, it may lead to alarming fear. For healthy fear to remain healthy, there must be healthy contact with the object of fear.

## 2) Alarming Fear

Alarming fear occurs when you sense some threat or danger in a place, person, or thing. The idea is not to stop you, but to make you very careful in your

undertakings. The idea is to dissuade you from pursuing a wrong direction. It makes you ask yourself, "Am I going to proceed or abort?"

If it is for a good cause (like self-preservation), and you proceed, you do it with utmost caution. If you abort, you delay your plans for a more opportune time. You do not give up. You wait for a more favorable time and condition.

If some misunderstandings or petty quarrels stand between two sweethearts, alarming fear starts to set in. This fear is not to keep them away, but to check their ways and attitudes toward each other. If a pupil fails to do his homework, his teacher will employ disciplinary measures. If he gets low grades, his parents may issue some warnings accordingly. The pupil may begin to feel alarming fear and try to do better next time.

Alarming fear is not admiration or reverence. It is being aware that something is wrong. In another sense, it is recognizing that some kind of danger is lurking somewhere, and you have to be ready (like when you hear something go bump in the middle of the night). When you feel alarming fear, you prepare for the worst decidedly. You don't freeze, but you become more alert. You may decide to detour to delay confronting the danger now. Then you think of measures to improve yourself in case the danger surfaces again. You don't let the danger confine you to a prison or limitation. You keep yourself in control. You are not afraid; you just want to be safe and secure.

When alarming fear is not dealt with, this fear may grow within you, and may soon overwhelm you.

When alarming fear seems to surround you, you must prepare yourself to overcome it. Try to talk yourself into facing the fear once it recurs. The moment you give in to fear and it becomes a habit, the tendency for cowardice begins to settle in. You lose the urge to overcome your fear. Instead, you simply accept the fear as your way of life. The fear then limits your freedom, and soon dictates what you can and cannot do. When fear dictates on you and makes you helpless, it becomes too alarming. Fear that gets too alarming tends to change your character negatively. It must be seriously dealt with.

### 3) Debilitating Fear

Abused children who run away from abusive parents or teachers can indicate a sign of being afraid. A frustrated suitor may never want to have anything to do again with the girl who rejected his love because he is afraid of being humiliated. An employee who is guilty of an offense may just suddenly not report for work because he is afraid.

Debilitating fear is synonymous to being afraid. In simple words, it turns you into a coward. It makes you want to suddenly disappear from the situation at hand. Debilitating fear makes you give up in fighting the thing you're afraid of. The thing, place, or person you are afraid of has become a tyrant punisher that you want to stay away from or easily give in to. You have become a prisoner of the danger.

When fear takes out the joy in you, it's debilitating. You tend to be withdrawn, or you lose interest in whatever incites the fear. You avoid the subject

matter, or show repulsive reaction when the thing, person, or place is brought out.

Debilitating fear must be dealt with soonest. When ignored or encouraged, it can lead to phobia. A child who has experienced burning his tongue with hot milk in his feeding bottle may become too alarmed by it. The mere sight of the feeding bottle with milk may give him chills in his bones. His health could be greatly affected by this, especially when he becomes hysterical each time he sees feeding bottles. Many children have phobia or irrational horror about injections. By just seeing women in white coat or overalls, they have tantrums. They think every woman in white dress is an injection-wielding nurse.

Taking remedies for debilitating fear at its initial stage is vital. The remedies for fears and phobias are discussed later.

### ***The No-Fear Guys***

There are people who seem to be fearless — or at least they claim to be so. Some believe them, but others do not. There are people who claim that bravado is not the absence, but the conquest, of fear. This means fear is still intact; but brave people are able to conquer their fear masterfully.

Some experts say only dead people do not fear. They assert that as long as you're alive, your emotions (including fear) function. You can either rule over emotions, or let them rule over you.

Some people are genuinely brave. They won't react negatively even at the point of death. They have mastered how to expertly manage their fears. They

claim that they have no fear of the most terrifying things; but actually, they may have encountered similar experiences before, and they have just learned to tame them.

There are also people who claim to be fearless, but they cowardly hide behind their claim of fearlessness. This may be a sign of inferiority complex. It is their way of getting attention. They terribly fear not being recognized as a toughie, or not being respected as such.

## ***About Phobia***

Phobia is considered a mental disorder. Experts say it is an *anxiety disorder*. It is ranked along with obsessive-compulsive disorders, general anxiety, and post-traumatic stress disorders. Anxiety disorder occurs when the joys of life are taken away from you by real or imagined fears. People suffering from this ailment are often unable to cope in healthy ways with life's changes, traumatic experiences, and losses.

Phobia is present when you bother with extreme measures to avoid a fear and you react in ways that limit normal functioning. Some experts say phobia is often related to a past event in your life that really upset you. You have created a ghost out of an undesirable experience and you let it haunt you. Although it may no longer pose any threat, the overwhelming fear remains so real that it rules your life. In short, you fear something like crazy, and it drives you mad!

## ***Related Mental Disorders***

A better understanding of phobia entails knowing other mental disorders related to it. They are identical in some ways, and similar remedies are applicable for their control.

### **1) Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder (OCD)**

When a thing becomes an obsession and is a result of compulsion (urgent, repeated behaviors), you have a serious problem. When you wash your hands 30 to 50 times a day for fear of getting germs through your hands, chances are, you have OCD. When you watch out for cracks on the ground or pavement each time you walk for fear of being swallowed up by the earth, you probably have OCD.

### **2) General Anxiety Disorder (GAD)**

When you are always afraid and restless for no apparent reason, and you are always at the verge of panic, you probably have a case of GAD. Some people, especially women, have this feeling and attribute it to their intuition. Many experts are of this opinion. However, if the anxiety is near panic accompanied by slight body tremors, it may be GAD.

### **3) Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)**

When past tragic fears recur in your dreams, imaginations, and guilt, and cause anxiety that lasts for months and even years, it might be a PTSD. The

tragedy may be brought about by war, rape, natural and unnatural calamities (flood, tornado, or accidents) that have embedded themselves in the subconscious being of the victim.

#### 4) Somatoform Disorders (SD)

If you complain of an ailment or disease that may just be a result of your imagination, you may have SD. You think you really feel the symptoms of the ailment; but when the doctors test you, the results are negative. When you are afflicted with SD, you feel frustrated with having to suffer some ailment; when in fact, you don't have any sickness. You may even get irritated when people find nothing wrong with you.

These disorders may accompany a phobia. When you see these symptoms, consult a professional counselor. Better yet, visit a psychiatrist. Professional help, along with techniques in this book, can help you counteract such disorders. You can choose to master your fears and phobias and make them bow to you, instead of you bowing to them.

## Chapter 2

# All In The Mind

Remember that fears and phobias are all products of the mind. Fear is a feeling, but your mind is the one that tells your feelings to fear something or someone.

An amuck is said to have lost his mind, which is why he has no fear of killing and being killed. Hence, in remedying your fears and phobias, you also have to “lose your mind” a bit. When you have less thoughts or imagination to play with, fears would be kept to a minimum — just enough to make you take precautions as you proceed.

The solution this book offers is not only to overcome these problems — though overcoming remedies are mentioned here now and then. The proposal is to use these reactions to your advantage and make them “user-friendly.”

Fears are parts of life. You cannot run away from your fears forever. You cannot overcome them permanently. Once you overcome them, you will have to overcome them again — and even in greater measures the next time around.

When you have grown to master your fears, they do not really disappear — they just become weakened by your powerful will and subjected to your able and expert management. Remember, you need healthy fear.

Once you become an expert at anything, it feels as if you do not need to exert any effort in doing it. When your fears have been tamed like trained dogs, they begin to be like friends. Dogs you did not train and tame will prove to be fierce enemies.

With phobias, you can do the same. A phobia is treated by repeated exposure to the stimulus (or the cause) of fear until you overcome it. See? The treatment process is really mind stimulation. It is all in the mind. By making phobias bow to you, you can even speed up the treatment. Learn to use your phobias to your advantage.

Understand that emotions and reactions (including fears and phobias) are all matters of the mind. These are often mere warnings of pain or trouble blown out of proportions. Then, they are transformed into monsters by your imagination. Imaginations can play very nasty tricks on you if you are not careful.

You must also realize that mobilizing your fears and phobias to positive use is not just about being brave. The power to rule over your fears and phobias entails a *wise determination* to surmount them, above anything else.

## ***Perception***

Fears and phobias begin with perception. Once a stimulus has a powerful first impression on you and it is retained in your mind, you begin to have an awareness of it. Then it is reinforced by further impressions so that you now have a perception. At times, a single but very potent impression produces an outright perception.

A waterfall is an awesome creation. You can be fascinated or frightened by it, depending on how you perceive it. If you see it as a scenic spot, you associate it with fun, adventure, and beauty. If you see it as a dangerous setting, you associate it with accidents, drowning, and tragedy. Yet, in reality, it is nothing

but the action of freely falling water on rocks and the river below. It cannot mean harm on anyone because it cannot think and make such plans. It is an innocent flow of nature. Its being dangerous or fun really depends on people's perception of it.

Perceptions can change. A sea resort can be seen as excellent for swimming, surfing, and diving. Its shores are great for sun bathing. But if an earthquake strikes, killer tidal waves rise up, or a lost shark has attacked a swimmer in that resort, people might begin to see that resort differently.

A schoolteacher can be so liked by students because of his intelligence, gentleness, kindness, looks, and athletic skills. Yet, if he does one slight but serious offense (ex: he was accused of making advances to a student), people might suddenly perceive him as a monster. Though he remains to be intelligent, kind, gentle, handsome, and athletic, the perception will change from a hero to a villain.

This is also true the other way around. Bad impression can suddenly turn to a good one by a change in perception. The same intimidating person who wears scars on his face and tattoos on his arms can become so popular and loved by all if he turns out to be a hero.

Thus, knowing fears and phobias — and all other reactions — depend on perceptions. We can easily work things out for our good by merely changing and *re-labeling* our perception of things, people, and places.

## ***Labeling and Tagging***

Our minds put labels or tags on things, places, and people as we experience them. This is our perception of them. This labeling is how we recognize “brand names” or value, and tagging is how we “price” (tag price) their worth. As commodities can change labels and tag prices, so can our perception change in the way it perceives things - it is just a matter of training and programming the mind to a particular mindset. Most fears have labels and tag prices that we cannot afford. Well, let’s change their brand names and we can see that they are nothing but things you can choose to wear or take off.

Now, how about putting your imagination to useful and positive work? Let’s identify some key players in a fear scenario.

### ***PLAYERS IN A FEAR SCENARIO***

#### **1) Fearful or Timid People**

What makes people fearful or cowardly?

Outwardly, cowards are those who readily give up without a fight. They surrender even before the battle begins. Inwardly, they are those who let their negative emotions rule. Their minds seldom work effectively. If they do work, it is in submission to their emotions.

Cowards are those who fight a little and then give up altogether. The fighting is a mere show of bravado, especially if they see they could bluff their way to victory. But if some negative signs start to show up, they get discouraged all at once and quit.

When something scary appears, the coward mind tells the emotions that the thing is indeed scary. The mind has been subjected to such negative thinking due to its repetitive failures in the past and subsequent victories of the emotions over it. The emotions then tell the mind to manufacture scary possibilities that can happen if further exposure to the danger or trouble is maintained.

## 2) Brave People

Brave people are those who are known to face up to any challenge, win or lose. Inwardly, they have their minds calling the shots and their emotions merely following suit. They feel slight fear, but their emotions shape up under pressure by their dogged minds. The emotions finally support their mind principles and their willpower operate in favor of their boldness.

Thus, brave individuals face any danger against all odds. Even in difficult situations, they still hang on fighting.

However, they may be emotional inwardly while keeping a bold front. They may also put up a fight no matter the consequence, not because their minds are above their emotions, but because they keep their pride from getting hurt. If brave people fight all-out just to keep their egos intact, it is no longer out of mental determination, but of self-interest.

## 3) Wise People

On the other hand, wise people are those who use their courage with utmost wisdom. They do not show boldness for the sake of showing it — or

worse, to boost their egos. They use it to their advantage. They have enough presence of mind to summon courage and apply it according to sound judgment. They do not scurry away from trouble; neither do they plunge headlong into the unknown. They don't deny their fears, and they may even have some phobias, but they put their fears to good use and make sure they are tamed.

## **Characteristics of the Wise**

Check yourself if you can be considered wise, or if you somewhat fall short of it. Then adjust accordingly. Being wise does not mean being knowledgeable. A person may be educated, and yet lack wisdom. If you can turn the tables on your fears and phobias and use them instead to your advantage, then you are wise. If not, then endeavor to acquire the traits of "wise" individuals. Here are the different characteristics of "wise" people:

### **1) Truth Seeking**

They are primarily after the TRUTH, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth. They will find the underlying cause of everything to discover the truth, no matter what. Once the truth is at hand, they lose no time in applying it to their lives. They don't just want the truth, but they assume it (and only it) in everyday life. For example, if all their lives they thought that sharp things would one day kill them, they would do some studies about sharp things. Once they find that sharp things have no self-will to do as they please (they cannot plan to kill anybody), they would drop the fear of sharp things and be free.

## 2) Levelheaded

They are composed in all situations. Other words to describe them are cool, self-possessed, calm, and collected. They never react immediately and can seldom be seen angry. They are even-tempered. In any circumstances, they always tell themselves, “Keep calm. This is nothing you can’t handle.”

## 3) Discerning

They always weigh situations and often get balanced conclusions. They are able to see the pros and cons, and decide on the spot what is best for everybody, not just for themselves. In tight situations, they can easily figure a way out to safety, with their dignity intact. If they are terrified of being alone out in streets for fear of being mobbed, they will plan their travel and choose to take peopled routes and places. They have discernment enough to know that busy places are better than deserted alleys and parks, especially at night.

## 4) Broad-minded

Their sharp discernment depends on their open-mindedness. They have trained themselves to examine everything before making conclusions. They don’t entertain biases. For instance, they may have a “bias” (revulsion) against dead bodies. They may not stand to identify a dead body in a morgue. But if they have no choice but to look at the body, they may take a peep at the cadaver, see that it’s not moving, and tell themselves that looking at dead bodies won’t hurt.

Besides, it's not going to take forever identifying it. Fears tend to narrow down what the mind can accept.

## 5) Decisive

After weighing things, they take positive action. They may feel the tendency to freeze amid trouble, but they manage to shake themselves from the stupor and swing into action.

Some people freeze out of fear. They need to run, but find their stiff legs unresponsive. Some are able to run pronto, but it is more out of panic than out of a wise decision.

Wise people have sharp awareness levels maintained throughout urgent situations. When they run, they are sure to take the right direction. If they confront a difficult boss, they manage to act properly and say the right soothing words. They are not taken by surprise.

## 6) Focused

Wise people have the presence of mind. They have the ability to stay concentrated on what is happening, where they, what they are doing, and what their present roles are.

Some people say foolish things out of too much fear, when such statements are not even necessary for them to say. They would have been better off being quiet and be taken off the hook. Wise people know their place.

## 7) Reasonable

They work within realistic possibilities and limits available to their situation. They don't let their emotions take over — though they often tend to do so. They are able to reason with themselves. Their practical minds keep things simple and workable. For instance, their fear of heights can be appeased with mere thoughts that people don't just fall off from buildings, and buildings don't just collapse.

## 8) Great Timing

Wise people know what to do to counteract the things they fear. As a result, they are able to use fears and phobias to their advantage. If they fear darkness, and they have to go out at night, they will do it while people still loiter around. If they fear lightning and the news says there will be a thunderstorm some time in the afternoon, they will spend some time in the mall as the storm passes by. They would find walking with people at night and strolling in the mall as they let a storm pass by, to be enjoyable experiences. Wise people will always find ways of utilizing time to their advantage, instead of wasting time cowering in fear.

## 9) Patient

They know the wisdom in waiting, especially when they have to weigh things or to get good timing. In the example above where they have to wait for a thunderstorm to pass by or take a walk outside at a time when darkness starts to settle, patience is the key. They patiently plan ahead of time and apply their plan

during the situation. Patience is also needed to keep themselves from getting into trouble. If they fear somebody, they take time to turn him into an ally instead of a feared enemy.

## 10) Meek

Fears and phobias bother some people because anxiety brought about by fears can ruin their pride. Some people fear water, heights, or certain insects, but they don't want other people to know their fears. Therefore, they force themselves to overcome these fears or pretend that such fears do not exist in them.

Wise people who have eventually dominated their fears were able to admit the truth that the fears exist in the first place. Even doctors have to make patients realize what sickness has infected them before they can treat them. If a patient keeps on denying his ailment, there's a narrow chance for his recovery. Wise people are meek enough to admit what their weaknesses are. They are not afraid to let people around them (family, friends, relatives, etc.) know what their flaws and limitations are, so people around may be able to help them too. As a result, they get to enjoy people's company and live optimistic lives.

## 11) Calm

Wise people have trained themselves to be calm when fearful situations arise. Being calm is first a mental capacity. A serene mind equals a serene heart.

Wise people disarm fears and phobias by keeping a calm disposition at all times. If a stampede suddenly happens, they can keep calm, stay in a safe place, and observe the situation before doing anything rash.

That way, they learn a lot as they calmly figure out an escape from the chaos. At times, when they are able to calm down and utilize their fears to their advantage, they become much fulfilled.

## 12) Honest

Wise people accept the truth humbly. Honesty is always necessarily linked to meekness. Honesty conquers pride. Wise ones reject all false assumptions and pretensions about the self, and honestly admit their weaknesses. Admission of fears is a very essential step in conquering them.

## 13) Have a Sense of Humor

One of the best ways to eliminate even your worst fears is to enjoy them. Laugh at them. Make fun of your fearful thoughts. Wise people have learned how to treat their fears as jokes.

If they think there's a ghost, they say something like, "Let's see if this one really raises my hair on end." If their spouse gets mad at them, they imagine the two of them doing dance numbers. They have also learned to apply this in their jobs.

Because they are able to laugh at their fears, they are able to handle the situation more at ease. Humor has power to shake off tensions, fears, and even phobias.

Wise people who fear the water could conquer their fear by having everybody bring a water gun at the beach and play war games. This would take their thoughts off the sea and on the “fierce fighting.” Soon, they may find themselves waist deep in the sea “running for shelter and ammunitions.”

Individuals can always find the funny side in things they fear, if they choose to. *Note however, that danger is not something to laugh about.* There is a big difference between danger and fear. The former can be life threatening, while the latter can rarely cause major physical harm.

Moreover, wise people never belittle or laugh at others’ fears. They can *teach* others how to laugh at their own fears, but they never do anything that can humiliate or embarrass somebody else’s ego.

## 14) Positive

Wise persons keep many happy memories and disregard unhealthy ones. This collection of happy moments is a part of what makes them wise. When they are filled with such thoughts, they always find their sense of humor ready for fun-filled use in times of fear. Collecting bad memories is the work of the unwise.

If wise people get trapped in an elevator, they take advantage of the darkness to reminisce the good old days. Deep darkness greatly aids in stirring up the imagination. That’s why we close our eyes when we are in deep thought,

or when we pray. Instead of trembling in fear at the darkness and lose hope, they use the darkness to their advantage while being trapped. Better yet, they enjoy it because they have no choice but to face it.

A readily available reservoir of good memories can help in drawing out happy thoughts of friends and loved ones. Survivors of tragedies have been known to keep hanging on to life by the inspiration of happy memories. Those who panic often die.

Darkness is a plus factor in effective prayers. The Bible records that Jesus Christ chose dark recesses as places of prayer, especially when he was about to face death. He prayed at the Olive orchard, mountainside, and in the wilderness during the deep hours of the night.

## 15) Discreet

Being discreet is a relative of being discerning and tactful. Wise people are very careful on how they go about or say things. Fears tend to minimize when the best effort has been exerted to abort danger or trouble. They also think of how fears and phobias can make them diplomatic and orderly in their ways. Negative emotions can produce positive results if people just learn how to use them to their advantage.

## 16) Tactful

Being tactful often saves wise persons from tight situations with people they fear. This is more evident when they discover the fun in being able to handle

fearsome people with their tact. The experience becomes more of a challenge and an adventure to be enjoyed rather than a scary moment. Tact is a product of meekness, honesty, patience, and positive thinking. The wise are devoted to this outcome.

## 17) Know How to Do Positive Bluffing

To bluff is to trick or deceive yourself into believing otherwise. It is wrong to deceive others. It is wrong to deceive yourself with what is false.

When wise people bluff, their aim is to “deceive” themselves using the truth — the truth which they have initially come to treat as false because of what their fears or phobias have fed them in the past.

Terrible fear can be a false teacher. It can distort the truth and make it look false. The wise seek the truth and use it to set their emotional minds free from false things. The mind, by being fed with half-truths over the years, can be very stubborn even when it comes face-to-face with the truth. This is especially true with a mind that has been victimized and enslaved by fears.

Wise men re-educate their fear-struck minds by cunningness and flattery, or sometimes by “bluffing.” If they believe that spiders are fearsome and powerful creatures, they assume the “poker” face. They “act as if” they are bigger and more powerful creatures than spiders — which is the truth. Then they start shooing off every spider they see with a long stick or anything that makes them feel safe and confident as they are doing it. They sometimes even treat themselves with food or fun for winning over the “ordeal.”

## 18) Know How to Do Positive Mocking

It is wrong to mock others. What wise people mock here are their fears and phobias. They use self-mocking techniques to raise their courage and confidence levels.

If they fear crowds of people, they mock themselves by saying, “You think you’re a famous actor that you imagine these people going after you? Don’t be so conceited. They are minding their own business.” If they have stage fright, for instance, they mock themselves by saying, “Come on! Get real! Don’t pretend to something you’re not. Just do your thing the best you can and get this over with!” They may also tell themselves, “Sure, you dance like you have two left feet — if you can call that dancing. But so do many people out there in the audience. So why bother with your so-called stage fright?” The prodding and the humor work effectively. They eventually end up laughing at their fears. To phobic minds, getting over the threat is already a big joy and success.

## 19) Weird

As you examine all the above characteristics, you would find that some items describe “wise” people as kind of weird. Fears and phobias are weird. The way to treat them positively is also to be equally weird — but positively at that. Poison kills poison. “Enjoying” your fears and phobias, and making use of them so that they become “user-friendly,” are by themselves very weird.

# Chapter 3

## How to Enjoy Your Fears

If you are determined to use your fears and phobias to the extent of really enjoying them so that they become “user-friendly,” regularly do these exercises. Doing all of them as part of a regular routine will develop in you the ability to use fears to your advantage.

Remember, you are developing a life and character as you do these exercises — these are habit-forming. All these are geared towards giving you a new and fresh outlook in life and the world you are in. Most fears breed in stale life perspectives. These exercises will gradually give you a radical and positive look to dominate even the worst fears.

*Note: The fears aimed to be dominated by utilizing these habits include the negative fears and phobias.*

### 1) Searching Habit

Wherever you are, try to observe what people around you are doing. If you are in the office or at home, stop what you are doing occasionally, and watch the people around you. If you are in a public transport, an eatery, or a bus station, watch and observe details about people. What are they doing? What are they wearing? What are their mannerisms? What are they doing with their fingers, feet, legs, eyes, etc.? Search for truths that come out of people during their unguarded moments. Just make sure that you do this unnoticed. Don't be obvious.

**APPLICATION:** This practices your awareness and presence of mind. This also trains you to know simple facts about people immediately around you. If you observe someone who often scratches his nose, ask yourself why he is doing that. Is it always itchy? Try to imagine reasons for the action. Small truths and facts about people often manifest without their awareness during unguarded moments. If you make this observation or searching process a habit, you will develop the ability to size up persons and situations, or know the reasons behind actions. Eventually, you will find this habit amusing. This is sometimes called *caricaturing*. You assign people to behavioral groups in your mind according to their character types.

## 2) Smiling Habit

Practice smiling whatever the circumstance, even when the going gets tough. Also, softly whistle or hum happy tunes as you keep up a good mood and do your daily routine. Do this wherever you are, even in public vehicles or the comfort room.

**APPLICATION:** When pressures and tensions mount and troubles seem to be everywhere, or when somebody gets really mad enough to harm somebody else, smile. Smiling releases a natural relaxant on your muscles, triggering a calming effect. When muscles are relaxed, the emotions tend to calm down a bit. Whistling or humming merry tunes add to the relaxation. If you keep up this habit, it will lessen shock when sudden terror or trouble appears. Make sure your smile is really a manifestation of your good and high spirits, and the happy tune is

really felt in your heart. Enjoy your constant preparation for anything that may come up.

### 3) Predicting Habit

Always try to guess what people are up to, or what they are thinking. Never mind if you always miss. Try to guess what they had experienced in the past, and what they are doing or experiencing in the present. It's like a game of hit or miss. At times, you hit it correctly; at times, you miss. For instance, stare at acquaintances or officemates. Watch their mannerisms, idiosyncrasies, personal preferences, weaknesses, and strengths. As you do this, be aware of what thoughts or pictures enter your mind as you stare at these people. Then make some guesses about their past or present.

Let's say, you notice that a person is irritable and inclined to complain. It seems that as you note these dominant traits in the person, the first thought that enters you is a crying child in a playground. Ask the person about his childhood days, especially his experiences with playmates. Without actually asking, take note if playmates liked him or if he was often rejected. If his accounts coincide with the pictures you saw in your mind, then you hit the jackpot. If not, then try better next time. Just let the person tell his story and check if your mental picture is accurate. Don't interrogate him or act like you are a clairvoyant.

**APPLICATION:** As you practice this with people, you will find that your mind can easily identify certain patterns in people that often lead to similar conclusions. The point is to gradually develop the skill to read people's thoughts

and actions. By practice, you would get to a high level of sharpness in discerning people through identifiable patterns. Most people's lives are patterned similarly. Thus, many people are predictable. They can put masks on their faces, but their lives and body actions (or gesticulations) still show some patterns that betray them. If you master this secret, you would find that influencing some people is easy.

When you discover traits and behaviors of people, then you can act towards them accordingly and tame them. You already know what tickles their weaknesses, and what triggers their annoyance.

You can then use this secret to take advantage of your fear of certain people. Your fear of strangers would become an adventure once you discover the excitement of accurately guessing their past and present, or their real personality. The real thrill comes in influencing the persons you fear. Think of what this can do to people you imagine being muggers, attackers, murderers, and other scary personalities out to get you. You can study them and ascertain if they are indeed, what they seem to be. Practicing this habit can be an enjoyable and exciting adventure.

#### 4) Something-New Habit

Daily, try to do something new. If you never enjoyed watching soap operas before, try to watch one today. Take off all your biases and negative presumptions, and try to watch it sincerely. If you haven't been in a certain place

— and you often hear about it from friends — visit it with a companion. If you know you are poor in drawing so that you never tried it before, try to draw now.

**APPLICATION:** This attitude stretches your mind's ability to broaden its perspectives. Studies show that irrational fears are really products of a narrow mind.

Small places are easy to conquer. When you try to drive away termites from your room, it would not be such a difficult task. But when it's a whole town full of termites we are talking about, conquest seems impossible. The same principle applies to dealing with fears. They can easily rule a narrow-minded person. But with a broad-minded one, their capacity to control you would be almost non-existent.

Now, imagine trying many new things daily. The thrill you get from that would scare the fear out of you. Fear weakens considerably once you begin to have a bright look at life and enjoy it. New things are strong spices of life. Discoveries turn on the proverbial bulb in your mind. This enables you to see things truthfully. Seeing the truth sets you free. Fears will just be around you, but they will not be able to overpower you anymore — as long as you enjoy your life.

## 5) Just-Do-It Habit

Eliminate procrastination out of your life. Setting for tomorrow the things that you can do today, or doing things a minute or some seconds later when you ought to do them immediately, often puts us into more troubles and deepen our slavery to fear.

Everyday, make a list or program of all the important things you have to do and accomplish for the day. Then just do them. Finish them one by one. Make sure you scratch out of the list the activities that make you idle, like watching TV, sleeping longer than usual, playing computer games, vain shopping, etc. Do include reading some chapters of a good book. Take an afternoon nap. Make sure to do the chores you frequently avoid engaging in, and do favors for loved ones and friends.

**APPLICATION:** Quick response is the key to any rescue mission. Even deadly illnesses can be remedied with early detection and treatment. Quick response must be preceded with careful (but not prolonged) study or thinking. Delay often worsens the situation. Furthermore, the just-do-it habit will start you on your way to a very productive life. You will begin to enjoy a very useful life, with no time wasted, and much lesser time for negative imaginations of fears. Think of what sweetness it can add to your life when you start doing good things to your loved ones and friends.

## 6) Concentration Habit

The mind often wanders off while doing a task or activity. Most people can read while understanding nothing about what they are reading. As you do things, especially as you perform your list of things to do for the day, put all your focus on what you are doing.

An added exercise for this is to choose a very positive picture, like flowers for instance, and then close your eyes to focus on them. Do this before you go to

sleep at night when your surroundings are quiet. Don't let anything else enter your mind except the flowers — swaying in the wind, in a garden, in a forest, in their varieties, and in different arrangements. Then open your eyes, while still concentrating on the same objects. See with your mind, not with your eyes.

**APPLICATION:** This strengthens your mind's ability to focus on what is beautiful and positive. This also trains your mind to stay focused. As earlier said, fears are all in the mind. This exercise strengthens your mind to ignore negative things. The real benefit of this exercise is that you will begin to enjoy the ability to focus on what is beautiful and what refreshes you. You will also develop the habit of focusing and retaining in your memory only the positive things — like good encounters with people, places, and events. The point is that the more you fear a person, place, or situation, the more you must try to recall only the good in them.

## 7) Good Reasoning Habit

Make it a point to look for positive reasons out of doing things. This time, say it verbally, even in whispers. When you take out the garbage, say to yourself verbally "It is so good to take out the garbage to keep the kitchen clean!" If you have to wash the car and clean its interior, say, "Clean cars reflect the clean people who ride them!" In everything you do throughout the day, declare with your mouth the good reasons for doing them.

**APPLICATION:** Verbalizing positive reasons can do wonders to encourage and strengthen a positive mind. Power is exhibited when you hear yourself declaring what is right and reasonable. Once you feed yourself daily with

this mental programming habit, the emotions will submit to reason. Thus, when fears come, you can start reasoning that fears only warn you to take extra precautions to abort bad things from taking place. Fears, in themselves, have no power to harm you in any way. They are present to help you. When you are caught in a building that is on fire, you can tell yourself “I am going to get out of here. There’s always a way out of everything. God sees my predicament, and he will send help. Of course, I’m nervous. I should be. This feeling gives me double ability to proceed carefully.”

## 8) Good Time Habit

As you list the things you have to do daily, program them as opportunities for a good time. If you have to take the garbage out, list it as a health activity. If you have to do a general cleaning, list it as a home wellness activity. Always treat everything as things that are fun or enjoyable to do.

**APPLICATION:** Everything in life, even negative incidents, must be seen as good times. When you fear a certain place and avoid passing by it, you can take a detour, not a way to escape your fear, but to have a good time and enjoy other sights. Better yet, pass by a mall or grocery and shop for a while. Each time you avoid passing by that place you fear about, think of it as a shopping trip. From time to time, do pass by that place you fear about with some companions. Then also pass by the mall or grocery. This makes the whole travel, even to the feared place, a trip for a good time.

## 9) Waiting Habit

This is different from procrastination. Waiting is looking for a good chance or for the right timing. Procrastination is simply idleness or timidity. Make it a life principle to always wait for your turn. Fall in line, no matter how long. When asked to wait, wait patiently without complaints or murmuring. Don't rush into things, but always wait for directions or instructions, the right timing, and the right procedure. When the right instruction, time, or procedure comes, waste no time. Proceed!

**APPLICATION:** The point in all the waiting is to develop patience. Patience conquers many things. An ancient eastern saying, written by a man considered one of the wisest and most powerful world leaders, goes that "Better a patient man than a warrior, a man who controls his temper (or emotions) than one who takes a city." Great rocks and landforms have been eroded by constant water dripping. Mature patience gives wisdom to master your fears and doubts. They say practice makes perfect. Mature patience also makes you see the beauty in life.

## 10) Face Off Habit

In everything you do, assume that others are equal, if not better than, yourself. In short, always be meek and humble. Come face to face with the person you really are. Do not assume a false self. Get rid of a false sense of superiority or perfection. This falsehood deceives you when you maintain that

you have no weakness. So each morning face the mirror and talk to yourself, saying:

1. I have strengths and weaknesses.
2. I have bravery and fear.
3. Both bravery and fear are for my protection.
4. Real perfection is to acknowledge and master my bravery and fear.
5. I need the help of others, and they need my help.
6. I need God above all.

**APPLICATION:** The first step to winning over your fears is to admit that you're having them. If you pretend to be so brave as to have zero fear, you will never enjoy your fears. You would either be irritated or bothered by them. Too much anger is often a sign of irritated fear. When you finally get to admit the truth, then you can start to take the proper steps to use them to your advantage.

## 11) Keep Cool Habit

Whatever the situation, stressful or otherwise, keep your cool. Train yourself to like mellow music, non-agitating TV programs, movies, and even environment. Don't let yourself get caught being angry.

In fact, train yourself to be unemotional. When something good or exciting happens, don't be too happy. Contain the emotion and keep it simple. Joy is experienced when you have great peace inside, and not too much ecstasy outside. Learn to use cool and positive remarks like "No problem," "Sure," "It's okay," "Good as done," "Don't worry," and the like.

### **APPLICATIONS:**

1. The person you fear will be discouraged from harassing you further.
2. More problems are solved when you are calm because you are able to think clearly.
3. You avoid doing many wrong things.
4. The Bible says you look wise when you look cool.
5. Keeping cool gives you lots of confidence, both inward and outward.
6. The cool look is a tough look.
7. Keeping cool restores courage.

## 12) Best Policy Habit

Honesty is always the best policy. Pretensions only worsen fear. If you pretend, you just add the fear of truth into your fears.

Sit down and have an honest inventory of yourself. Get a clean sheet of paper and a pen. Divide the paper into two rows. In the first row list all your positive features — your abilities, the things you are not afraid to do and say, skills, talents, etc. In the other row, list all your negative features. Be honest. Write down your fears, things you cannot do and say, your failures, etc. Then get another clean sheet of paper. Using a pentel pen, write on it with bold letters, “USE AND ENJOY.” Staple this piece of paper on top of your lists. Display on a wall in your room.

Then go around your house and properties (even try walking at the park), and look for an object that best represents your personality. You may think of a

rock, which may mean “My stubborn personality. I have stubborn fears and inferiority. It’s hard to get through me.” Take that rock into your room. Or, you may choose to buy a sponge, which may mean “I’m soft, very vulnerable, and my personality is full of loopholes. I get easily scared and discouraged. I’m good for nothing except in scooping up dirt.” Take the sponge to your room.

In a simple ritual, transform the meaning of the object you took to represent you. If you chose the rock, for instance, verbally say and put into writing that “I am a rock. I can break to pieces the mirror that reflects a false image of me. I will shatter into pieces the fears, doubts, and inferiority that keep me from being a winner.” Then display that rock and what you have written about it where you can see them everyday. With the sponge, you can say and write, “Like this sponge, I can easily absorb positive teachings to change my life perspective and win over my negatives, especially my fears. I will clean up every mess that this false image has been giving me.”

Whatever object you have chosen, think of positive things to say about how you would like to change for the better, and which you can relate with the object. Then daily, read the list you have posted in your room, as well as look at the object and what you have written about it.

**APPLICATION:** The application is obvious. This ritual will serve as a commencement exercise of a new life and will signal the start of better things to come. They will remind you of your goals. Starting with honesty as the best policy, the other traits of meekness, endurance, truthfulness, and perseverance

will come in easy. The ritual is like setting up your banner or flag of conquest over new territory.

### 13) Lighter Side Habit

Always look at the lighter (and brighter) side of things. This mainly includes keeping your sense of humor active. Laughing at your fears is the best way of using them. Exercise your fear-dominating capabilities by sometimes watching sad, frightening, or violent TV programs or movies. Better yet, read books of the same nature.

Now, instead of reacting in accordance to the nature of the program or book, look for things to laugh at. Most people who have tried doing this have found the exercise so amusing. It is something everybody should try to do.

So, when you see in the show a serious hostage situation, laugh at the villains. Transform them in your mind as silly clowns trying to look scary. If you are watching a car chase or a manhunt, imagine that they are really trying to race each other to get to the toilet first. If it is serious drama, put off the volume and imagine them crying and arguing over a piece of candy.

You can also make fun of your fears by drawing them and making them look funny. For instance, if you fear dead bodies, draw a morgue or cemetery with the dead doing a tap dancing number or a ballet dance, or wearing bikinis. If you find zombies in movies so scary, try to imagine them (draw them in your mind) playing the part of Julie Andrews in "The Sound of Music," or something like that. You can do the same to your hotheaded boss or professor who's after

your neck. When he gets to scold you hard, you might not be able to control your giggles.

**APPLICATION:** When you can laugh at your fears you have truly learned the secret of enjoying them. When danger occurs in real life, think of something funny to tell yourself. If you are caught in the middle of a shootout, pray something like, "God, I hope no bullet here is cross-eyed." You can mean it, too. This helps others who are with you in the danger zone. They can take time off from the peril to smile and relax. This loosening effect enables the mind and body to be more alert. You'll soon notice that the more fearful your experiences are, the more fun they are.

#### 14) Happy Holidays Habit

About three times a week, do this exercise:

1. Lie down on a couch.
2. Relax.
3. Close your eyes. Think of nothing. Breathe deeply and slowly.
4. Then one by one recall the good times of your life. Take your time.  
Smile if you feel like it. Even shout for joy. Keep your eyes closed.
5. After the session, get a piece of paper and write everything you recalled.
6. The next time around, think of new happy things in your life. Repeat the process.
7. Then write everything down on a paper again.

8. Make a compilation of your happy life moments and read them often.

Count your blessings.

**APPLICATION:** You will need this armory or supply of happy moments in your times of fear. Keep them in a notebook and in your heart and mind. Review them from time to time. Then keep telling yourself how blessed you are. This will enhance your love for life. The Bible says perfect love casts out fear.

## 15) Good Boy/Girl Habit

From now on, be very particular about obeying rules and regulations no matter where you are. In malls, restaurants, fast foods, public markets, and even in public toilets, obey posted rules and regulations. If the rule says to fall in line, obey. If the bus driver tells you to sit, sit. If a sales clerk tells you to proceed to the next counter, do so. Don't litter your trash. Obey private policies of the owner when you are in another's house or office. This will develop your law-abiding attitude.

**APPLICATION:** Being law-abiding will keep you out of trouble. Being out of trouble, there's lesser chance for your fears to get triggered. This will also train you to be more careful of your actions. Wayward actions bring troubles. If the troubles are serious, they often cause impressive fears in you. This training will keep you confident, in the sense that obedience keeps troubles away. As you become more disciplined, polite, and law-abiding, you will enjoy a more orderly life.

## 16) Sweet Talk Habit

From time to time, list down ways on how to communicate politely. There are good books on public relations in the market. There's always a nicer way of saying things. As you list down the ways, practice them regularly in front of the mirror. Then apply them in actual situations, whether with pleasant or difficult people. Make this a lifestyle.

**APPLICATION:** A positively motivated sweet talk can influence even the most fearsome people on earth. Do not flatter. By sweet-talking a person, you are making him agree with your views without being obvious. It often appears that you are the one agreeing with him. When you are very gentle and sincere in the way you talk, you can easily persuade or dissuade people, even the most unreasonable ones. Then imagine the joy of influencing and convincing the people you fear. It's like Dr. Frankenstein being able to control the deadly monster he has created.

## 17) Self-Rewarding Habit

Make it a habit to treat yourself with simple rewards. Do something challenging with the promise that you will reward yourself when it is accomplished.

For instance, if you fear darkness, keep yourself in a very dark room alone for 30 minutes. When it is done, give another 30 minutes. Tell yourself that instead of just a cone of ice cream for the first 30 minutes, you will treat yourself to an appetizing buffet if you accomplish it in an hour.

If you fear open high places, climb up a 5-storey building then look outside a window. Then climb up another five steps and look outside a window, with the promise that you will buy yourself a new shirt or dress. Then climb another five steps, and treat yourself with new shoes once you've accomplished it.

**APPLICATION:** Winning over your fears means facing the truth. Truth alone can cure fears. As you reward yourself whenever you expose yourself to truth, re-education happens. Education principles are reward and punishment principles. Good performance is given high grades and recognition. As you expose yourself to your fears and get rewarded for the bravery, a deep learning happens. This way of winning over your fears enables you to enjoy your fears as you master them.

## 18) Mock Challenge Habit

As you do the Self-Rewarding Habit, like the exposure to total darkness, challenge yourself with a mock. A mock is a strong prodding that challenges your guts.

For instance, as you remain in darkness for 30 minutes, tell yourself from time to time, "Thirty minutes? Do you mean this is a challenge? Even a child could do this!" Then for the other 30 minutes, tell yourself, "So you do it for an hour. No big deal! Piece of cake! Shame on you if you back out of this!"

**APPLICATION:** You need some pushing forward to go nearer your fears so you can face them properly. It's like a man who is blindfolded and prodded with the tip of a sword to make him go forward the edge of a diving board that

looks out to the sea. The enjoyable thing about this is that the humor keeps the stress off the challenge. Yet, it is still very persuasive.

# Conclusion

Fears are parts of life. Some fears help us, but most fears pester us. The main conclusion is that you must identify what fears help you, and keep them under control. The fears that pester you must be kept at bay and, if possible, eventually eradicated. However, effective removal of harmful fears takes time.

During the time you are learning on how to get rid of them, you can use them rather than let them continue to use you. What can be more welcoming than making even your worst fears “user-friendly,” while you figure out ways to throw them out of your life?

Enjoying your fears is the best way to dominate them. The worst scenario is to be living with fears that constantly keep you in their control. Befriending your enemy on equal footing is quite different. There’s a deadlock. There’s ceasefire because the enemy has realized your capabilities. Ceasefires are best times to gather strength for the final offense to oust the enemy.

Radical living is a radical spice of life. It frees us from boredoms and fears. If you want the techniques in this book to help you dominate your fears, you have to prepare to change radically. Enjoying your fears is a radical concept. It is seldom brought up as a solution to fears and phobias, but it can be very effective.

Finish the old regime of terror peacefully through non-violent means. Evil fears must end in your life. But make sure that you don’t also kill the good fears along with them.

# Some Common Phobias

## 1. Hypochondria

This is a type of Somatoform Disorder, as discussed in a previous chapter. Hypochondriacs imagine themselves developing serious diseases like cancer, diabetes, or some other serious problems. They refuse to believe people, even doctors, who tell them they are healthy. People who were once overwhelmed by the sight of a serious disease condition or by death can develop this disorder.

## 2. Claustrophobia

This is the fear of being in closed or too narrow spaces. People suffering from claustrophobia may feel like suffocating or drowning once they find themselves in these places.

## 3. Arachnophobia

People who dread spiders, even small ones, probably have this phobia. They may have acquired this fear when they read about the dangers of poisonous spiders, or if they were actually bitten by one and seriously hospitalized as a result.

## 4. Hydrophobia

Some people fear drowning so much that the mere sight of water gives them the creeps. They are the victims of hydrophobia. Hydrophobia is often associated with those inflicted with rabies. This is a deadly type of hydrophobia.

## **5. Acarophobia**

People who are afraid of itchy insects have this phobia. They have acquired this type of phobia when they have actually experienced the itchy sensation brought about by the insect bite, or if they have seen such bites from other people in extreme proportions.

## **6. Acerophobia**

People who fear things that are sour or cause sourness are suffering from acerophobia. In severe cases, they imagine that the sourness can kill them.

## **7. Agliophobia**

Individuals who fear pain so much - that even a slight sensation, sight, or thought of pain is unbearable – are victims of agliophobia.

## **8. Agraphobia**

People suffering from agraphobia have the irrationally weird notion that many people are out to sexually assault or rape them.

## **9. Agyrophobia**

Streets make agyrophobic people cower in fear. They feel like crossing the street is equivalent to the death march.

## **10. Ailurophobia**

Just hearing a cat's meow can send chills up the spine of people suffering from ailurophobia. Some of them may imagine the cat's claws scratching them.

## **11. Bogyphobia**

Mr. Bogeyman is death itself to victims of bogeyphobia. They fear the Bogeyman so much that they see him lurking in the dark recesses of their room or house. When darkness strikes, they want to be locked up at home with all the lights on.

## **12. Bromidrophobia**

Bromidrophobic people panic when they think they have a body odor. They dread catching the odor from others. In this case, they take a bath probably 5 times a day and put on lots of anti-body odor fragrance.

## **13. Botanophobia**

Botanophobic people fear plants because they probably think plants can eat them alive, or something to that effect.

## **14. Carnophobia**

Eating meat gives carnophobic people the creeps. They imagine meat to be human flesh; or perhaps they think it can turn them into the animal it was taken from.

### **15. Catoptrophobia**

People who suffer from this disorder are afraid of the mirror, especially big ones. They avoid passing in front of them or having themselves seen in them. But experts cannot yet say if the fear is of mirrors or of the image of the phobic individual reflected on them.

### **16. Chrematophobia**

This is probably the most stupid type of fear ever. Chrematophobic people fear money. Perhaps they think it causes bad luck or even death. Some of them fear the microbes and germs existent in the money.

### **17. Chronophobia**

Chronophobic people feel as if every tick of the clock spells doom for them. The tiny sound of the tick tock re-echoes in their heart and seems to pursue them to the grave.

### **18. Cleisiophobia**

Cleisiophobic people are afraid of being locked in an enclosed place. It gives them the eerie feeling of being buried alive.

### **19. Clinophobia**

Clinophobic people feel that going to bed is like lying inside a coffin.

## **20. Coimetrophobia**

Cleisiophobia and Clinophobia conspire to give their victims the fear of cemeteries. They may imagine the dead in cemeteries rising up anytime to give them a bad night.

## **21. Coulrophobia**

Clowns are supposed to be funny, but somehow victims of coulrophobia see them as vampires or monsters out to kidnap them or suck their blood.

## **22. Cyberphobia**

Victims of cyberphobia fear computers. They think computers might control them, suck them up to Wonderland, or suddenly explode in their face.

## **23. Cyprianophobia**

For a cyprianophobic person, almost every woman looks like a prostitute. They fear the sexual diseases they might catch when meeting them.

## **24. Dendrophobia**

Victims of dendrophobia believe that trees can turn into flesh-craving monsters when they are not looking at them. They can also imagine elfin creatures taking residence in every tree.

## **25. Dentophobia**

Many people are suffering from dentophobia. They think that dentists are always up to something bloody. They are afraid of the pain the dental machines will inflict on them. The drilling sound of dental equipment is agony to their ears.

## **26. Didaskaleinophobia**

Kids are apt to catch this silly fear. When they think schools are really monsters in disguise, they will be afraid to go to them everyday.

## **27. Doxophobia**

People who are suffering from this irrational disorder feel that the praise they receive produces equivalent danger. Thus, they also fear giving praise to others.

## **28. Dysmorphophobia**

To people victimized by this phobia, deformity is the pits. They believe that people with deformities have “something” living within them.

## **29. Epistemophobia**

Ever wondered why your son fears school and studies? He might be having a case of fear of knowledge. Epistemophobic persons see knowledge as a curse. To them, it is against the gods to know something and be intelligent.

### **30. Eremophobia**

People with this fear beg to be with people. Being alone is agonizing for them. They strongly believe that no man can live alone.

### **31. Ergophobia**

People who fear knowledge, schools, and studies are likely end up fearing work. Work to these people is like digging their own graves.

### **32. Euphobia**

This fear of good news seems to attack news reporters because many of them want to report negative things.

### **33. Gephydophobia**

Crossing bridges is never fun to victims of this disorder. They assume that bridges will fall any minute once they're on them.

### **34. Gerascophobia**

People with this fear are desperate to stay young. They quiver at the thought of old age. People with this fear visualize old people somewhat like the living dead.

### **35. Globophobia**

Nope, this is not the fear of the globe — though it is something close to that. If you fear clowns, you might as well fear balloons. For whatever reason, people with this fear run like mad hens when they see balloons.

### **36. Glossophobia**

This is the fear of speaking in public. The terrifying feeling is not brought about by addressing the public, but in being watched by the public.

### **37. Graphophobia**

Nope, this is not the fear of graphs. It is the fear of writing or seeing handwriting. Somehow, people with this fear see ghosts in any writing.

### **38. Gymnophobia**

Nope, it's not the fear of gyms. It's the fear of nudity. It's healthy to have this at certain times, especially when going to the mall or office, but not when you are married.

### **39. Gynophobia**

People who have this fear of women have probably been punched in the nose by a female martial artist before.

### **40. Hypegiaphobia**

If you fear studies, schools, knowledge, and work, guess what? Chances are, you also have this fear of responsibility.

#### **41. Hypnophobia**

People victimized by hypnophobia fear sleep or being hypnotized. They are addicted to caffeine in coffee. They might also fear looking straight into a person's eyes, or watching a tennis ball go back and forth, back and forth...

#### **42. Illyngophobia**

This is the fear of dizziness or looking down. Thus, people with this ailment always look up, whatever they do, wherever they are.

#### **43. Iophobia**

This is the fear of poison. Iophobic individuals feel as if every food and drink has poison in them. This is good when you want to keep a tight budget. 😊

#### **44. Isoterophobia**

Isoterophobic people wonder in fear at the ability of termites to eat wood. They're thinking that if termites could eat wood, these creatures could easily eat them. Thank heavens they don't grow any bigger.

#### **45. Linonophobia**

For some reason, people who exhibit this disorder fear strings. They see strings as deadly and horrifying. These strings probably remind them of worms and snakes.

#### **46. Logophobia**

Words seem mysteriously evil to people with this disorder. Words drive them crazy. They imagine evil schemes in even the most innocent statements people make to them.

#### **47. Lockiophobia**

Women who fear childbirth exhibit lockiophobia. They magnify it as a cause of death. They have also seen how it has produced deformed babies. Most probably, they also fear having sex.

#### **48. Medomalacuphobia**

Men who fear losing an erection have medomalacuphobia. Erection to them is the essence of manhood and life. To lose it is the worst disgrace for them.

#### **49. Medorthophobia**

This is the opposite of medomalacuphobia. Extreme erection is the worst disgrace for men who have this disorder.

## **50. Microphobia**

This is the fear of small things. People who have this ailment want everything to be extra large or biggie-size.

For a comprehensive list of phobias, go to <http://www.phobialist.com>.