

FEAR

Fear is a natural and valuable instinct. It can help us survive dangerous or threatening situations. But for some of us, fear can become an overriding force in our lives. Fear can prevent us from taking necessary risks, from meeting people, and from broadening our horizons.

Some of us may have grown up believing that the world was a threatening place, or we may have had a frightening experience and lost our confidence. Regardless of how fear may have become part of our feelings, it can become a negative and pervasive influence. When fear prevents us from trying something new, or when it becomes a paralyzing feeling that prevents us from leading a normal life, it can be an irrational and destructive force in our lives. Ordinary situations seem threatening and we may avoid them. We may feel different or inferior because others seem to deal

We add to our fear by attempting to maintain an appearance of strength, and then worrying that how we really feel will be found out. Or, we may simply give up and retreat into our own world.

We may have tried to intellectualize our fears away by telling ourselves that there really is nothing to fear. Perhaps we have tried fighting against fear with all the will power and courage we could muster, but our best efforts to conquer fear seem to have been in vain. One immediate benefit of Emotions Anonymous (EA) is that we meet others who have had similar experiences with fear and who understand our feelings, irrational as these feelings have always seemed to us. In EA we learn that we are powerless over our emotions, that we cannot think nor will our fears away. We hear that emotions are neither good nor bad, they just "are."

We may have been fearful all of our lives, but now we recognize it and admit it. Admitting or acknowledging we are fearful is a first step in not allowing fear to control our behavior. When we stop denying or fighting our fearfulness, we can accept it. The idea of accepting our fears may seem truly frightening.

Through this program we learn of the existence of a Higher Power.

When we become willing to trust our Higher Power one day at a time, or even five minutes at a time, we learn that fear can be replaced by faith. Our faith begins to grow as we see a Higher Power working in our lives and/or in the lives of others. We can begin to let down our guard and then realize that we had only the illusion of control. We learn to let go of our fear, and when we do, our Higher Power gives us the strength needed to meet the situation at hand.

Learning to trust our Higher Power can become a habit that offers us peace of mind and relief from the impossible task of trying to control our fears. Fear loses its grip on our lives and is replaced with the knowledge that strength and serenity comes from our Higher Power.

God grant me the serenity
To accept the things I cannot change,
Courage to change the things I can,
And wisdom to know the difference.