

# Fear: Illuminating what scares you, can bring triumph

By Michael A. Grant, J.D.  
Special to Sentinel-Voice  
"All our fears grow out of a core fear of loss: loss of control, love, esteem or health." — James J. Mapes, Quantum Leap Thinking

face of real danger or a demanding challenge. If we understand the proper use of fear, it can be our friend. However, the vast majority of our fears are irrational and unhealthy.

Let's place the subject of fear under the microscope. Yes, we are going to get scientific in our approach to understanding this notorious villain and sometimes friend.

They fit in the category of what one writer calls: "False Evidence Appearing Real." Irrational fear is at the root of all negative emotions. And yet it has no more power over us than we give it.

So what is fear? Fear is only an emotion. Fear, oftentimes, serves a positive purpose in our struggle for survival. It is the offspring of the ancient fight or flight syndrome.

When we are worrying, the culprit is fear. When we are frustrated, the culprit is fear. When we are afraid to be ourselves, the culprit is fear. When we are angry, the culprit is fear.

Fear can save our lives. It can give us added energy and heighten our awareness in the

And when we are anxious

about the future, the culprit is always fear.

Our insecurities are borne of our fears. And the primary reason that most people live out their lives "in quiet desperation" is because of this psychic intruder. Fear can paralyze us. It stops us in our tracks. It causes us to shrink from some of life's greatest challenges.

Irrational fears infiltrate our minds and through countless acts of mental and emotional sabotage take control of our powerful imaginations. Fear distorts reality's clear pictures by first creating disturbing images on our inner screens.

The reason fear is able to get a foothold inside our heads

is our lack of awareness. The most important thing that we can do to counter fear's impact is to become aware of its scary "presence." But do not resist fear. It is only a shadow. There is nothing to fight. The only thing necessary to show oneself how powerless our irrational fears are is to refuse to react to them.

Refuse to react to fear? How is that taking control of my fears? You do not take control of fears, you simply observe them. You illuminate to dissipate.

The best weapon in your arsenal against fear is awareness. You must get a greater understanding of where the fear is coming from.

If you refuse to "energize" your fears by withholding any emotional response to them, over a period of time, they will eventually evaporate into thin air.

Why? Because they are not real!

Think about it. There are things that you want to do with your life right now and yet fear is holding you back, causing unnecessary pain. Not pursuing our highest calling for personal fulfillment is painful. Not fully exploring this wonderful experience called life is painful.

Worrying about what others think of us is painful. What lurks at the core of all this pain? You got it: Fear!

Look back over your life. Examine all the times that you desperately wanted to break out of your comfort zone, that you wanted to try something different or you envied someone else for breaking free of fear's stranglehold.

As you look back, think of the inspiring words of President Franklin D. Roosevelt, who lifted a dispirited nation with his famous words: "So let me assert my firm belief that the only thing we have to fear is

fear itself — nameless, unreasoning, unjustified terror which paralyzes needed efforts to convert retreat into advance."

If you will move from fear's shadowy cave of doubt and despair into the encouraging light of understanding, you will realize that there really is nothing to fear but fear itself.

When fear acts as a friend, warning us against real danger or energizing us to face real challenges, we should acknowledge its beneficial role.

But when it tries to get us to believe that we are defeated, we should — with keen awareness — shine the light of understanding on it. This will be sufficient to send it scurrying back "onto the heap pile of its native nothingness."

And we will emerge victorious!

God bless!  
Dr. Michael A. Grant, author of "Beyond Blame," is a motivational/inspirational speaker. His company G&C Motivational Consultants, also conducts seminars, leadership workshops, and team-building meetings.

## Wall Street

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Travelers Group spokesman said the firm was "supportive of the concept of building bridges."  
Dr. C. Delores Tucker, a member of the board of the Atlanta-based Dr. Martin Luther King Center for Nonviolent Social Change, and founder of the Philadelphia Martin Luther King Center, sees the exchange's decision as a "wonderful gift."  
"This makes me more optimistic that finally, as the song predicted, 'We Shall Overcome,' because on that day a powerful, symbolic message will be sent across the nation and around the world," she said.  
"This brings great hope for the new year and is truly a gift to make Dr. King's dream a reality."  
Dr. Teta Banks Brayboy, executive director of the Philadelphia King Center, agreed.  
"After 13 years (of persuading the exchange,) we have a

major signal that the King holiday is being recognized as a national holiday," she said.  
"Many have criticized it as being only another commercial day and some states have not acknowledged it. But now that Wall Street sends its message, we have the signal to the business community, to the nation and the world that this is a special day for all," Brayboy said.  
Michael Meyers, executive director of the New York Civil Rights Coalition, told the Wall Street Journal that while he supports Jackson's broad-based effort, including the holiday observance, he was not certain what could be gained by closing down the exchange.  
"In pursuing Dr. King's dream, I would prefer that people work throughout the day," he said. "Symbolism is good, but not good enough."  
Kendall Wilson writes for the Philadelphia Tribune.

## King

(Continued from Page 10) — "bears little resemblance to the human King or the political King of 1965-1968."  
"By idolizing those whom we honor," said Charles V. Willie, the educator, who was a college classmate of King's, "we do a disservice both to them and to ourselves. ... we fail to realize that we could go and do likewise."  
Diane Nash, who led civil rights demonstrations while in college in Nashville in the early 1960s, said that understanding that King was not the entire civil rights movement is critically important.  
"If people knew how the

movement started," she said, "then the question they would ask themselves is, 'What can I do?'"  
That is what school officials in Riverside asked themselves — and then, along with many of the city's residents, they acted.  
In naming their new high school after Martin Luther King, Jr., they've chosen to follow his example: They have disturbed the peace.



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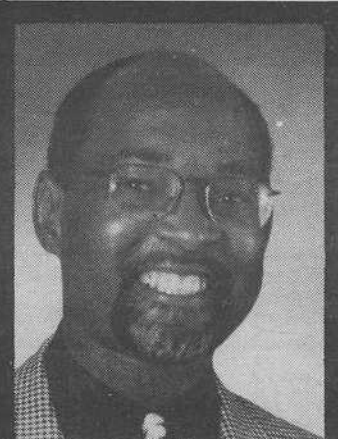
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