



FREEDOM FROM FEAR

Are Stress and Fear Impacting Your Body?

Fear. It's something we all feel. It's what enables us to react when we sense danger. Feeling fear can literally save our lives, and under the right circumstances, it's a beautiful thing. Under the wrong circumstances, it can crush us. Physically. Mentally. Emotionally. Spiritually.

I would propose to you that fear is the root cause of stress. Stress happens when the body, mind, or emotions sense or perceive danger and react to it. Stress causes virtually every "dis-ease" known to man. More importantly, all disease happens because the body gets stuck in a chronic stress response.

So what is triggering all this fear and keeping people stuck in a perpetual state of stress? Well, think about it. Many people feel threatened or overwhelmed in their work or home environment and spend the better part of their day feeling tense. Some individuals sense the collective fear churned up by current events and the media, sending their nervous system into overdrive. Some folks know that heart disease or cancer runs in the family. They carry the weight of fear, wondering if they are next. Traumatic

events and memories are stored in our bodies, triggering an adverse reaction whenever anything similar happens. Toxins saturate the environment and our food supply. Our bodies sense the danger and react to protect us. Fear and a sense of danger are affecting every aspect of our lives!

Do you see how much time we spend in the stressed-out, "fight-or-flight" side of our autonomic nervous system instead of the "rest, digest, and repair" side? It is not a matter of IF the fear and stress show up in our bodies. It is a matter of WHERE. Being stuck in a constant stress response can show up as asthma, digestive issues, thyroid, endocrine, or hormonal problems, high blood pressure or heart disease, diabetes, weight gain, joint or back pain, or autoimmune conditions. The list goes on and on. (See a list below, published at Breathing.com, of the most common ailments linked to chronic stress.)

But it doesn't have to be this way. We do not have to suffer from these chronic conditions, wondering why we are not getting any better, no matter what we try. I see more and more that the missing pieces for many people are:

- Noticing when they are in a fear-based stress response
- Learning to shift into rest, digest, and repair mode

Most diseases are either caused or made worse by poor breathing, oxygen starvation, and/or an overactive sympathetic nervous system, i.e., "stuck in fight or flight." —Michael Grant White

anxiety or panic attacks
allergies
arthritis
asthma
back pain
bronchitis
cancer
candida, Epstein-Barr
chronic fatigue
chronic pain

concentration/memory problems
constipation or diarrhea
depression
digestion problems
drug addiction
eating disorders
emphysema
headaches or migraines
high blood pressure
hyperventilation

infertility and impotence
immune deficiency
irregular heartbeat
irritability
nightmares or night sweats
pneumonia
sleep apnea or sleep problems
snoring
thyroid problems
weight issues

It doesn't matter how perfect your diet is, how targeted our supplementation is, how talented the doctors or practitioners we work with are. If we miss this piece and fail to address the root causes of our fear and stress, we will block or significantly slow down our ability to heal and live a vibrant, healthy life.

There are numerous tools we can use to release fear and stress in our lives. Breathwork, meditation, EFT, Theta healing, yoga, massage, sound and light therapies can all be useful. That said, I believe breath should be the first tool we use. It is free and available to us at any time, in any place, and in any situation! Use every healing modality in conjunction with the breath, which will enhance and amplify them to their fullest potential.

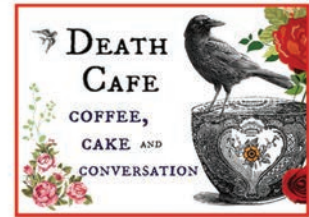
A simple practice to follow: Whenever a stressful worry or fear comes over you, pause for a moment and take a few deep breaths. Expand your lower torso as the first impulse of the inhalation, then allow the in-breath to expand your ribs and chest. This will ensure you use your diaphragm to relay a calming

signal to your nervous system and brain. The exhalation is a free deflation of the lungs and a relaxation of all tension.

So start today. Become conscious of how the fear factor is impacting your well-being. Decide to be aware of fear and stress in your body, mind, and spirit. Then choose to free yourself from them every chance you get. It can be as simple as taking a few deep, cleansing breaths. Your body will thank you with increased energy and fewer symptoms! ■

BETHEL WAGNER received her training from the Institute for Integrative Nutrition, studying a variety of dietary theories and practical-lifestyle-coaching methods. She helps exhausted moms with hypothyroidism increase their energy, boost their mood and release weight, so they can zoom through their days with energy to spare. Bethel is currently offering her **Thriving Thyroid Course**, as well as a **28-Day Thyroid, Metabolism & Energy Jump-start**. Call (406) 479-3242 for details and registration.

VIRTUAL DEATH CAFE



Wed., Mar 17 • 7–8:30 pm

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