

FEARS: Are They As Big As They Feel? by Debra Beck



What are you afraid of? There is plenty to fear—whether you are a child, a teenager or an adult. Fears come in all shapes and sizes from the Boogieman to the Taxman. You can be afraid of speaking in front of a crowd, growing old, getting a bad grade on a test, losing friends, looking bad, embarrassing yourself. The list can go on and on. Everybody is afraid of something and to different degrees.

Are fears only as big as we make them?

Let's take a look. Let's say that you have a new boyfriend, and you really, really like him. You're afraid that now that he has claimed to like you, he will wake up some morning only to like your best friend better. You're so worried that you start asking him questions about how he feels about your friend, such as "Do you like the way she looks?" and so on.

Your fear of losing your boyfriend gets so big and out of control that every time you're with him that's all you talk about. Guess what? He might like your best friend better one day. And he might not. **But I can guarantee that talking about it with your boyfriend day in and day out is only going to make your boyfriend think about it—and get bored with your relationship.**

So let's say he does wake up some morning and decides that he likes your girlfriend. Was there anything you could have done about it? Did worrying and having all of that fear stop him? No!

Now, let say he never decides that he likes your girlfriend. Did you waste a lot of time worrying and being afraid about it? Yes! Either way it was a waste of time, and it prevented you from being close to your boyfriend and sharing special moments with him.

Some fears can ruin a relationship and keep us from being in the now.

Some fears can ruin a relationship and keep us from being in the now. If your boyfriend is with you right now that has to be good enough.

Another thing fears can do is to prevent us from doing things and experiencing situations that would make our life fuller. For instance, suppose you want to join a certain club at school, but you know that it requires you to speak in public. Speaking in public has always made you sick to your stomach, so you don't join. What if you joined and walked through those fears and eventually you could speak in public without getting sick? What if you even started to enjoy it?

We all have many fears, and we have to take a look at each of them individually. We need to make a list of our fears. We need to ask: Is this a fear that is holding me back? Is this a fear that is ruining my relationship? Or is this a valid fear? A valid fear, for example, would be getting into a car with a drunk driver.

The more we get to know our fears, the better we will be at deciding how to handle them. We do not want to be controlled by our fears. We do not want our fears running our life.

I have noticed that when we face our fears and walk through them, we become empowered.

I have noticed that when we face our fears and walk through them, we become empowered. When we do the opposite and allow our fears to control our life, we empower our fears.