

How to Conquer Your FEARS

Do you have doubts about holding your job? Do you worry over loss of money — or over the lack of money you need? Does the dread of illness or of a nervous breakdown or of insanity haunt you?

Are broken friendships, repressed love affairs robbing you of health? THEN HERE'S WHAT YOU NEED TO DO!

by Herman L. Hoeh

NEVER IN the history of the world have people enjoyed so many labor-saving devices, so much leisure, such benefits from public sanitation. Yet, strange to say, the fear of nervous disorders, heart disease, cancer and insanity is robbing millions of health and happiness.

People everywhere are under *needless mental strain*. Business pressure and family troubles worry millions. *We don't know how to relax.*

Why is there such anxiety, such nervous strain? Why are we FAILING to master our fears and worries?

An Age of MISMANAGED Minds

This is not alone the age of the atom and hydrogen bombs. This is the AGE OF MISMANAGED MINDS!

Uncontrolled, undirected minds are ruining the lives of countless thousands. Millions more are rendered miserable and unproductive because their minds have been *enslaved* to FEARS — needless, unreasoned fears!

Needless fears rob us of contentment, warp our personality, and poison *both mind and body*.

Fear is an emotion — an emotion directed toward the SELF. Have you ever noticed that *those who suffer most from fear and worry are "wrapped up" in themselves?* "I'm afraid of this . . ." and "I'm worried about that . . ." is the way they talk.

This, then is a SELFISH age! And the

more we become concerned with ourselves, the more *afraid* we become that the *self* will get hurt. We become fearful of what might happen to the *self*. Our misdirected minds coddle and pamper the self.

In many instances this uncontrolled emotion of fear leads to grave consequences — to real desperation. There is the fear that "something is wrong with the brain" — that a nervous breakdown is impending, that even insanity might result.

In other instances this uncontrolled emotion results in feelings of inferiority, in mental inadequacy, in sex impotency. One fear leads to another until our mental outlook and our physical health are permanently impaired!

But there is a way to correct this problem. *There is a way to conquer fear!*

Are All Fears Wrong?

For millenniums the problem of fear has confronted and perplexed our greatest thinkers. Philosophers have found no satisfactory solution — or their lives wouldn't have been so often *frustrated!* Psychologists have spawned the idea of *auto-suggestion* as the solution to overcoming fears. Those who have tried this method still find themselves spiritually *devoid* of happiness. Of course! For *auto-suggestion* is a clever way of saying *self-deception!* And deception never solved anything.

Others have tried sedatives to relieve their nervous fears. Countless pills to calm nerves and keep people happy have been sold by druggists and doctors. But fears and worries and mental and physical illnesses still continue!

For us to reach the solution, we must recognize there are TWO fundamental types of fears: 1) *helpful fears* and 2) *harmful fears*.

Without *normal, helpful* fears none of us would be alive today! *Proper* fear is merely the drive for *self-protection*. Without this fear we would not exercise proper caution against injury.

It is the kind of fear we need!

But notice! — when the mind is not properly managed, the natural fear for *self-protection* is turned into unnatural fears for the protection of SELF.

Fears Are LEARNED

The control of the drive or emotion of fear is a *learned process* — it is a *matter of education*. We first need to learn what proper fear is. Then we need to exercise proper control over it. But we must also avoid misdirected and harmful fears.

Proper fear is *wisdom*. It is also *knowledge*. Suppose, for a moment, that we are confronted with a *real* danger. It is only natural that we should be fearful. But let's master our fears. Fear tells us something is wrong. It warns us that we must calmly and care-

fully face our danger. We must get busy and take ACTION. Action solves the danger! — but simply worrying about it and being afraid that the worst will happen won't help us.

People who are chronic worriers, who have countless fears, are usually procrastinators and *indecisive*. They are *afraid* to take action. Their fears become their master. They become slaves to their fears.

The time to learn to master our fears is when we are young — yet THE PROPER DIRECTION OF THE MIND IN THESE FORMATIVE YEARS IS NOT BEING TAUGHT IN EITHER THE HOME OR IN THE SCHOOL!

But it is never too late to learn. Life is too important for us to remain in ignorance, no matter how old we are. Let's learn to DISTINGUISH between *helpful* and *harmful* fears.

Needless Fears and Phobias

Sometimes our fears are insignificant or even laughable — to the other fellow, of course. Here are some of the petty fears that plague people: fear of an expanse of water, fear of air travel, fear of silence, darkness, shadows in the moonlight, fear of telephone, telegrams, hunchbacks and mice!

These fears usually are the result of *past experiences* which we have either consciously or subconsciously allowed to haunt us.

Usually far worse are the common *phobias* which afflict people abnormally. Fear of the sight of blood, fear of animals, fear of being alone, FEAR OF AN UNATTRACTIVE FIGURE, FEAR OF BEING AFRAID, and the FEAR OF FAILURE. To this list we might add the *fear of everything*, a characteristic of the person who runs away from life!

Underlying some of these abnormal phobias are *normal* fears. But in every case *the normal, natural fear has been allowed to get OUT OF CONTROL*. Witness the countless millions of girls and women who are afraid they have or may sometime have an unattractive figure. Serious mental, emotional and physical injury has often been done to "remove" this fear. The worsened con-

dition creates more fears. A vicious circle results.

Haven't you known people who were fearful of *being afraid*? They can't explain their fears, but they *know* something fearful is going to happen to them! They haven't learned the lesson of life that our worst fears and experiences NEVER HAPPENED!

Sometimes, however, we bring fears and worries on ourselves. Job wrote: For the thing which I feared is come upon me, and that which I was afraid of hath overtaken me (Job 3:25). Many capable men and women have become *failures* simply by yielding to the uncontrolled FEAR OF FAILURE. Especially has this been true since two world wars and a catastrophic depression. This fear has led to the FEAR OF LACK OF SECURITY. Notice how one anxiety breeds another. These fears are all characteristic of *lack of knowledge* and *lack of wisdom*.

The CAUSE of these abnormal worries and fears lies in inadequate recognition and control of emotional problems we experience in maturation. Domineering parents, inconsiderate fathers, over-possessive mothers, family jealousies and arguments, fussy grandparents — these created most of our emotional problems. But the fundamental CAUSE of OUR fears is OUR failure to recognize and solve these emotional problems.

A Common Example

Here is an example of the consequences due to the failure to discipline our mental emotions. A young girl is engaged to be married. Instead of being happy, she is crushed with conflicts and fears. She is frightened with the responsibilities of married life and motherhood. A nervous breakdown seems inevitable. Why?

Usually in her background you will find a carefree father, a frustrated mother, spinster school teachers, no companions of her own age while an adolescent. Mental problems, unsolved, produced *physical* disturbances. Menstruation became abnormal and often painful. Fears of childbirth haunted her because of stories she heard from

"friends." This is no isolated case. This is a COMMON EXAMPLE. Some of *you* are suffering from just such a problem as this.

Let's understand, now, why *emotional* disorders lead to physical disorders, as in the case just mentioned.

There is a direct mind-body relationship in every individual. We must direct and coordinate both mind and body before we can really achieve happiness and conquer our fears. Solomon understood this problem when he wrote: "A tranquil heart is the life of the flesh; but envy is the rottenness of the bones" (Prov. 14:30). And again, "Better is a dinner of herbs where love is, than a stalled ox and hatred therewith" (Prov. 15:17).

There is a direct connection of digestion and health with the mind. When the mind is fearful, it sends out messages to the various glands and organs to be prepared for danger. The organs fill the bloodstream with materials to enable us to ACT to meet the danger. When we procrastinate or are indecisive, our body becomes filled with unused material. Our glands are needlessly drained. Constant self-induced fears soon cause the gland to function abnormally. Our whole body suffers, and with it the personality and even the mind.

Unconquered fears are the cause of a major portion of diseases. Of course, proper food habits, proper exercise and elimination also play a part in overall health — both mental and physical.

When our bodies become filled with toxins that should have been used up in ACTION to meet *real* dangers, we find ourselves "nervous" and "upset." People often say: "It's my *nerves*." Nerves are not wrong. We need them to live. It is *what we have done to our nerves* that is the problem. We have frayed them through overuse arising from uncontrolled fears and worries. We have turned the nerve mechanism created for SELF-PROTECTION into a weapon for SELF-DESTRUCTION.

Frightful Dreams

When once we have created physical disorder in our body, the *imagination*

begins to play tricks on us. Our imagination should be utilized to create new and better ideas. It is an instrument for progress. Instead, we let our imagination *frighten* us with new and added FEARS. We imagine we are suffering from indigestion, then ulcers, then cancer — and finally DEATH, the greatest fear of all! Sometimes we imagine ourselves suffering from a nervous breakdown or mental derangement. Life becomes frightful.

Horrifying DREAMS begin to afflict us. Most dreams come from an overworked mind. Daily problems weigh us down as we seek rest at night. We don't know how to relax. Solomon said: "For a dream cometh through the multitude of *business*" (Eccl. 5:3).

Since the conscious business with which so many have been occupied is that of *creating new fears and worries*, is it any wonder that a blood-engorged brain will re-create these same fears in DREAMS?

When the state of mental worry takes a severe form, dreams and premonitions build up the FEAR OF DEATH — and usually cause premature death. MOST OF THE WORLD is enslaved by this dreadful fear! This fear wrecks mental balance and poisons the body. It creates spiritual misconceptions that sometimes exert themselves in religious *persecution*. Persecution is a release valve for pent-up spiritual frustrations, fears, and the sense of self-condemnation. But persecution doesn't solve the problem.

The Way of Escaping Fears

Once we recognize these unfounded fears which we need to battle, we must find the right way to CONQUER them. Psychological self-deception won't help. It doesn't really do any good to tell ourselves that death is not really an enemy — that it is a good friend. Such auto-suggestion doesn't change the fact that death is a mortal enemy. The way to solve this fear — and to solve every unnecessary fear — is to *recognize what it really is*.

Paul tells us death *is an enemy* (I Cor. 15:26). But Jesus Christ has made a way to escape its eternal consequences. "Our Saviour Christ Jesus... *nullified*

death and brought life and incorruption to light through the gospel." "For God gave us *not a spirit of fearfulness*; but of power and love and sobering" (II Tim. 1:10, 7, Panin trans.).

But how do we lose the dread of death — and of all the other fears and worries that haunt us?

Remember the first lesson we learned is that we need to recognize the distinction between *helpful* and *harmful*, uncontrolled fears. Fear may be either right or wrong depending upon our direction of this emotion. *Proper fear* stems from the drive for self-preservation. It is a signal of danger — a signal that we need to take ACTION.

Proper fear is in two forms. One is *natural* fear of physical danger — the warning that we need to protect this life. The other is SPIRITUAL FEAR for our eternal protection. This fear almost no one recognizes. Yet without it, we will *never* be able to CONQUER uncontrolled fear.

This SPIRITUAL fear is called the FEAR OF THE LORD or the FEAR OF GOD. Like every other fear, it, too, has been misguided until it has become the fear of the devil!

The natural emotion of physical fear warns us of physical hazards. This is a learned fear. The spiritual FEAR OF GOD warns us of eternal dangers. It, too, is a learned fear. We have to *learn* about the power and authority of God. We learn that God gives life and also *takes life*. That is why Jesus said: "Fear Him" (Luke 12:5).

Why Is the Fear of God Necessary?

This present age has lost this healthy respect for God. Notice the example of Noah: By faith Noah, *warned* concerning the things not seen as yet, with *godly fear* prepared an ark to the saving of his house (Heb. 11:7). Noah *feared* the power of God. That was a right fear — a proper spiritual fear. But Noah controlled his fear of God. He didn't let his fear worry and frustrate him. Noah ACTED on his fear. He *did something* about it!

The great *importance* of the FEAR OF GOD has been woefully misunderstood. Let's understand its full significance.

"By the fear of the Lord men *depart from evil*" (Prov. 16:6). This fear warns us that *God will punish us if we harm ourselves by doing evil!*

When we do *evil*, we harm ourselves. To teach us NOT to do evil, God sometimes has to punish us. That is how the fear of God leads us away from the danger of evil — both physical and spiritual danger. "The fear of the Lord is the *instruction of wisdom*" (Prov. 15:33).

When we fear God, we respect what He says. What He says has been recorded in His Word, the Bible. In the Bible is the wisdom of God. Its instruction tells us right from wrong. It defines for us the pitfalls of sin. It warns us of the dangers of evil which robs us of happiness and prosperity and eternal life. "The fear of the Eternal tendeth to *life*; and he that hath it shall abide *satisfied*; he shall not be visited with evil" (Prov. 19:23).

The *need* for the fear of the Lord is a *New Testament* teaching. Peter said: "Fear God." (I Peter 2:17.) It is repeated again in Rev. 14:7: "Fear God." The early Church of God had peace when "walking in the *fear of the Lord* and in the comfort of the Holy Spirit" (Acts 9:31).

How to ACT on the Fear of God

How will the proper REACTION to the fear of God rid us of all the needless mental suffering we impose on ourselves? How will the fear of God teach us to manage, and direct our minds until we master every nervous fear?

The apostle John wrote: "There is no fear in love; but *perfect* love casteth out fear: because fear hath torment. He that feareth is not made perfect in love" (I John 4:18).

The worries and mental torments stemming from fears occur when LOVE has not been perfected. LOVE is doing what God commands: "For this is the LOVE of God, that we keep His *commandments*; and His commandments are not grievous" (I John 5:3).

The commandments of God define right and wrong. They tell us of the dangers of sin. Sin is the "transgression of the law" (I John 3:4).

By OBEYING God we avoid the dangers of evil and we fill our minds and emotions with LOVE. Love removes worries and torments. This is how we ACT upon the fear of God.

Now let us learn HOW TO ACQUIRE PERFECT LOVE. Here is what Peter says: "Add to your faith virtue; and to virtue, knowledge; and to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; and to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness LOVE" (II Peter 1:5-7). (The archaic word "charity," found in the King James Version, should be rendered LOVE.)

Here are SEVEN STEPS you need to follow to rid yourself of fear!

First, notice that you begin with *faith*. What is faith? "Without *faith* it impossible to please [God]; for he that cometh to God must *believe that He is*, and that He is a *rewarder* of them that diligently seek Him" (Heb. 11:6).

You cannot FEAR God without having faith that He *exists* and that He *rewards* us for what we do, whether good or evil. Faith is not something you try to make yourself think you have when you don't have it. Faith is the recognition that God exists and that it is fatal to fall into His hands unless you turn from your sins! This faith is *acquired*. It is learned by *experience*. You cannot *hypnotize yourself* into receiving faith.

Maybe you are like the woman who wrote me: "I can't seem to make myself fear God." Of course you can't *make yourself* fear God! You have to *experience* the *need* of fearing God. Perhaps you need to become a constant reader of *The PLAIN TRUTH* to learn the *authority and power of God!*

Let's follow the instruction of Peter throughout his *seven-fold plan* to conquer fear by filling the mind with LOVE.

The SEVEN-FOLD PLAN

First, add *virtue* to your faith in the power of God. Virtuous means *decent, chaste, modest, well-mannered*. It is the opposite of coarseness and vulgarity. The *first step* is to *remove the cause of*

self-condemnation, the *secret sins* that are often committed under the guise of extreme prudery!

We must *let the Bible define* decency, chastity and good manners for us. Study the lives of men and women recorded within its covers. Recognize their mistakes. Don't make the same mistakes. Remember, too, that the fear of God teaches us not to make up our minds as we wish to believe, but to believe and act upon what *God says* virtue is. It is neither self-righteousness nor coarseness. It is proper refinement.

Second, add *knowledge* to virtue. Knowledge refers to the learning of ideas and principles of conduct. We must continually *increase* in knowledge until we clean up our character!

Third, add *temperance* to knowledge. When we learn that God permits us to use things that we thought were forbidden, we must exercise the proper balance in handling any 'new freedom. We must be temperate. *Temperance does not mean prohibition*. Prohibition is abstention. Temperance is moderate use! Paul said: "Every man that striveth for the mastery is *temperate in all things*" (I Cor. 9:25). Temperance means SELF-CONTROL. This is one of the most vital steps in controlling the mind and stilling fears. You need to exercise self-discipline over mind and body if you want to overcome fears.

Fourth add *patience* to self-control. Patience is that *broadness of mind* by which you *wait* for the result to be achieved. Patience is the opposite of *worry*. One who is patient does not become frustrated because problems don't always solve themselves immediately. Patience comes from exercising self-control under trial. "Tribulation works patience," wrote Paul (Romans 5:3). You can't sit down and make yourself patient. You must work at it, under trial and test!

Fifth, add *godliness* to patience. Godliness means to be *like God* in character. God defines His character throughout the Bible. Many "religious" people pretend to have godliness, but "they deny the POWER thereof" (II Tim. 3:5). God is a powerful character, not

a weakling. Godliness means *strength of character* — it *sums up* virtue, knowledge, patience, self-control. Too many try to *imagine* what God is like apart from reading the Scripture. Little wonder that they deny His POWER!

Sixth, add *brotherly kindness* to godliness. It is often easier to act righteous than to be *kind* to a brother! James says of the human tongue: Therewith *bless* we the Lord and Father; and therewith *curse* we men, who are made after God's likeness (James 3:9). God is perfect. We need to be perfect. But our brothers have faults of the flesh. It is difficult to be kind, to be helpful, to be generous, to be stern only when necessary to fellow human beings.

In misguided zeal many *impose* their "kindnesses" on others. We must learn to exercise good judgment in being kind. On the other hand, many neglect kindnesses which they can never make up. This breeds sorrow and worry.

Seventh, add LOVE as a climax to perfection. Jesus said to LOVE your *enemies*, and pray for them that persecute you (Matt. 5:44). When you love your enemies *this much*, you won't fear what they can do to you. Love, when perfected, casts out *all* fear! Jesus also said: "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man *lay down his life* for his friends" (John 15:13). Perfect love even removes the most terrible fear of all — the fear of death!

What is LOVE?

Love is the perfection of God's Law according to its spirit or intent. "Love worketh no ill to his neighbor: therefore love is the *fulfilling of the law*" (Romans 13:10). You cannot love anyone without fulfilling the law. And you cannot fulfill the law completely without loving your neighbor and your enemy! Love sums up the spirit and intent of God's Law. It is the summation of all that is good and right. The fear of God leads us to love.

Notice how the Scripture defines love in its fullness. (In the following verses the archaic word "charity" needs to be translated LOVE, which I have done): "If I dole out all my goods, and if I

give my body that I may glory, but have not love, it profiteth me nothing..." Brotherly kindness without LOVE profits nothing eternally! "Love suffers long" — it is patient — "is kind" — it includes brotherly kindness; "love envieth not, vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up" — it doesn't exalt itself, it is virtuous — "is not unseemly, seeketh not its own" — love is directed away from the SELF — "is not provoked, taketh not

account of evil" — it is patient and not resentful — "rejoiceth not in unrighteousness, but rejoiceth in the truth" — it is godliness.

Love "covereth all things" — it covers every requirement — "believeth all things" — love is not gullible (which a misreading of this verse might imply), but it believes all things written in God's Word — "hopeth all things" — it hopes for all the promises, which gives us

courage — "endureth all things." LOVE rises above all conflicts, making it possible for us to rise above the sufferings and fears which engulf this age.

"Love NEVER FAILETH," (I Cor. 13:3-8).

This is how YOU can conquer your fears and worries! Ask God for help to carry out His seven-fold plan to attain real peace of mind. "Ask, and it shall be given you" (Luke 11:9).