

## Presencing Issue 36: A Deeper Look at Fear Part III Living in Fear

**Back to fear:** I have subtitled this issue "Living in Fear," because I am trying to express the pervasive influence of fear on our lives. We are like fish unconsciously swimming in a sea of fear. It influences every aspect of our lives. However we do not recognize it as anything other than normal. In fact our minds are putting out fear messages continually. Fearful thoughts create sympathetic, fight or flight, reactions in the body. The rush of adrenaline in our body adds excitement to our lives. We don't realize how much we have become addicted to that excitement. Until we recognize the hidden cost we are paying for all that excitement we will not choose to replace it with peacefulness. The cost is directly responsible for most of our suffering.



**Cost of fear:** Edmund Burke 1756, "No passion so effectually robs the mind of all its powers of acting and reasoning as fear." He recognized that fear takes over our minds and prevents us from thinking clearly. A Course in Miracles states that there are only two emotions: love and fear. It also states that only one of those emotions really exists; love. In other words all of our negative emotions are some form of fear and are not real. We have deceived ourselves into believing that it is necessary to be on guard in order to live in an unsafe world.



We do not realize that we have made a Faustian bargain with our own minds. We train our minds to be on guard rather than to be present. We do not take responsibility for the effects our thoughts have produced. When we pay attention to our thoughts and emotions, we start to realize that we are actively projecting and manifesting the dangers we are perceiving.

**False life:** If we watch our minds closely, we can start to recognize that the fearful thoughts are emanating directly from our own minds. I will cite examples below of how we have collectively recruited one another into these fearful mental states that produce distrust, separation, competition, and violence. I believe that we have also substituted the endorphin rush, and stimulation of fearful excitement for our own feeling of aliveness. Why do meditators and practitioners

of presence become so peaceful and unconcerned about personal status and success? Why, because life offers so much more than the short term conquests and rewards of the ego mind. We are sentient beings dwelling for a time in bodies, and sentience is eternal life. When we open inner channels of awareness we start to feel our own sentience. We blame our bodies for causing our suffering, and yet attending to our bodies can bring us into sentience.

**Deep peace:** We who work with touch learn that bodies are perfectly designed to reflect what is occurring in our state of consciousness. If our minds are consumed by the attraction of fear our bodies give us the feeling state of that fear. If we are worrying about some irritation that is happening in our bodies, the fear involved in worry makes the irritation more perplexing. The meditator learns that pain is just a body signal that is designed to inform just like any other signal coming from the body. If we watch our minds closely we notice that there is a tendency to interpret pain signals as some sort of punishment for some wrong. If instead, we investigate the pain signals with curiosity, we find that we are rewarded with a growth of self knowledge and peacefulness. This is a benefit of working with somatic awareness.



**Transformation:** Some spiritual teachers have said that we have to suffer in order to transform. I sense that the "suffering" is the loss of our fear-addicted ego minds. We have built our sense of identity and status on control and achievement over others. This "suffering" means freedom from habitual worry and doubt. This "suffering" means releasing others from our projections. This "suffering" means stepping into the mystery and surety of this moment. This "suffering" means coming into oneness with the rest of life and receiving the

celebration of our return from prodigality. We who work with bodies can help our minds to deepen into a sense of self that includes somatic awareness: aware of

what we are feeling in our bodies from inside as we are touching and being touched from outside. As we develop this awareness in ourselves and our clients, we are opening the same doorways of consciousness and inner peace that are experienced by long-term meditators.

Jack Blackburn, LMP, Master's in Theological Studies, Certified Spiritual Director, specializes in body centered spiritual growth and healing. He has been a Trager® practitioner since 1986. He has been a Trager tutor since 1993, has taught Trager electives classes since 1996, and teaches a variety of classes to care giving professionals. He is a NCBTMB Approved Continuing Education Provider and AMTA National Presenter. He is a Focusing Trainer and teaches Bodywork Focusing classes for professionals. Jack is also a Reiki Master and teaches levels I, II, III and Advanced Reiki for Bodyworkers.

[presencinginfo@gmail.com](mailto:presencinginfo@gmail.com)

[www.presencingsource.com](http://www.presencingsource.com)

206-527-0908 1-888-755-4558