**KNOWING THE FACE OF FEAR**

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Linda stood before the crowd, quite overwhelmed and trepidated. For the first time since qualifying for the music competition, she really knew what true fear felt like. The confidence that used to give her a roll when training for the contest has suddenly disappeared, thereby leaving her high and dry. She remembered the commonly recommended mantra of breathing in and out to quench the bout of fear usually born out of lack of confidence, but even that just wasn't working right then. Her fears started getting confirmed when the crowd that had been cheering to hear her voice suddenly got silent on seeing her real face for the first time since the contest started. Yes, Linda had a scar on one side of her face that seemed to deform her for life. She had gotten the scar from an unfortunate accident years ago which had not only left an indelible mark on her pretty face, but also robbed her of a loving husband and left her with a very young daughter. Having had a very rough childhood, she had tried everything possible to care for and protect her girl like her late husband used to do for both of them. And now, her kid was suffering from an unknown trachea disease and languishing in the hospital because of lack of money. She had hoped to use her buried, excellent talent of singing to win the contest and therefore get the cash reward to save her girl. Imagine the sheer courage it must have taken to do that when not knowing whether it would even work or not. She had been hiding her true face with a special makeup until this final moment as she had found herself surprisingly progressing through the singing contest. Her little girl’s life was on the line and thus she wanted to sing with the very core of her soul and tell the world all her pains through her song and real face, but it seemed fear and shame won't let her. And at that moment of panic, a flash of her dying poor girl, the only precious thing left for her in the went through her mind. This suddenly gave her the push and courage to ignore the stares and she went ahead to face her fears. Yes, she strongly fought back with her voice till the crowd had no other choice than to give her a thunderous, standing ovation. She had won; she had used the strong love for her daughter to stand up and squarely face her discouragement and fright.

We have to understand that we all have fears in different dimensions in our lives. Fear is that kind of uncontrollable emotion that makes us perceive a threat or danger to us, or whatever we believe in just like the case of Linda above. In fact, there are people who are afraid of fear itself but that is another topic for another day. But at one point or another, everyone has been in many helpless situations due to this ever powerful emotion and it is what solely drives us either to try and do something or stay back and refuse to give it a try. Some will readily label those that helplessly succumb to fear as cowards but in reality anybody, including those condemning you, have one form of situation or the other that is causing fear in their lives. All the great warriors, successful people, great leaders and voices of authority that we’ve learnt about in history or see today all have something or things they are afraid of.

But you as a person can be better by fighting your fears. So here are three tips to consider:

* Be ready to accept that it's normal to be afraid: Yes, it's really awesome to appear bold, mighty and fearless in front of everyone or to yourself, but all you're really doing is trying hard to wish away the fear by a frail act of bravado. And doing this will only give a temporary relief because you've failed to address the real issue and this will make you to fail on the long run no matter how well you put on that fake show of bravery. Accept first that you're afraid and that it's normal. After this, you have taken the first necessary step towards achieving that victory you seek because you have looked that fear in the eye and what's left is to battle it.
* Bring in the boldness in a real way: Just like what the woman in the story later did, the first important step is the ability to truly accept who you are (a form of acknowledging that you're human afterall and normal to be afraid). This helps in eventually overcoming fear. Taking that first step will unconsciously prepare and properly arm you to readily battle the thing that's making you afraid. This is the second step which is known as the stage of true bravery and heartfelt confidence. Remember that fear is emotional, hence it is psychological. So you'd be surprised at how suddenly bold, strong and confident you'd be to battle your source of fear and eventually get to defeat it as your first mental step towards victory ushers in the second.
* Being better: Nobody wants a repeat episode of what has greatly caused them pain and fear in the past, so it's very important to pick yourself up after the battle of fear is won and consistently work at being better than the position where the fear first met you. Improving yourself does a lot of good on your self esteem and before you know it you'd be flying high in the skies of your dreams and aspirations.

So there you have it. Always remember that you are going to face many battles in life e.g. physical, spiritual, mental etc,. These battles shall cause you to fear strongly or weakly, but one of the means to emerging fulfilled in the end is to always try and follow those tips above described above. Cheers.

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