

Meet the edge of the precipice

<https://youtu.be/JEhvbT7waNc>

Hot to the touch and rapidly reddening, the condition of my skin was a dead giveaway to my feelings of anxiety and embarrassment. I was about to face one of my silliest fears.

“Hurry mom, we’re running late!” My oldest son quickly fired off the words, but they were ominously muted. My subconscious had shifted into denial. The roles were oddly reversed that morning; I was always the one hustling after the kids to get them out the door on time.

I haphazardly threw the ridiculous weight of my briefcase over one shoulder while reaching for the coffee pot with my free hand. It was no coincidence my favorite travel mug was on the counter, waiting to be topped off.

Emerald green (my favorite color), it sported an empowering message that spoke volumes and had indelibly engraved itself in my own mind: “**Fear is a Liar.**”

Wrapping my hand around its calming textured grip, I took one sip (French roast ... *ahhh!*) and we rushed out the door. After all the school drop-offs, I proceeded to the mall where a few colleagues were gathered to watch me relieve a burden that I’d carried for far too long.

Approaching them with great determination, I released the noisy keychain into my coat’s velvety pocket. Stirred by the neuroscience of curious emotions, their innocent little jingle became my mini-metaphor for a panic alarm.

The team’s welcoming smiles and whimsical stance showed they were curious to watch as I prepared to (*cue the drum roll*) ... sit in a massage chair!

There. I said it. I find them painfully reminiscent of torture chairs. The mere sight of them has always intimidated me.

I welcome you to watch the new video shenanigans on my blog. I hope it makes you laugh, while encouraging you to think about your own fears ... regardless of how “silly” they seem to others. (One of the funniest I’ve heard thus far involved falling off a boat into the ocean naked.)

Seriously, though, how often has fear discouraged you from stepping forward? I confess another irrational fear I’ve battled is public speaking. I’ll delve into that one more soon and happily report that I’ve put it to rest.

Research by Harvard business school professor Amy Edmondson indicates that fear is the #1 destroyer of great teamwork and productive workers. Openly acknowledging them, however, breeds familiarity, which inspires the desire and confidence to move past them. Such newfound strength positively benefits our professional development.

Tearing down the mental prison walls of fear helps us take ownership, cultivate clarity through action, and foster assurance to attain larger individual and organizational goals. The experience also builds resilience, proving that even if we trip over our first attempts, we come back stronger. Break down your fears into smaller steps if you need to, but let them bring you to the edge—challenge them!

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