



Developing Courage to Face One's Fears

## Fear Has Positive Benefits

- Fear helps protect us from danger
- Fear can help us reach peak performance
- Fear can help us make wise decisions
- Fear can heighten awareness
- Feeling fear can even be fun, in fact, fear and excitement are closely related



## Fear and the “Adrenaline Rush”

- Many activities create this same “adrenaline rush,” such as:
  - Watching an action adventure or horror film
  - Engaging in extreme sports such as rock climbing, zip gliding and bungee jumping
  - Riding amusement park rides
- Why do people consider this reaction positive sometimes and negative at other times?



## Sensible (Rational) Fears

- There are some things that it's sensible to be afraid to do, such as:
  - Jumping off a cliff
  - Running in front of a fast moving car
  - Getting too close to dangerous wild animals
  - Sticking your hand into a pot of boiling water
- In short, it is rational to be afraid of things that can actually endanger our life or physical health



## Programmed (Irrational) Fears

- There are, however, many things that we are afraid of that pose no real danger to us, such as:
  - Fear of failure
  - Fear of making mistakes
  - Fear of rejection
- This can also include various phobias
- These responses are conditioned fears based on life experiences
- These fears do not serve us



## Tools of Control

- Fear
- Shame
- Guilt
- Blame
- Parents, religions, governments, doctors, lawyers and other people in power typically use these four tools to seek power over others







## Influence versus Control

### **Influence**

- Influence and persuasion are tools that help people change from the inside out
- Involve respecting the other person's right to choose
- Are highly effective long term

### **Control**

- Manipulation and control are tools that try to change people from the outside in
- Don't respect people's right to choose
- Are ineffective in the long term

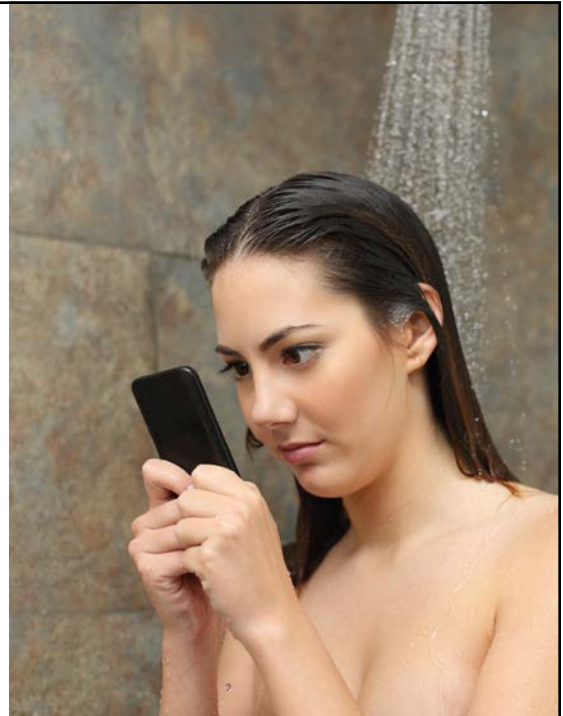
## Fear-Related Emotions

- Scared or Frightened – Acute fear
- Worry – fears that drive obsessive thoughts about the future
- Stress – an ongoing fear reaction to life’s circumstances
- Nervousness and Anxiety – a chronic state of fear
- Panic – an acute state of paralyzing fear
- Timid or Shy – lack of self-confidence that inhibits action



## Running Away from Ourselves

- Addictions and obsessive habits are generally ways of running away from emotions we don’t want to feel, such as anxiety or grief
- The problem is that running away intensifies the pain, which causes us to compulsively seek our “escape” more and more



## Ways We “Run Away” from Ourselves

- Compulsive eating
- Substance addiction
  - Caffeine
  - Alcohol
  - Drugs
- Psychological addiction
  - Gambling
  - Computer games
- Being careless, reckless and thrill-seeking
- Sexual obsession
- Staying constantly distracted by TV, movies, music, etc.



## Courage

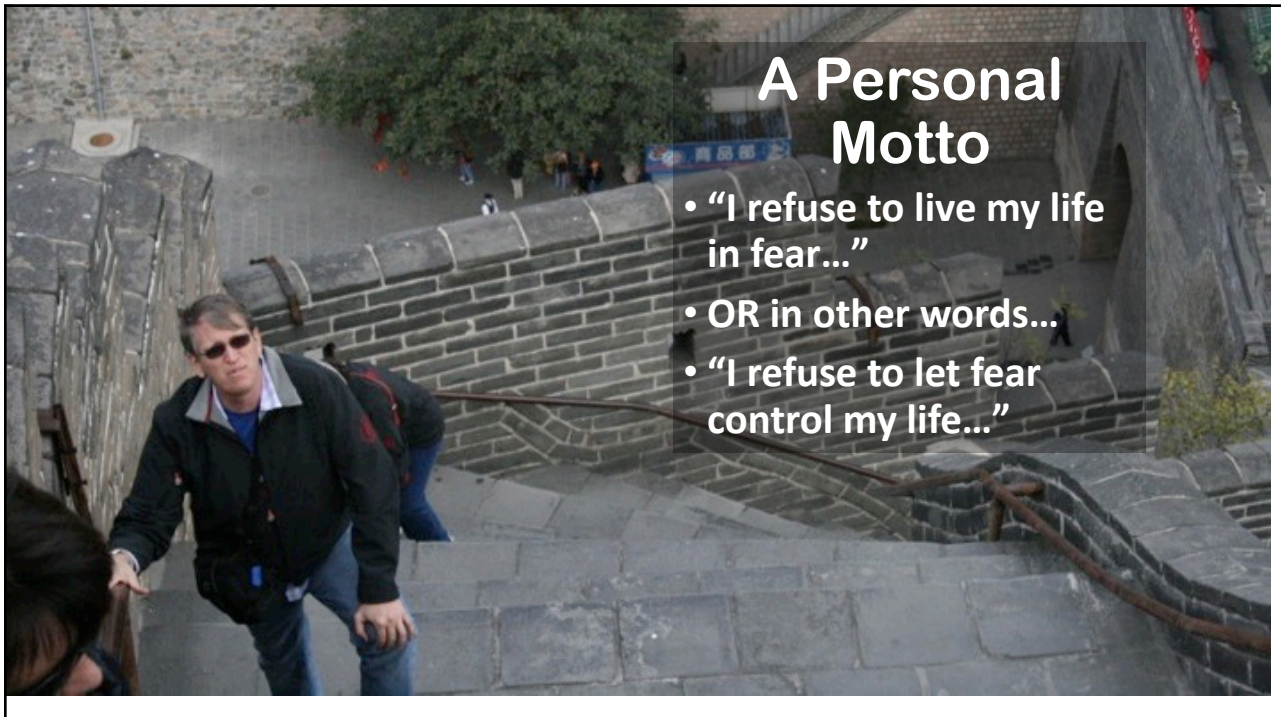
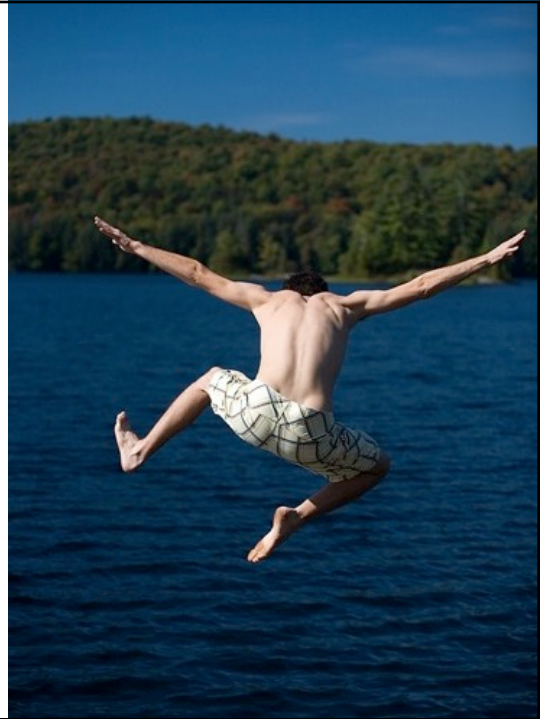
- Courage is the ability to take action (not be “frozen”) in the face of fear
- When you force yourself to do something that you know rationally won’t harm you, you are exercising courage





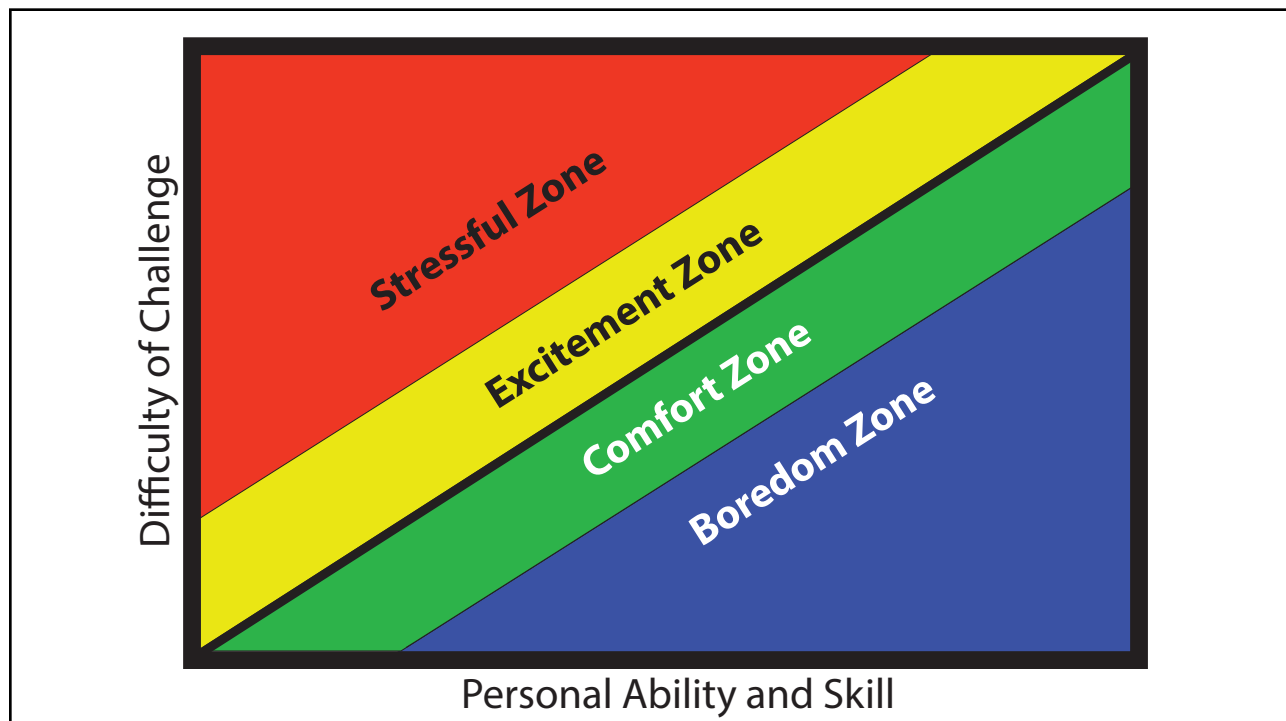
## 1-2-3 Jump!

- Exercising courage is a simple thing, it's just a decision to make yourself take some type of action when you're afraid
- Train yourself to do this by taking baby steps (facing small fears first) and then start tackling bigger fears

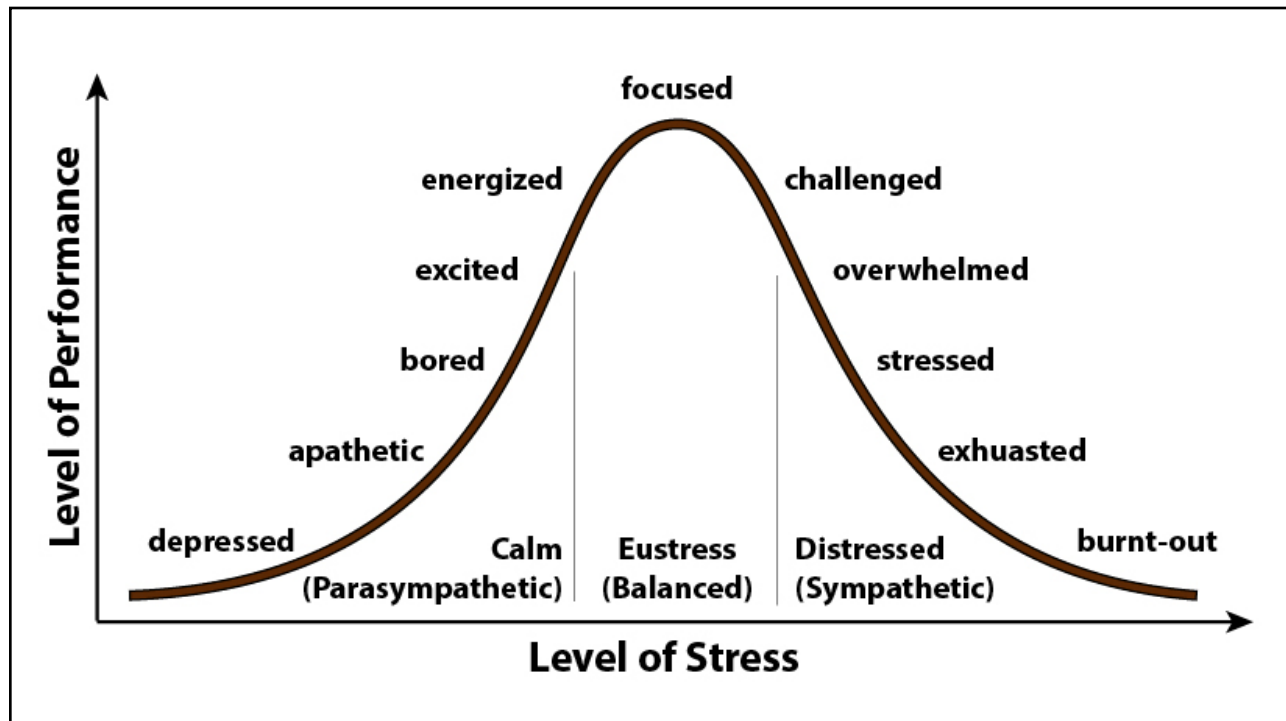


## Fear (Stress) versus Excitement

- The difference is that in excitement, we perceive that the risk has been minimized, that is, we will survive
- The difference is one of perception
- How we CHOOSE to perceive something affects our reaction







## Courage to Face Ourselves

- Courage isn't just the ability to face things outside of ourselves that are frightening
- It's also the ability to face what we are afraid of that is inside of us
- It takes courage to allow ourselves to feel and acknowledge painful emotions















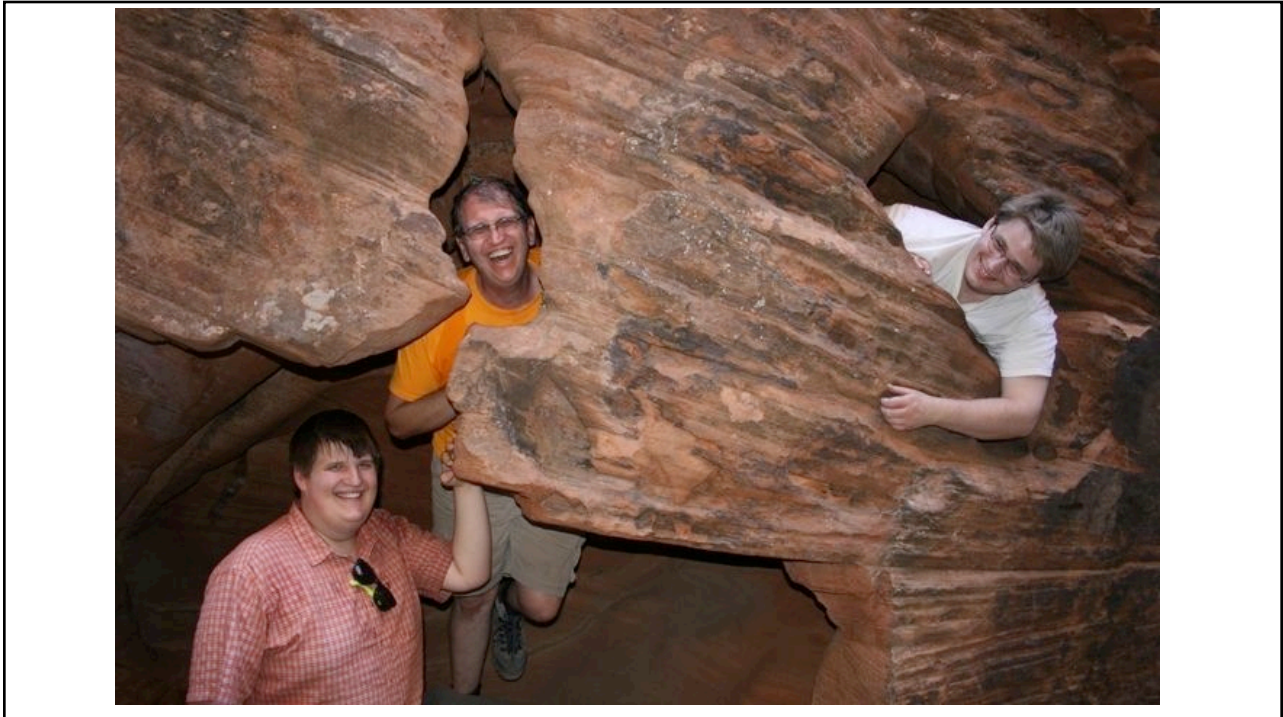






Developing  
Courage  
Leads to Self-  
Confidence





## Listening to Fears and Facing Them

- During a quiet moment alone, think about your greatest fear. Wouldn't it be great to conquer that fear and reclaim power over that part of your life?
- For example, you might discover you are afraid of failure, rejection, a repeat of a traumatic event
- Write your fear down on paper and acknowledge it
- Now, ask yourself what the solution would be to your fear and write the solution down at least a dozen times

## Examples of Facing Your Fears

### Fear

- I'm afraid of failing
- I'm afraid of being rejected
- I'm afraid of being abused again
  
- **Remember: The choice is yours... you can "fold your hand" and remain afraid, or you can empower your life and enjoy the peace and happiness you deserve.**

### Solution

- I know that if I keep trying I will eventually succeed
- I'm strong enough to handle rejection and I have the courage to risk being vulnerable
- I won't allow myself to be abused, if someone tries to abuse me I will fight back

## Exercising Courage

- Pick something that you are afraid of doing, but you know would cause you no physical danger if you did it
- **Examples:**
  - Public speaking
  - Approaching someone of the opposite sex and starting a conversation
  - Learning something new
  - Breaking a habit
- Make a decision to "make a fool of yourself" and do this thing, even though it is scary
- Learn to take a deep breath, count one-two-three and ACT, even though it causes anxiety or fear
- A supportive friend can be a cheerleader to help you with this exercise