

DR. ALEX DIAZ

SPRING NEWSLETTER

Fear, The Emotion That Inhibits Peak Performance

Imagine yourself reaching an old age, seated by the fireplace, and taking a moment to look back at your life only to conclude, with little remorse, that you achieved what you set out to accomplish. What do you think it will feel having lived your life with little regrets? When successful people are asked, what prevents people from achieving their best, they point out to fear. Fear can become a paralyzing emotion, which is often dictated by negatively painting the outcome of our immediate future goals. Fear can be portrayed in many different shapes and forms. We can be fearful of our own abilities to achieve a goal, not meeting other's expectations, feeling rejected or being not good enough.

Fear prevents us from taking action. Rarely, we admit feeling fear. Often, we point to life circumstances as culprits for our failures. But, at the end of the day, it was mainly us who found "obstacles" that interfered from achieving success. For some of us, these "obstacles" are so credible that we become very good at convincing ourselves and others for not achieving our goals. However, if we looked very closely, it was mostly us who got in our own way from reaching our goals.



We do not just feel fear all of the sudden. Perceptions feed emotions. Our five senses gather information from our environment, which are absorbed in electrical signals that remain stored in brain. If electrical signals are linked to an event connected to fear, its simple recollection or perception will trigger fear responses. For example, a golfer needs to hit a shot over water. Looking at the water triggers electrical signals stored in the brain, which are connected to the emotion of fear. This emotion will then travel inside the body by tensing up our muscles and tendons. As the golfer swings the club, the body will be constricted from its normal fluidity and, most likely, cause the swing to be flawed enough to increase the chances of landing the ball in the water.

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How often has it happened to you that you are planning an event and your body is already responded to it? If you are walking into your unreasonable bosses' office, your body will tense way before you make it there. If you are a tennis player and compete versus a much talented opponent, you will most likely play with little pressure. However, if you find yourself going ahead in the score, suddenly the fear of not wanting to lose will appear.

Three tips to overcome fears:

1- Successful individuals are driven to achieve specific goals. Gold medalist gymnast, Nadia Comaneci, said, "I do not run away from a challenge because I am afraid. Instead, I run toward it because the only way to escape fear is to trample it beneath your feet." They thrive to achieve a goal that keeps them motivated more so than focusing on the prize or trophy. As Brian Moran said, "when you focus on changing your actions, you experience incremental performance. When, however, your thinking shifts, everything changes."

2- Equally important, when your passion becomes the motivating drive toward success, a mental shift takes from that of paying too much attention to mental distractors to focusing on achieving your dreams. Having passion makes us more determined. We are more likely to overcome challenges rather than succumb to obstacles.



3-Controlling the controllable. It may sound like an old cliché, but how true it is. You can only manage what is in from of you. To overcome fear, focus on factors you have control over. Positive thinking processes, visualization before and during performance, breathing techniques that trigger relaxation, and

surrounding yourselves around encouraging people are all under your control.

Manage your fears and it will create a positive domino effects. It enhances trust, lifts confidence, and builds self-belief. A surely worthwhile outcome!!!





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UPCOMING TALKS:

Invitation only July 12, 2017, I will be talking at a luncheon organized
by **Menninger Clinic at Westport, CT**

Helping Our Bodies Manage Stress Responses



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