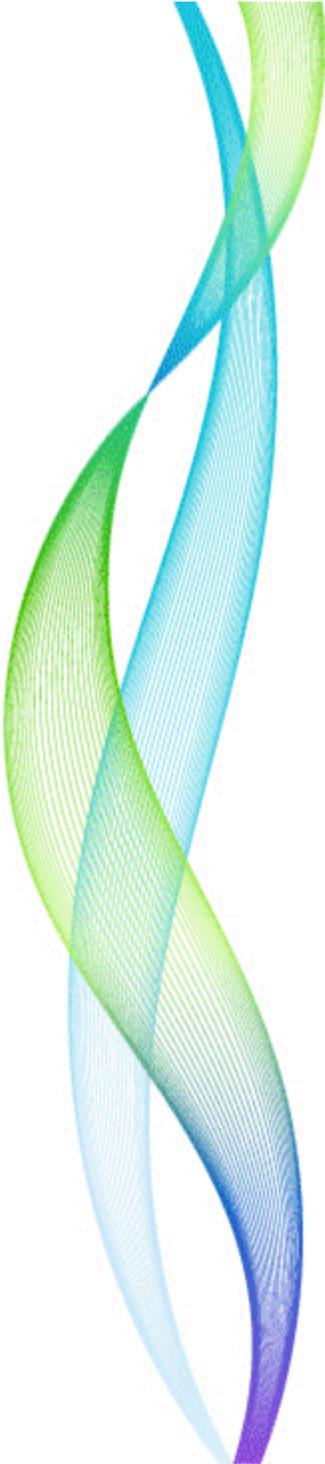


October 2016

**Focus:** The Upside of Fear

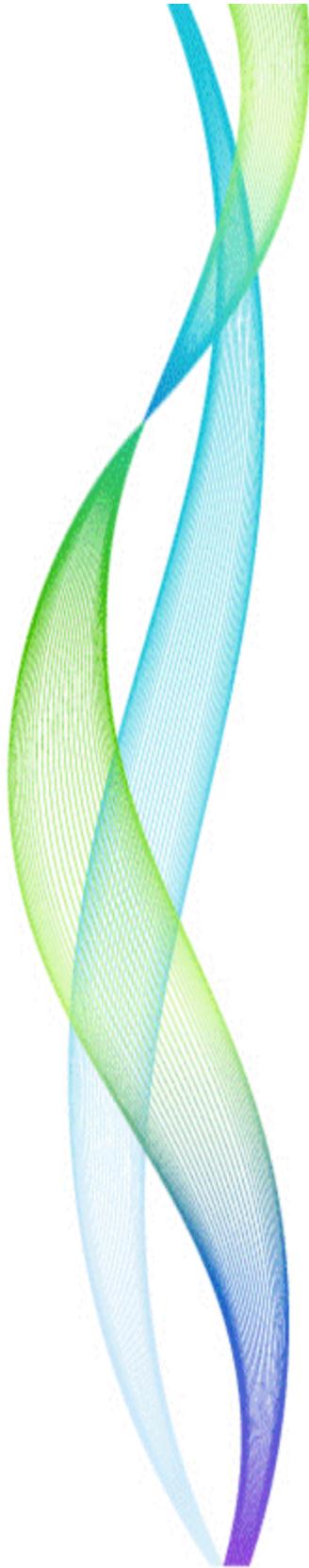
*Don't be afraid of your fears. They're not there to scare you.  
They're there to let you know that something is worth it.*  
— C. JoyBell C.



It's that time of year when Halloween goblins and zombies decorate our lawns as easily as U.S. flags did on July 4. Most adults don't fear Halloween decorations or costumes, as we know that they're intended to be in "good fun". But real fear is an interesting feeling, in that of all the feelings we experience, it's often one that our society strongly encourages us to squash down. Fear is for little kids; we know there isn't *really* a monster under their beds, right?

Many of our clients grew up with the message that whatever was scary should be minimized, rationalized, defended or even dismissed. Parents (with good intentions, by the way) teach kids to put aside their fears and plunge ahead. *It will make them more resilient adults*, they say. But it's also no wonder that these same people find themselves later justifying what feels "off" to them: *My new girlfriend asked for my Facebook password; I'm sure it's no big deal*, or, *My co-worker gives me a really creepy feeling but I don't want to hurt his feelings so I'll meet him for drinks, just the two of us*.

Fear—whether real or perceived—serves a purpose. Whether it's the hair on the back of your neck, a pit in your stomach or goose bumps on your arms, these fear-associated sensations show up for a reason. They're there to motivate you to do something—or *not* do something that doesn't feel right to you. The tricky part is learning how to distinguish true fear from unnecessary worry. True fear is based on something you perceive as dangerous, either in your immediate surroundings or circumstances; worry, on the other hand, is based on



something in your imagination or memory (which, in our “bad news makes good TV ratings” world, there’s always a plethora of unfortunate events upon which to draw). It’s been said that true fear is involuntary, while worry—a manufactured fear—is a choice.

If a bear is standing in front of you, you’re going to take action. If you’re going camping at a national park where there *might* be bears, however, worrying constantly about them won’t change that fact. What *will* help is reading up on bear behavior and following park guidelines about keeping food locked up, then relaxing so that you can actually enjoy your vacation. **IF** a bear happens to visit your campsite, you’re prepared. **BUT** you know the chances are very slim, so you can rely instead on your intuition—quite the opposite of unnecessary worry.

Listen to your body. Practice asking, *Am I really in danger, or am I worried about something that could, but probably won’t, happen?* Anything that makes you feel “off”, such as the example of giving your new girlfriend your Facebook password, you can avoid worrying about by simply not doing. Learn to trust, without denial, when something needs your attention. Think of fear as a gift, but learn to tell the difference between fear and worry.

*Reminders:*

We made it! As of Oct. 1 our **new office space**, located just around the corner from our previous space at **8140 Walnut Hill Lane, Suite 450, Dallas, Texas 75231** is open for business! Our phone number and website are the same.

If you are a patient of Dr. Smith’s, he will not move until later in the month so continue to visit him at his current location until Oct. 24<sup>th</sup>.

We’re also in the process of changing our billing software, which will include an improved patient portal and allow clients to eventually schedule appointments online. While there may be a few technical bumps along the way, we ask that you bear with us as we move toward this improvement.

We can’t wait for you to see our new space! We think you’re going to love the changes.



**Reconnect:** Be a good listener.

If you know your partner is feeling anxious about something, whether it's a job-related situation, a parenting issue, a friendship challenge, etc., try to be a "good" listener. Encourage him or her to share feelings with you; ask them what, specifically, is the most stressful aspect of what they're experiencing? Don't be a problem solver (unless asked, and even then, focus first on hearing them out); just be a great listener and an awesome friend. Finish your time with a few words of encouragement and/or a hug.

**Bibliotherapy:** *The Gift of Fear* by Gavin de Becker

"In this empowering book, Gavin de Becker, the man Oprah Winfrey calls the nation's leading expert on violent behavior, shows you how to spot even subtle signs of danger—before it's too late. Shattering the myth that most violent acts are unpredictable, de Becker, whose clients include top Hollywood stars and government agencies, offers specific ways to protect yourself and those you love, including...how to act when approached by a stranger...when you should fear someone close to you...what to do if you are being stalked...how to uncover the source of anonymous threats or phone calls...the biggest mistake you can make with a threatening person...and more. Learn to spot the danger signals others miss. It might just save your life." —source: [www.amazon.com](http://www.amazon.com)

**Time-Out:** "Mornings are a nightmare!"

If you've got a pokey puppy for a school-aged child (and who doesn't?), mornings can be particularly stressful. *How many times do I have to tell them to put on their shoes and brush their teeth? Why are we always pulling into the school parking lot on two wheels, right before the bell rings?!* While it often seems easier for parents to do everything, children of all ages are quite capable of taking age-appropriate ownership of their actions. Are there things such as making breakfast or lunch that you or they can do the night before? This might mean that they won't have a Pinterest-worthy bento box lunch, but as long as they're eating something healthy, does it really matter? Less stressful morning might also include simply getting up fifteen minutes earlier, and placing shoes, jackets and backpacks next to the exit door. Finally, letting kids deal with the consequences of being late is often the best motivation for future timeliness, and positive reinforcement for being on time goes



a long way.

**Self Care Strategies: Pick Three**

What three things have been bugging you, yet you “haven’t gotten around to them?” Maybe it’s a burned out light bulb in your office, a doctor’s appointment you’ve been meaning to schedule or a car that desperately needs washing? Pick three things you’re tired of looking at/avoiding and just do them. It’s amazing how accomplishing three small things can make you feel less stressed!

**Take Two: *Sully***

“On Jan. 15, 2009, Capt. Chesley "Sully" Sullenberger (Tom Hanks) tries to make an emergency landing in New York's Hudson River after US Airways Flight 1549 strikes a flock of geese. Miraculously, all of the 155 passengers and crew survive the harrowing ordeal, and Sullenberger becomes a national hero in the eyes of the public and the media. Despite the accolades, the famed pilot now faces an investigation that threatens to destroy his career and reputation.” — source: [www.moviefone.com](http://www.moviefone.com)

**Our Time is Up:** Stayed tuned for our November issue!