

Survivalists and Fear

By Joseph Parish



Nearly everyone at some time, or other has experienced the sensation of fear. Fear is normal for any living thing to experience, and acts as a danger threshold for our body. Human bodies are frail, and often times the owners of those bodies fail to comprehend the limits that Mother Nature has imposed upon us, but fear tends to balance this out, and warn us of impending perils.

There are several ways that one can react to this emotion when exposed to a survival situation. In the animal kingdom the intended victim is presented with two choices. As the moment of attack is quickly approached the attacker will let loose a fearsome sound. The animal being attacked then has two avenues from which to retaliate. The victim can freeze solid in their tracks in which case they will likely be food for the attacker in a short period of time, or they can quickly dash off perhaps avoiding their assailant, and living for another day.

Humans are similar to animals in this respect. If we freeze up in a time of emergency it could very well end up being our last few moments, however if we react with confidence, and purpose we could survive, and actually be made a bit stronger for the next encounter. An interesting note here is that often when our brain goes numb with the onset of a situation our body automatically reverts to our training which we have received. This is a concept that I learned well while in the military. When terror strikes us, our bodies will respond as they have been trained to do. Often times you will read about someone who has recently experienced a dreadful experience, and as a result they usual remark that "if I had only done..." This kind of frozen response is a result of the lack of training. If

the person had received the proper skills needed, they would have acted immediately under just about any circumstances.

Few survivalists realize the value that training in escape, and invasion can have on our ability to survive emergency situations. For those who may not be familiar with it, escape, and invasion is a training exercise used in the military to prepare fighting men, and women to respond to enemy capture. The concept is simple – you try to keep from being captured. This type of training allows our body to fully function efficiently during those times when our minds tend to freeze up. Let's be realistic here as there will continually be fearful situations in our life whether they relate to survival, or not. In these cases, we will experience fear, and even when properly prepared a specific amount of fear will still be present. The object is to get the proper training so that we are not paralyzed by fear when it strikes.

I have always tried to approach my fears head-on. If I feared climbing a tower, then I often found that by doing the thing that I feared the most usually made the fear non-existent. Once we can accomplish a feared task its losses all of its ability to harm us. Remember the old saying that “all we have to fear is fear itself”.