

## **THE FEAR PROTOCOL**

### **STEP 1. Notice What's Really Happening**

### **STEP 2. Notice What Has Already Worked Out**

### **STEP 3. Notice What You Can Take Charge Of**

### **STEP 4. Notice What's Going Well Right Now**

### **STEP 5. Time It and Start Again**

#### **STEP 1. Notice What's Really Happening**

Tell your mind that you are leaving your worry alone for a moment. Know that it will still be there if you want to go back to it later.

Fear is always about the future. It's about what might happen. Notice that what you're afraid of probably isn't happening in this moment and may never happen. In fact, most of the things we worry about never actually occur.

#### **STEP 2. Notice What Has Already Worked Out**

Consciously calm your breathing and go back in time to the last thing you were really worried about. Notice how much of your worrying helped it work out. Did worry have a direct positive impact on the outcome? Did it work out the way it worked out regardless of the amount of time you spent in fear and anxiety?

Also, notice that, one way or another, it did work out. Go back over the last several weeks and months and look at the things that caused you a great deal of anxiety and notice how many of them have already worked themselves out better than you feared. For now, you are still alive and carrying on. Go back to earlier in the day and notice if what you were worried about happened yet today.

Now, to whatever degree you can muster, allow yourself to trust that things will work themselves out this time too, one way or another. Sometimes it will be in ways you want, sometimes not, and sometimes it will work out even better than you would have thought.

### **STEP 3. Notice What You Can Take Charge Of**

Since fear seems to come from feeling out of control of the situation, pay attention to what you can take charge of.

You are ultimately in charge of how you feel, for one. It is your choice to be in fear and anxiety, or to find a way to trust in Life. Consider how you can be proactive and take charge of the decisions you need to make today and tomorrow.

In fact, make one firm decision right now, even if it is a relatively minor one.

### **STEP 4. Notice What's Going Well Right Now**

Consciously relax and breathe as calmly as you can. Find something to be grateful about that is happening right now in the moment and put your attention there.

Find anything, even if it's the fact that your sheets are clean, or you can hear a nice breeze outside, or the neighbors have stopped shouting.

Notice the systems in place that are working for you. In your mind's eye, see the people who are helpful to you and say thank you to them one by one. Your doctor, your friends, your family, your coworkers.

If you are getting any financial assistance whatsoever, acknowledge that help to yourself and say thank you on the inside. If you've noticed any improvements in your condition, say thank you.

If the people you love are doing well, say thank you. If things could be worse than they are now, notice that they aren't, and say thank you. Say thank you for all the things that could have gone wrong and didn't.

### **STEP 5. Time It and Start Again**

Go back to worrying if you really need to, but time it. Take exactly 10 minutes to worry excessively without making yourself wrong for it. Stop immediately when the time is up. Work through the protocol from the top again until you feel better. End on a positive note.