

Burying The Devils

Everyone has fears and bad habits that impact their lives. We don't think about them because we incorporate them into who we are. This article tells how to clear your life of these problems. Find the home site of author Bill Allin at <http://billallin.com>

Somehow our devils are never quite what we expect when we meet them face to face.
- Nelson DeMille, author (b.1943)

Our devils remain our devils precisely because we refuse to face them.

Be they bad habits or fears, they eat away at our emotional wellbeing, seldom reaching the surface where we must address them, such as when someone else becomes involved with them as part of our interaction with them.

We tend to be afraid of our fears, as DeMille said. That is, we can't overcome our fears because we won't address them for what they are. We imagine them to be much greater than they are, with power almost overwhelming. Our fears, then, become monsters in their own right, which causes us to fear them as if they led lives of their own.

Let's take an easy example, a fear of heights. There are two main reasons why we might legitimately be cautious about heights. First is that most of us don't ascend to heights far above the ground (or the floor) on a regular basis. Thus climbing might take us into an environment or situation with which we are so unfamiliar that we might lose our composure.

That's a matter of familiarity. High steel workers walk along girders dozens of floors above the ground daily in their work without thinking about it. They don't fear the height because they are familiar with it. It has become like walking along a long narrow hallway. We wouldn't fear walking that same hallway (or girder) if we weren't concerned about falling to our death. The situation is so unusual for most of us that we don't want to put ourselves into a situation where we might make a mistake.

The second reason for supreme caution about heights is that we might be unsure of our balance. Those with good balance find it almost impossible to understand that some people have trouble standing on one foot on the floor, let alone riding a bicycle, walking on a balance beam or doing some other physical activities that require balance.

In my case, for example, it took me three days of much practice and falling before I gained sufficient balance to ride a bicycle. Most kids learn this within minutes or an hour or two. To this day I have trouble standing on one foot with my eyes closed because the balance mechanisms in my ear don't work as well as that of most people. Balance is not the same for everyone, so some people have a right to what is apparently an unreasonable caution about anything requiring good balance.

Having poor balance, however, does not excuse me or anyone from trying to improve the skill level we have. We can learn. Those with poor balance, for example, can learn to cope with situations they might encounter, even to the extent of climbing a ladder with confidence. Practice is part of it, as is taking precautions necessary to give them confidence in knowing that a fall resulting in injury or death is not possible.

When most people find someone who can help them gain the confidence and take the precautions necessary to address a particular fear, or even to do it without assistance, they address that fear and find that it was much greater in their imagination than it was in reality.

That's part of what our imagination is about, making things bigger than they really are. We need to understand that fear is not something we should turn over to our imagination.

The imagination tends to dominate more in the unconscious mind. By granting it power over our fears, we elevate it to our consciousness. We don't need to give it that power. We can keep that power within ourselves.

With that power, we can overcome our devils.

Bill Allin

***Turning It Around: Causes and Cures for Today's Epidemic Social Problems*, a book for adults to learn what they missed, mislearned or maldeveloped as children so they can return their lives to better balance rather than succumbing to fear.
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