

You Probably Don't Know Your Greatest Fears

You think your greatest fear is heights. Or confronting your boss. Or succeeding at work. Or facing down spiders. Or dying in a plane crash.

You might be wrong about that.

These fears are fearsome, to be sure. We have to confront serious psychological discomfort to get past them. But people overcome these sorts of fears all the time. They climb tall mountains, tell their bosses what for, get promoted, eat spiders, and become pilots.

What people don't overcome is the fears they never consider. And these are the greatest fears – the ones we so fear so much that we don't even admit them to be possible to us.

If fear is at least half made of avoidance, then it makes sense that you could conceal many of your worst fears from yourself.

Maybe you think your greatest fear is making a cold sales call, when in fact your greatest fear is fear of becoming a world-moving industrial entrepreneur. You can think about the fear of the cold call, but the notion of becoming something truly great is so petrifying a challenge that it doesn't even register.

Maybe the things we fear most are not the things that scare us, but the tasks which we do not imagine to be possible. And it's only when we push the limits of the possible that we can learn more about these deeper fears.

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