

A SEEKER'S GUIDE TO

## A LIFE WORTH LIVING

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### **Terrifying, Scary or Just a Walk in the Park?**

There are masses of things that can scare us, and as we are all different it's impossible to say where the scale starts and ends. What is absolutely terrifying to one person may be an exciting new challenge to another.

Is it something to do with our upbringing? Were our parents or carers people who seemed to be scared of so many things? It has been said that the idea of dying is far less threatening for some than the idea of living.

Grown-ups who tell children how they worry about them can mean that if anything bad happens to them they would be grief-stricken, so their fear (on a subconscious level) is at least partly for themselves. Many children are prevented from doing something they would really enjoy by a parent fearing the worst, and how sad is that when the rest of the child's friends are allowed to do what is off limits to them.

### **We don't always listen**

Many times parents speak from their own experience and can often be right—how many unwanted difficulties and fatal accidents have there been when a young person defies a parental ban? A case I remember is of a young man who sneaked the keys to his mother's car and, with three friends on board, lost control of it, crashed and they all died.

But when we become adult and go out into the world, then we're responsible for our lives and fear has much to do with the way we lead them. Some of us thrive on new challenges, either physical or mental, while others become fearful of the least thing. I'm ashamed to say I belong much more to the second category. Once I have been forced to overcome my fears, then I can handle any situation like a pro. But, oh, the waste of energy spent in anticipating ... anticipating what? I mean it's not as if I'm being asked to go scuba diving or bungee jumping, although for someone else that would be a brilliant way to spend a weekend.

### **Looking the part**

We tend to think that everyone else can handle any situation much better than us and when I admitted to being terrified of our boss to a work colleague much more confident-seeming than me, she told me she felt exactly the same way. From the comments made by other people I realise that I manage to hide my unease pretty well, but that doesn't settle the inner turmoil each time something new comes up to be dealt with.

In my book I point out that FEAR means False Expectation Appearing Real and although I understand that very well, I'm still at the airport, the train or bus station ages before I need to travel (just in case something happens to delay me en route), still petrified of starting a new job, a new course, dealing with a novel situation. Lack of self-confidence plays an important role in our fears, because if we believe we can do it, whatever it is, we don't need to be scared. Even if something doesn't work out as well as they'd expected, confident people can use the event in several ways, either as an example of how *not* to do it in the future, as a springboard to greater things or just as a walk in the park. So perhaps it's developing our self-confidence that people like me need to work on first.