



CIRCULAR LEADERSHIP MASTERMIND TOPIC:-
MANAGING FEAR, INNER CRITIC, IMPOSTER SYNDROME

The different types of Fear:-

(draws from Tara Mohr's ideas in her book Playing Big)

1. Unhelpful fear

This is a fear of projected or imagined things that could (but is probably unlikely to) happen in the future. Usually it's not based on evidence but could draw on a negative experience from the past that is blown completely out of proportion.

This fear triggers our fight or flight system and shifts our cognitive functioning to our amygdala. This means we go into "tunnel vision" seeing only problems and we struggle to be creative and find solutions.

Unhelpful fear makes you feel stuck, small and scared – fuelling your inner critic who's always keen to berate you for being incompetent and incapable.

As a consequence it stops you from being your best self, tapping into your best ideas and being the best leader that you can be. The cortisol/adrenaline release that happens with fight or flight can also take a toll on your health.

Signs that you're experiencing unhelpful fear:-

You feel tension and contraction in your body; you're over-reacting to the set of circumstances; you're imagining the worst case scenario; your mind struggles to see past the problem

Solution:-

Don't listen to this fear, instead recognise that you're being held hostage and find ways to release and move through it. Do an emotional release process using music to access the relevant underlying emotion; Listen to the PowerType Release recording; do the process in the next section to dissolve limiting beliefs.

2. Helpful fear

This is what we experience when we're on the precipice of something significant and bold. We label it as fear but really it's a mix of feelings – possibility, excitement, apprehension about the unknown. Because it's a stretch beyond your comfort zone it feels at once scary and exciting.

It's a sign post that we're heading in the right direction. It's our soul recognising it's being called to expand further into our purpose – or at least in a direction that will serve us. So



when we feel this type of fear, it's a good thing! But because it requires us to expand who we are in the world, our little ego gets freaked out by unknown and feeling out of its depth.

Signs that you're experiencing helpful fear:-

You're body feels more open, tingling and perhaps even a little ungrounded; you might oscillate between feeling expansive and contracted; your mind might be buzzing with ideas and possibilities.

Solution:-

Acknowledge that this is a sign from your soul, feel excited about that and lean into it. Follow this path but know that you don't need to make any sudden moves. Take baby steps in that direction if that feels right. As you do you may need to reassure the small scared part that it's going to be ok and that you've got this.

3. Appropriate survival fear

This is a natural response to a some form of potential or actual danger or threat to you or your loved ones. This fear is based on current real evidence and is what this emotion was designed for – to act as a guidance system to keep us safe.

It is therefore appropriate to feel fear and respond accordingly. That said, be mindful, if your system is running on high alert from past experiences which make you over react to a perceived threat (a car cuts across you on the road, a close call but you're safe, however your body responds as if you actually had a life threatening crash).

Also, if the fear relates to something over which you have no control and is ongoing, it may not serve you to remain in a continued state of fear. For example, during the Covid pandemic a certain amount of fear has been useful to ensure we take relevant precautions to stay safe. Once these precautions are in place, staying in a state of fear would probably do us more harm than good. At some point we have to let go of the fear and find a way to be in a more empowered state.



Process to help you dissolve a limiting belief

Our fears, inner critic and imposter syndrome are all fuelled by the meaning we place on the situation we are in. They are fed by thoughts like “I’m not good enough at this”, “I don’t have enough experience”, “they don’t respect me”, “this is going to be hard”.

The beauty is that if we create the meaning, then we also have the power to change it.

This is a process I’ve adapted from Katie Byron’s the Work which takes your mind through a process of rational enquiry to unpick and dissolve limited thinking.

Think of the limiting thought and ask yourself these questions and write the answers down:-

1. Is this thought empirically true? (If mind is hooked on the answer being yes ask yourself Q2)
2. Can you absolutely 100% know that it's true? (backed by evidence!)
3. How do you react and what happens to you when you believe that thought?
4. How would you act if you didn’t have the thought?
5. What is another positive and supportive thought that could also apply in this situation?
6. Find at least 3 examples that support this new positive thought
7. Take immediate action from the place of the new belief

Remember you don’t have to do it alone!

You can either:-

Connect with your Sorceress or seek support from with others - both will help ease any fear and the sense of being stuck.

Sorceress (intangible)

Allows you to know that you are never alone and you are supported by unseen forces. What these forces are will depend on your belief system – it could be a higher power, the universal energy that connects all things, the laws of quantum physics or your inner wisdom.

Activate your sorceress energy by doing whatever allows you to get centred and connected with that present peaceful part of you. From that place ask for help and trust that help is there and available to you (even if it is from the recesses of your unconscious mind). You have magical witchy powers to make this happen!

Support from others (tangible)

Reach out and seek support from people that could help you - colleagues, mentor, coach, and of course this mastermind group. Often, the simple act of reaching out for help unlocks something in your brain and you end up finding your own solutions! Plus collaborating with others makes things far easier and more fun. Use the skills you learnt in the communicating with influence skills CLM session to enrol people to get on board with your idea.