

Mastering fear

by

Barefoot Doctor

overcome anxiety and panic for good



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Introduction

Everybody behind the façade is absolutely terrified. That's the truth of it. There are many reasons that people are scared. One of them is the fear of abandonment. On a daily basis there is the fear the other will not like you talking to them. And if say, I assume you don't like me and you turn me off, the fear at some primal level is of being abandoned, of being rejected from the tribe, from the clan, from the pack. Another fear is of people hitting us. I'm a martial artist, have been since I was eleven. I'm aware of the ways of the fight and I know what goes on. You might walk down a street and see two guys sizing each other up. And the one who is obviously going to be the winner in the fight takes the dominant position and the other one naturally defers. Being a martial artist I instinctively defer to the other. I've got nothing to prove. And it makes it easier, things move faster that way. While obviously maintaining my dignity. And that's important too. There is the fear of losing your dignity, your uprightness, becoming a crumpled person. There's the fear of being beaten by life, the fear of humiliation, being outcast, the fear of destitution, of starvation, of suffering awful pain, of suffering loneliness, of being alone. Underneath all this, when you allow yourself to be awake to it, is the fear of the existential terror.

The fact that we're in a cosmos that is so infinitely fierce and ferocious, and if we actually become aware of it it's rather frightening. And to know that we're on a planet that is spinning on its axis at 1,000 miles per hour and zooming round the sun at 66,000 miles per hour. And it's not a flat thing, it's not a big clod of solid stuff, it's about twenty miles thick. And underneath that twenty miles, in most places anyway, some places are much thinner than that, it's as hot as the surface of the sun. If you look at a volcano erupting, which I've had the privilege of doing recently, you'll see it's really powerful. We have the power of the cosmos right under our feet. And then we also have the power out there, which we tend to think of as up there, but that's when we thought the earth was flat. We're on a sphere, so it's out there, and out there there's nothing. And then you get to a galaxy that's colliding with another galaxy, and you know how big a galaxy is. Imagine the power of that. And you know that life is cruel, you know that nature is fierce and cruel. It's certainly not sentimental. Yes, it's beautiful, but it's fierce. Look at a cat. Cats are beautiful little things. You want to make a video go viral on YouTube, put a cat on it. Everybody loves a cat. And yet you watch the cat go for a mouse or a bird, that's ferocity, that is the ferocity of nature, that animal is wild.

And we're afraid of nature in its raw state and all the possibilities that nature could bring about if it didn't treat us well. And we mask all this. That's why we've built our infrastructure, our supermarkets, our distribution systems, our communication systems, and so on. It's to mask the fiercesome nature of nature. And as we learn we can't do that, it starts rebelling. And we're facing these sort of multilevel, multidimensional crisis to our very survival as a result of it. But that's how we operate, it's how we roll. We can't change that. And this primal fear of being hit, this primal fear of loud noise, this primal fear of falling off ledges, this primal fear of fire, and so on is so deeply wired into our circuitry from the time, however long ago it was, when we were living on a planet that had fire erupting all over the place and big wild animals and massive horrible monsters. And people with no sense of ethics, and who had no respect for other people's lives, who would just club you if they

needed to. We don't know this of course, we're just assuming, but we imagine anyway.

We're all terrified of each other, we're all terrified of existence, we're terrified of the universe, and we cover that fear over, because if we didn't we couldn't function. And we have various strategies for doing that, most of which we learned when we were children when we actually didn't know very much about anything. We feel that we're not good enough. All of us intrinsically feel we're not good enough. And that's why we buy all the stuff, that's why we make all the things, because we feel that we're not good enough. And this is a fear, the fear that if you're not good enough you will not be accepted into the hunting pack and you will die from starvation. You'll be ejected from the clan and so die. That's how it was in those days one presumes. You had to stick together.

Now this is so deeply programmed into our wiring that, firstly we can't stop it operating, and secondly, we're not even aware it's going on. However, this underlying fear, if it's not acknowledged, if it's not adopted and embraced as a force, if we're in resistance to it, if we're in denial of it, works away against us, it eats away at us and it prevents us living fully. And we become people pleasers, we take second rate options, we afford ourselves much less of an experience, much less of an adventure than life is offering us.

I'm not suggesting it's better to have a bigger adventure. I don't know. I like it big. There are people who like it even bigger. Everybody has their own way of doing it. But what I do know is that each and every moment of being here could be the last moment, we never actually know, we mustn't ever take continuity for granted. But in each and every moment there is this opportunity to feel beautiful, to feel like, *'Oh this is amazing, I'm alive, I have the gift, the gift of all gifts, I exist, I'm here, thank you, thank you, thank you'*. And when in that state it seems that life presents more opportunities, more opportunities for fun, for self-expression, for self-development, for expressing your creativity, your original ideas, more opportunity to connect with people in a state of love. Because that is actually what we all want. We all want inclusion, everybody wants inclusion. We go about it in the most ridiculous ways, by becoming celebrities, becoming rich, becoming a victim, becoming this, becoming that, committing crimes. People do crazy things just to be included. None of which actually works.

Most of the stuff people do to be included actually excludes them. What includes us in the human family, which is what we're talking about, is love. I'm not just talking about hitting a word on you and you going Pavlovian, yeh, love, good. It's not about that. Love is a very simple thing. It's when the chest feels open, when the breast bone, as if it's a pair of sliding doors feels as if it's parted, so that the armour in there that protects you from connecting with people dissolves for a moment, and that allows the precious jewel of your essence, of who you really are, that beautiful being who when you were born people picked up and went, 'oh you're so beautiful, so beautiful, I love you, I love you', the way you can inspire that love with your beauty, that is still there, right in in your heart. And that's really what you came here to do, to share that with everybody. When the heart is open that radiates naturally, and in its radiation it somehow simultaneously draws in that same quality from everyone else. That's what makes you feel connected, that's what makes you not feel alone, that's what makes you feel good enough, that's what makes you feel not afraid of being ejected from the clan, abandoned, and therefore left to die. But this love can't just come from some concept, from

some ideal. It has to come from the depths of your being.

And that again sounds all very good and pretty, everyone knows what that means, sort of, but what exactly does that mean? The surface of your being is what shows in the front. The depths of your being is what's behind that. And you could say what's down underneath it. So it's an actual, what you could call, a psychospacial manoeuvre of drawing yourself, your presence, the experience of being you, out of the front of your body where it usually resides into the back of you. This I have to say, is probably the most important move I've ever learned in all of my life, in almost fifty years of studying it and practicing it. It's not spectacular, this idea of just sitting into your back, it's no big deal, it's not like bang, that's it, I'm enlightened forever. When you drop back though everything goes still, everything goes silent, everything becomes a very strong feeling. Because that's what the back is really, it's still, its silent and its strong. And when you sit in your back, that's what you become. You become the presence in the background that's observing all the time. It's not partial to whether things are easy, or difficult, it doesn't mind. It's just somehow always in a state of perpetual delight just for being here to experience all this. It's not involved in the drama of being here because all of that goes on in the front of you, in the noisy, vulnerable relatively weak front of you. You've got the noise of your belly, the noise of your heart, the noise of your lungs, the noise of all the stuff going on inside of you. You've got the noise of all the emotional resistance to just being alive, to receiving all the information that's coming through every moment. You have the closing down of the chest to protect you from the pain of betrayal and skulduggery that in turn closes the throat down and stops you communicating freely, authentically. And this general closing of the front of the body pulls the head forward, very subtly, and that tips the mind if you like, into the front brain.

And that's why we're all very front brain orientated. Now what the front brain does is create a series of descriptions about what the sense organs are perceiving in front of you. The sense organs all face forwards, so you perceive the world out there as being in front of you. And what you do is make descriptions of what you're seeing, or what you're perceiving. You then mistake this series, this highly complex series of descriptions built up from childhood onwards, which as I say, is a time when you don't know a lot about the world from which to base your descriptions, this heavily complex series of descriptions occurs in the front of the brain and you mistake that for reality. You then notice yourself in relation to that complex of descriptions and you've got this whole drama going on - am I winning, am I losing, am I winning, am I losing, and you'll use different, rather spurious criteria on which to judge that, for example how well something is doing, how likely is that to happen, how badly is this one doing, and so on and so on. All of it are just descriptions, all of it is spurious, all of it is just subjective, yet it's taken to be absolute truth that is you, this is your world, this is your reality. Then you spend inordinate amounts of energy rushing about out here in the front of you trying to sort it all out, and make it neat and tidy, make it stable, get a state of static balance, make everything secure, so you won't have to worry any more. It's a great idea, but you know it doesn't work. And this for one very simple reason, because everything from the tiniest quark or neutrino, to the largest galactic cluster, is spinning. So this entire universe is on a spin. The whole thing is looping. How can anything remain static when everything is spinning? It's not possible. So balance, for example, is not a static state, enlightenment is not a

static state, peace is not a static state, being clever is not a static state, being rich is not a static state, being happy is not a static state. None of it is a static state. All of it is moving. The whole thing is a big dance. And there is no alternative. People have the most amazing Jedi tricks, such as making loads of money and making it really work for them, so that they're cushioned from the inconvenience of nature, they'll have their chauffeur driven car wait outside the restaurant so their shoe leather only has to contact the ground for four steps, or whatever, and get a private jet so they won't have to go through the ordeal of standing in line with people in airports and so on.

Yes that will remove a lot of the inconvenience, but you're still living in fear. And that might enable people to take breaks momentarily from feeling the fear. But it won't guarantee it, that's for sure. I spend a lot of time in these sort of places, the French Riviera is even more poignant. You see a lot of superyachts rolling by. If you happen to be standing on the shore looking out at any moment in summer, you will see ridiculous amounts of wealth going by on boats. And I have never ever seen anyone smile on those boats. It doesn't mean they're not doing it, they might be shielding their smiles from me, I have no idea. But I know that surroundings being comfortable does not preclude this feeling of fear that prevents life being beautiful. And true success surely must be being able to stop at any single moment and go, 'I love this. I couldn't actually be having it any better than this. This is beautiful. I love this, thank you. I'm loving being alive'. That's the test. That's why people want to make the money, that's why they do all the stuff they do, become famous and so on, to feel that they're loving being alive. So, and this is actually Taoist wisdom, flip it on its head, start by loving being alive, and all the other stuff, the lesser gifts, because it is all lesser gifts, will come anyway. And because then you're in the flow of the Tao, the big wave, the roll of nature that includes the fear, because you're with that, the fear of it being taken away from you, of life becoming inconvenient - yes it's still there, the front part of you still fears that, but you know that it will be a story - you'll grow through it, you know that you'll be protected, you know that you'll roll with it and that the energy, the chi will support you through.

The antidote to all the blocks to your flow really consists in learning to drop into your back. So, that's the first thing we're going to do. Acknowledge the fear. This is primal. This is scary. It's scary being here. It's really frightening this universe. Acknowledge that, that you are terrified. Stop pretending just for one moment. We both acknowledge it, we are terrified, that's our natural state, terrified, and it's OK. Breathe with that. Breathe with that trembling fear inside of you, just keep breathing slowly. Let your belly expand as you breathe in, and flatten it to your spine as you breathe out. You swell it up to let the air in, you pull it back to push the air out. Notice your posture. If you're a bit hunched over, lengthen your spine, drop your shoulders, broaden out, raise your breastbone. Feel the muscles hanging off the bones and notice where they are tense for no reason, and just let that tension dissolve. Use your mind to say muscles soften. Something nice to do is spiral your hands. There's no particular order to it, they can go in all different directions, you can do what you like with it. What that does is get your energy moving, and it's such a lovely habit. This gets your mind moving. There'll always be something that gets stuck, you're missing the boat, or you're going to miss out and not get the right deal, or you're going to take yourself down a blind alley that's going to land you in a garbage can, or whatever, you've probably got a list all of your own. This is the

stuff that you're creating in the front of you. It's a story that you're making up. Because the thing hasn't happened. Real fear is if a tiger suddenly came at you, you'd be scared, or if the ground suddenly went from underneath you and you fell down into a chasm, that would be scary, or if there was suddenly a really loud noise, that would be scary, or if a fire came over the horizon very fast, or if some guy came round the corner firing an AK47, that would be scary or if an asteroid suddenly fell down. I could go on. These are real fears. The fear we're talking about here is fear that we're creating in our heads, we're inventing a horror story.

So you ask yourself, *'OK this horror story that I'm creating, is it real?'* Be honest with yourself, you have to then say *'of course it isn't'*. You can give yourself as many *'what ifs'* as you like, as long as you acknowledge that's what they are – *'what ifs'*. You can go for the usual option of rushing about trying to change things, to stop that happening, this *'what if'* thing. You can buy an insurance policy, or buy a house, or do this job, or whatever, and this might work, it does work for people at certain times. I'm not saying it's wrong to sort out the outside.

Or alternatively you can just drop it all and come into the back. Once you sit in your back you can then attend to the energetic cause of fear, which is that your kidneys are contracting. When that area contracts, and it's subtle, you feel fear. When the kidney area contracts fear arises. The mind then deftly and quickly posits a reason for that fear. And it does it so so fast that you think you're afraid of that *'what if'* thing happening. You're not, you're actually just afraid and then you're creating fearful thoughts. It's very important to remember this because it puts you in command of the process, rather than vice versa. So you come into your back, you desist from trying to sort out the outside. Let it sort itself out for a moment, take a rest. And say to yourself, *'I'm silent, I'm still, I'm strong'*. Take your mind down to your kidneys, at waist level, either side of the spine and use your mind to broaden it out there, to expand it. You can use your hands at the same time. Hold your hands up at waist level, palms facing each other, and move them towards and away from each other slowly. And as you do you'll feel a magnetic pull between them. It starts between the fingertips, and goes to the palms, that's chi. Now, as you do that you get this expanding, contracting concertina effect. You can feel that, if you're sensitive, happening in your kidney area too, just by intention.

So you're now conducting the flow of chi in your kidneys, and making it expand, contract, expand, contract. Now this may well be new for you. You might get it straight away, but you probably won't. You're going to have to practice this. That's how this stuff works. It's not instant gratification. It might be, but you've still got to work at it. If you really want the gift from this stuff. This isn't just like buy a pill, take it, sorted, because that doesn't work either, we all know that. You have to practice to develop it a little bit. And it's nice, it's not a chore. It's nice to sit and do this. Just feel the area of the kidneys, expand, contract, expand, contract.

Because we're usually really messed up in the head - very, very busy, no time for anything - it will help also to put your fists either side of your kidneys and turn them round and round. It's very crude and mechanical, but it helps. You're using your knuckles to knead the area. You can also put your palms there to let the heat penetrate. You can also put the back of your hands there and rub up and down. You can even use the Taoist healing sounds. They're great fun. There's one for each organ. And the one that warms and takes the contraction out of the

kidney, is *fuiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiii*. You can do it for other people as well as yourself. It's a silly noise, it's nice and it makes people laugh. And even that silliness lightens your spirit. It's like going off a high diving board and getting the sound to dive down into your kidneys. And it works. How they found this out goodness knows, but it works. Whether it's just getting to that part of the body and distracting thoughts by having the sound going on, that's enough, it's just to get the mind to the kidneys. Where your mind goes, blood and energy follows and then healing, balancing occurs. But it does in fact feel like the vibration is particular to that organ. You can feel it if you practice it. It's an option.

You can also go the herbal way. This is safe for anybody. Drink nettle tea - two or three medium to strong cups a day will put fire into your kidneys and thus warm your kidneys up. When we get afraid, when we have a fearful thought, that makes the kidneys contract, and/or they get cold. They can get cold from you rushing around, from straining too much, from using too much adrenalin, produced by the adrenals, which most of us do in fact run on most of the time - you're coming out of yourself all the time.

Then there has to be a willingness to love the feeling, to not be afraid of it, as that's silly, it's double punishment. Instead of fearing the fearful feeling, love it. It's a force. It's the force of nature, so breathe with it and go with it. Say *'it's fear and it's me who's generating it'*. It's a big one. You say:

'It's not as if its loud noises of danger around making this happen, it's my mind. Why am I generating this fear? Is it because I am utterly insane? Well probably. But the reason I am generating this fear is because the feeling it gives me makes me feel alive'.

Now when you can acknowledge that to yourself, notice how that immediately makes you feel powerful. Your mind will resist this. As soon as you acknowledge this it starts to turn down somehow. Or you get a handle on it and can soften it while still feeling alive. Say,

In fact I notice that the more I let the feeling subside, the more alive I feel'.

Once you get this your life will be so totally different. It will be different of course anyway because life changes, but this stuff changes people. It brings out the true self. It brings out the part of you that loves being alive. It brings out the powerful part of you It doesn't stop you feeling vulnerable. It doesn't stop you feeling awkward. It doesn't stop you feeling insecure. It doesn't stop you feeling down sometimes and all the rest of it. But whatever you're going through, you're able to maintain stability inside. You're able to keep coming back to this place where you can say *'Ah how curious, this is happening'*. So rather than wasting energy and running around trying to change something, like you've probably been doing all your life, this gives you the wisdom of these ancient Taoist sages, who really were clued in, and it's a great privilege that we have this knowledge now. And it's a great privilege for me firstly to be able to receive it, and secondly to be able to share it with you. This is what is going to make us evolve to the next level if anything is.

It really comes down to, *'am I a warrior, or am I a worrier'*? Do you want to be a warrior, or a worrier? Well I find things work out a lot better, you feel better about yourself, it's a far better

look, its neater, its tidier, and everything seems to flow when you're a warrior. I wish you results from practicing this. We'll be dealing with all the major fears. They all comes down to the same thing, but from a different angle. And it needs a lot of repetition and to be seen from all the different angles, as you will see.

Chapter 1

Schema and stratagems

In thinking about this, it's brought to mind one of the very first instances that I was aware of supreme overwhelming fear, and looking back on it how that actually was the moment that really shaped my life in a very profound way. I mention it as you may want to do this yourself, look back to the point that you can remember when you first felt a real dread, total fear. For me, I'd just started boarding school at the age of eight, and I was walking along, talking to new found friends, all of us in a state of shocking grief having left our family homes. I'd chosen to go because I was sold on the promise that it would help me develop independence, which it certainly did and I don't regret it for a moment.

However, a few days in, still feeling a little bit shaky, I was walking along minding my own business when I was suddenly pushed from behind with a double sort of shock to the kidneys and with a lot of force that winded me completely. I couldn't breathe, and it hurled me onto the ground, whereupon I was kicked rather mercilessly by an eleven year old boy, who was a fair amount bigger than me as I was only eight and he was definitely someone with a severe personality disorder, that came through at the time. I lay on the ground humiliated. But much more importantly, or prevalently now, was this feeling of all embracing terror that somebody I didn't even know - he happened to be the older brother of someone I'd made friends with could have this much hatred and violence in him towards someone he didn't even know. It was a really horrible primal fear of, 'oh is that what it's like in the universe?' And subsequently he would take any opportunity he could to try and do the same thing again.

However, my dad had been a champion boxer in the army and had taught me how to box from a very early age just for fun and I used to really love it and have quite a knack for it. So, I knew about running away, that was the first thing dad taught me, as any a martial arts instructor will tell you, it's the number one technique in dealing with any danger, running away, without any shame, just avoid. And I was good at it, so I managed to evade his attacks, which were fairly numerous. Fortunately for me and to his detriment they were always exactly the same technique. He tried to strike me with a chop into the kidneys every time, which was actually quite effective because when the kidneys' energy is dislodged is exactly where fear arises from. Whenever the kidneys suffer a shock, or a contraction for whatever reason, fearfulness arises spontaneously anyway. Nonetheless I managed to evade him by running, or whatever. When I got home for the weekend naturally the first thing I prevailed upon my father for was to train me in what to do about it.

First, we had this philosophical discussion about how you must stand up to bullies, because if you don't they'll just get worse and worse, which for an eight-year-old contemplating standing up to this quite sturdy eleven year old, was quite daunting. Nonetheless, a lot of this training that weekend was all about the mind. But he also taught me the moves. So he played the part of this guy and would come and strike me from behind and he taught me to swing round with the right elbow, land a left hook, and then pepper down the front of the guy's body, finally ending up with an upper cut into the solar plexus which would wind him and

disable him, or neutralize him, which is exactly what I did as soon as I got back to school. It just happened to be in front of a vast number of the kids. It was in the playground and it caused everyone to stop and watch as these things often do, especially with him, as he'd always walk around with his two henchman and people were always aware of wherever he was because you never knew when he was going to attack when. I'd completely floored him and he ended up on the floor.

However, my overriding feeling, apart from the triumphant relief of it all, was that I felt rotten that I'd done this to another human being. So I leant down and helped him up and asked him if he was OK. Then he tried to hit me again, however I gave him a threatening on guard posture and he just backed off, and everyone applauded. That was what got me started really on the whole martial arts thing. It took me till I was eleven till I started learning aikido, but I've been a keen pugilist ever since, and I have to say that the martial arts training is the bedrock of everything that I have explored over the last forty-five to fifty years. It's at the root of all the Taoist training, all the Taoist practice. And a lot of what I've been doing is translating the benefits of that training for people who don't necessarily have the desire, or time to learn and study the martial arts at that depth, so they can actually acquire and benefit nonetheless, hence School for Warriors, and this Master your Fear training.

So, fear serves as a real blessing if it's done something with, if you utilize it. Let's look first of all at what fear is. I just want to say, don't rush through this. Go through it slowly, take your time. We need time to take things in.

What is fear?

So what is fear? Fear is definitely constant. We tend to experience it as something that arises in the moment, and then ideally just falls away. In fact, it's always there, like the sea is always there. Sometimes it bubbles up and you'll get a storm in the sea for whatever reason, whether it's something external, or something generated internally, but we'll talk about that in more depth shortly. The fear that we have as a constant is just one way of describing the life force. The life force, the chi that makes us stay alive, that gives us our health, that gives us vitality, our strength, is exactly the same as the power that causes entire galaxies to move against each other and rotate in space at a million miles an hour, or whatever they're moving at. It's a ferocious power, albeit the generative power of existence itself. It's a ferocious power. The ferocity of it, which shares the same root as fear, is the bit that we experience as fear. And it's not our enemy, it's our friend, because it keeps us alive. If you take life back to when we were living in caves, that's how you get to understand what really operates us, that's where you get to understand what we're really running on. And what we're really running on, the primal fear, that primal life force, is masked and sanitized by the modern world. That's why we've made it like it is, it's to allay all the reasons for that fear. We'll come back to that in a moment.

The true fears are the fear of being physically hurt by either another person, or a wild animal; or by the ground erupting beneath your feet and you falling into a crack in the earth; or a ledge that you're walking on, on a high mountain breaking and falling away and you dropping into the void; or the sound of footsteps of someone running close to you – in case they're going to attack you; or the war cries of an opposing tribe; or the sound of an eruption.

Loud noise generally is a prelude of some form of danger. A noise would generally prelude an attack if you take it back to primeval days where, a large animal might roar at you for example. So the fear of loud noise generally. Noise is a major stress trigger in the body. And in fact, much of modern heart disease is caused by the high levels of street noise, engine noise and so on. Noise is deleterious for the health because we're programmed to be afraid of loud noise.

You can then take this to a slightly deeper level by saying that what this represents fundamentally is the fear of death. And that is posited by most learned teachers as the fear of all fears, the one that all the others are a disguise for - we're afraid of death. Now I go one further than that and say it's a fear of the unknown. Then I go one further than that and say that what we're afraid of about death when you strip all the mythology out of it - of hell, being reborn into evil lives, or whichever model you subscribe to - when you remove all of that, it's the fear of oblivion, the fear of the void. I then go one further than that and say that what we're afraid of is what we all know instinctively, intuitively that informs the void - the Taoists call it Tao. They say it's something that can't be defined in words, it can't be explained because it's simply too huge and imponderable. Or you could call it God. You can call it anything you like, it doesn't matter. It's the prime generative spark of everything. That is what commands and informs the void, just as it does matter. So I would say that the fundamental fear of all fears, is actually the fear of God, as we would call it. Hence why we would refer in the old days to people who were really on it with the spiritual path within the religious idiom, as being god fearing. This didn't mean that they were cowards, or that they'd done something wrong and therefore were afraid of divine retribution. What it meant was that they were so awake to the fundamental basis of reality, that they were in a state of fear, or as the Rastas called it, dread, of the divine. The way that that fear of the divine expresses itself in a more stand out version, in a more day to day level, although most people won't admit to it, is the fear of divine retribution.

Superstitions

Hence everyone learns superstitions - don't step on the cracks in between paving stones and all those sort of obsessive compulsive rituals that all of us subscribe to to some extent, because we're afraid that at one point or another the invisible divine realm is going to punish us for not being perfect, which of course none of us can be anyway because we live in an imperfect reality. And then we have our religious cosmology, the bible, to back that up, by describing the divine as some pithful, wrathful, vengeful character, old man in the sky, who would smite you at a moment's notice because he felt like it. Obviously this was a kind of crowd control device developed by the priests to maintain their own position and societal stability. That's as may be.

I'd like you to take a moment now to feel into your fear of the Tao, however that appears to you. So if you can, envisage your eventual demise. That moment where you take your last breath and you make your last exhalation. And after that moment there is no knowing what comes next, despite all the theories and conjectures of all the most learned spiritually enlightened people throughout history, nobody actually knows. Feel the fear, or as the fear occurs to you now, or even feel the imprint from the fear about this, of the unknown. Let

yourself contemplate oblivion, let yourself contemplate the void. Maybe you'll find it a really restful concept, I don't know. Be aware that what fills that void is not just emptiness, its presence. You can call it the subatomic background presence if you like, the Tao - the awesome power of that, that which is powerful enough to explode an entire universe like ours, and for all we know, a multiverse, into being - that is worthy of inspiring that fear in a healthy way. Allow yourself to feel into that fear.

If you can really contact it fully, breathe with it, allow it to cause you to quake in your boots as it were. And as you do, start to contemplate your instinctual resistance to it, which I posit that beneath that fear there is an urge to love, there's an urge to be fully vulnerable, to let down all your defences, all your prejudices, and just love that. As it says in the bible you should love the Lord your God with all your heart, all your soul, and all your mind. Now if in this moment, you can allow your heart to open, and love this unknowable, mysterious, awesome power, it immediately antidotes any unpleasant sensation associated with the fear. You'll notice that the complex sensations in your belly have transformed into one of excitement. So, when these well-meaning teachers say that love is the antidote to fear, but nobody knows what it means, this is one example of a pragmatic use of that. So aside from it sounding pretty, it means that you love the Tao, you love the God that informs the void, and by loving it with all of yourself, your belly, your chest, your brain, your heart, soul, and mind, you antidote the negative sensations associated with it.

Now this response to life threatening danger, or potential danger, has been active in humans for at least the last four million years, and it's only the last very small fraction of which that has seen us organised into agrarian cultures, or societies and then the modern technological society. Whereas, as long as things continue to run fairly orderly, we no longer really need to fear those same things. Obviously, the situation in the world at the moment is looking increasingly tenuous. Nonetheless, as things stand the original danger of being hit on the head by someone passing by, or being set upon by a rabid tiger, or the ground falling away beneath your feet, or what have you, that stimuli for fear are not generally present. However that fear, and that level of fear, is still running in all of our circuit boards, all the time.

So what do we do with it - and this is something we do with every type of fear and it has the same physical basis, so this will be repeated and emphasised throughout? ***We create horror movies.*** And by that I mean all-star, no holds barred, massive budget, adventure movies, apocalyptic, horror movies, or maybe they'll just be a small personal horror movie, but which generally depend on questions such as, *'well what happens if this or that happens?'* and so on. And then we basically make ourselves grow scared of what we're seeing, of what we've manufactured in our own heads. So this is not actually real first-hand fear, its second-hand, confected fear. And it's technically anxiety. It really looks like we're afraid of something, something we imagine of course. For example, not having any money, being destitute because of whatever message that came in that day, perhaps being overdrawn. We imagine ourselves becoming destitute and we become afraid of it. The idea of becoming destitute, although it's in our imagination, i.e. purely internal, is seen as being an external object to fear, of which to be afraid. This external object of fear, in this example of going destitute, appears to trigger the fear. That's the way round it seems.

Imaginary

In actual fact it's the opposite. That is the sleight of hand - in the same way that we see the world upside down in fact. The information coming in through our eyes is actually the other way round to the way we're perceiving it. The whole thing is a world of appearances. The Taoists call it the world of the ten thousand things. The whole thing is just a vast hall of mirrors. It's all pure illusion. That as it may be, what's actually happening is that the kidneys are processing your natural healthy fear quota. That's where the fear energy is processed. It's the kidneys that produce it and process it. It's the kidneys that share that healthy energy that arises from fear, i.e. on an energetic level. And we all have this stable fear quota, which as I say originates from about four million years ago at least. And what happens is we subvert that quota of fear into confected fear, or anxiety, and that makes the kidneys have to work harder, and more consistently, and this makes them tired.

Now when the kidneys grow tired, they contract. And when they contract this squeezes the adrenal glands, which in turn causes cortisol, the stress hormone, to be released into the body. This makes you more fearful. And then your mind deftly finds an object of fear to justify its position, to justify its faulty description and evaluation of reality.

So it looks like you're afraid of not having any money. In fact you're not. You're just afraid, you have anxiety because the kidneys contracted. And your mind quickly finds an object for the fear, which is actually manufactured in your imagination and then projected onto that. And it does it so quickly, just like a magician performs his tricks that you don't even notice. Hence you believe that it's the apparent external object causing the fear. When in fact it wasn't external in the first place, but purely imaginary.

Will

This is radical, and it's very powerful, and once imbibed, it is liberating. The way you can actually check this as being true, as you'll notice, is that say for example, you've been anxious about not having money, and then a payment comes in that completely reverses that, so that you've got money, it won't take more than a few seconds, or a minute for the anxiety to be projected onto something else that you'll find to worry about. There's a reason for this biochemically, and this is the cortisol released by the adrenals, which means literally that which sits above the kidneys, those little sacs that sit above the kidneys, that cortisol, the stress hormone released, is addictive, similarly to crack cocaine, or crystal meths. It's not pleasant, but it is addictive, and hence will instigate probably a little bit of self-stressing just to keep that level of cortisol moving through the system. The kidney strain arising from all of this causes you to be afraid of life, and in general it gives a fearful tone to your thoughts and in its extreme form, causes you to lose your will - the kidneys, whence your will derives. When the kidneys are strong you have will. When the kidneys lose their chi, when they become weak and contracted, you lose your will. And ultimately that means you lose your will to stay alive. You lose your will to live. And hence this whole system is counterproductive.

And so we have to come back to the place where we acknowledge, accept and bless the fact

that life comprises fear, it comprises a healthy fear. And hence it's the anxious state which is ubiquitous throughout most of the global society, which is why we devote a lion's share of global resources to allaying all our anxieties by spreading the sources of fear out so we don't have to face them. In other words, we have the fear of imaginary danger, we grow afraid of fear itself. And ironically, by channelling all our efforts and resources into masking and pushing away the potential stimuli for fear, we're actually using up all our global resources at an alarming rate, which is in fact exacerbating our critical situation on the planet, and will, unless some miracle intervenes, give us very real cause to be afraid. In fact, the key to being fully juiced up with the requisite chi and derring-do to optimize this adventure of being alive, which is surely the point of the game, and thereby be able to stare the fear of our own oblivion, of our own extinction, in the face, and go, 'so what', the key to having the key to do that is to acknowledge, accept, embrace and then harness that fear. In other words, you have to love the fear.

Love

And this, is another example of our love used practically as an antidote to fear. The route is to differentiate first between fear and anxiety. In other words, to distinguish between genuine fear and fake, manufactured, confected fear, which is actually anxiety. Because by just doing that you immediately gain psycho-emotional distance enough to be able to then process it sensibly and thus transmute it by intention and focus into pure chi. If this isn't attended to then what happens is, anxiety will compound itself, and in so doing produce in effect, smaller and smaller anxiety thought loops in the front of the brain. In other words the fear that you're manufacturing, or confecting, you do in the pre-frontal lobes of the brain, the thought loops, 'what if this happens, what if that happens', become smaller and tighter, allowing less and less room to see the big picture and they become more and more compelling. This spiralling exerts more and more drain on the kidneys. In turn this drains the liver energy, because the liver relies on the kidneys to keep it cool and keep it functioning optimally. When the liver loses its chi, this causes higher levels of toxicity in both mind and body, and the anxiety thought loops become poisoned. And that's when paranoia sets in, that's how paranoia arises – toxicity introduced into these ever decreasing sized anxiety thought loops. This gives the effect of anxiety thoughts, imbued with complete misconceptions and false assumptions, arising from toxicity of the liver chi, some of which might coincidentally tally with reality at some points, but only by fluke, not because you've actually had prescience into the future. That's one of the aspects of paranoia, it tends to make you feel that what you're imagining is a premonition.

Toxic liver chi

However, when visions arise out of toxic liver chi, you can be sure that they are not premonitions. And these are then used by the mind to somehow justify the paranoia. And/or when the liver chi stalls, the heart chi weakens because the heart relies on the liver chi to keep the muscles working strongly, to keep it resilient and regulated. Now the heart chi governs the sense of suffering and the integrity and strength of self as experienced as an individuated unity. You lose this momentarily, the sense of who you are in the world, and the anxiety build up, possibly tinged by paranoia as previously stated, can give rise, and generally will give rise

to what we think of as panic attacks, hence why its then hard to breathe and the heart pounds.

Now:

When the heart weakens, the spleen weakens too because it relies on the chi of the heart. When the spleen energy weakens, the mind becomes obsessed by trying to order the apparently senseless chaotic swirl of events that we think of as life, and will try to do so by returning to a point of repair.

A point of repair is something an actor, or performer may use when improvising in case they dry up. They have little set pieces they can return to, i.e. repair, and then continue from there. And these will be the various rituals that we will enact to somehow try to make order of life. And this is common to everyone, without exception, to varying degrees. I say this because the spleen energy is responsible for the aspects of mind that deals with practicalities, with staying alive in a practical sense - short term memory, organizing yourself, getting things done on a detail level. And so it will try to make order of even the most disorderly view for you. And when fuelled by anxiety, paranoia, and loss of sense of who you are in the scheme of things, it will do so in more and more unreasonable, or unrealistic ways.

Rituals

This is not said with any disrespect at all, to the contrary, you can look at any religious ceremony as a perfect example as a series of rituals designed to make sense of the otherwise impossible to understand, cosmos. Or you could look at all the superstitious moves, such as putting your right foot first when walking into a room, saluting a single magpie, not walking under a ladder etc. Or you could look at the Japanese Tea Ceremony, a most revered ceremony, as being the perfect example of the Zen. It's really a very intense and elaborate series of rituals. Or you could look at how you put your eyeliner on in the morning, if you use it, or which part of your body you wash first when you shower and so on. These are all rituals.

Now when the spleen weakens enough, the lung energy weakens too, as the lung energy relies on the spleen energy for its chi. And when the lungs weaken you're drawn constantly to reference all your experience to the past.

Healthy lung energy, and hence good breathing practice, regular in and out breath, keeps you in the here and now, which is really the only sane place to be because it's the only place at the moment where anything is happening. What's been has been and what's to come hasn't come yet. It's all imaginary in the mind. The only place where there's any power available, where there's any genuine sanity available, is the here and now, and it's actually a healthy lung chi that keeps you here. But when the lungs weaken it draws you back to unresolved childhood, or even adult traumas, for which you would first have developed any of the rituals you enact on a daily basis to somehow help you make sense of a senseless reality. And the compulsion then to enact the rituals becomes intense, you become compulsive about your rituals. And that's what is described these days as OCD, or obsessive compulsive disorder.

But there are degrees of all of it. And to a certain point, even anxiety, even confected fear, has its value, just like its big brother, genuine fear. So for example, if you have anxiety about becoming a slob, if you have any sense, you'll use the anxiety to fuel you to do a daily training routine to prevent that. One definition, or explanation of a very lazily used term depression could be that. One aspect of what we lazily refer to as depression, is that if you make an agreement with yourself to do something that you know is going to make you feel good, and certainly overcome feeling bad, and then you don't do it, you break the agreement with yourself. That leads to a loss of trust in yourself, letting yourself down, a drop in self-esteem, shame and anxiety that you'll never stick to an agreement again. Now, all of that is a wonderfully precise explanation of what most people refer to and suffer from as so-called depression. It makes it very different when you actually break it down to what's happening because then you can really deal with it. That's what we're doing with fear. Or you might have anxiety about poverty, most people do, in which case, it's likely, if you have any sense, you'll use that to focus in a sensible way on money, and how to divert some of it your way. Or if you have anxiety about divine retribution, or karma, you'll use that to ensure you remain ever more respectful of the idea that what goes around, comes around, and respect the sanctity of your fellows and their lives, and their sphere of activity, so you'll not hurt them in any way, or violate them in any way.

Anxiety

But beyond that point of having noted the anxiety, identified the anxiety and then made a note at least to have an agreement with yourself to do so, if it persists beyond that point that's when it needs addressing as a psychopathology. So let's analyse anxiety, the process of anxiety. What actually happens psychophysically speaking? You have a thought, it comes from goodness knows where, it doesn't matter. You feel the response to this in your solar plexus, in your upper abdominal area, it tenses, the muscles contract. This encourages your breathing to stall, i.e. you hold your breath. Your breathing then will become shallow, intermittent and uneven. As a result of this your thoracic cavity, your chest, contracts. A combination of this causes you groin to contract, your shoulders to raise and contract, your neck to contract, your head to fall forwards, your face to contract, and as a result of all of that, your kidneys to contract. The front of your body rigidifies, the front of your brain has more heat going into it because your head is moving forwards, and so your brain is more inclined to have horror sequences to fuel it all, and there you have just another example of how the vicious cycle is perpetuated.

Now in the ensuing seven chapters, I've arbitrarily grouped all the various anxieties that I could think of, or were suggested by everyone who contributed to the survey we carried out prior to my writing this. It doesn't really ultimately matter how they are grouped because anxiety is anxiety no matter what name you give it and fundamentally it is the same protocol that deals with it. But a big part of the protocol is to firstly differentiate between real fear and fake fear, i.e. anxiety, and then to be able to differentiate between different forms of anxiety, to be able to identify precisely what anxiety you're confecting because that helps a lot. So implicit in this is what we must develop as a primary tool, and that is the ability to observe and be cognisant of, to take note of, what's occurring within. It's what in modern parlance they refer to as mindfulness. And from that cognisance to identify exactly what form of

anxiety you're experiencing. For example, in the next chapter we're going to be looking at separation anxiety in all its various guises. Note down with a pen and paper, better than typing it. It's somehow a bit more tangible. Note down all the major moments of childhood, and or adulthood when separating from someone, or something, or somewhere that was particularly traumatic for you, that really hit you particularly hard.

The time for example that occurs to me was when my mother dropped me off at boarding school for the first time. And the awful pain of the separation that lasted about a day, or maybe two or three, and then went underground was actually not nearly as bad as the horrible feeling of separation anxiety that led up to saying bye bye at the school doors, the lunch we had before, the drive there, it was like on the way to my execution. It was the separation anxiety, which had I been able to identify it and say 'Hey mum, I've really got separation anxiety', and she would have said 'Yes I have too'. That would actually have dispelled it there and then. Neither of us had that technology at the time. It's that sort of thing. If you can note down the moments, the examples of separation anxiety and then, if you can remember, try and write down what you did to allay it, how you masked it, how you denied it, how you distracted yourself from it, or how you actually faced and processed it, if you can remember. This is purely to start getting your mind rolling. Once the noticing skill has been activated, the following chapters will describe a series of protocols, or steps, to enable you to separate the unwanted, useless aspects of confected fear, from the desired aspects, the juice that you can tap into.

Start right now by

1. scanning your body to see where fear is coagulating within you right now, as in energy that's got stuck. Use your mind to briskly, but carefully, thoroughly scan from the crown of your head, over your face, the sides of your head, the back of your head, the neck, the throat, the shoulders, the arms, the hands, down the sides of your body, the front of your body, the back of your body, the lower belly, the pelvic region, the legs, the feet, the toes, all the way through. And wherever you get a sense that fear is coagulating, like a stagnant energy in area, just make a note of it. You don't have to do anything about it, just make a note of it.
2. The second stage is to differentiate right now between what is real fear, as in, is there anyone threatening you at this moment, are any wild animals coming at you, are you about to fall from a great height, are you about to fall into the void, are you about to meet your maker, to differentiate between real fear and confected fear - anxiety. You'll notice that a vast amount of what you previously considered as fear, is actually merely confected fear, so just to be able to observe that.
3. The third stage is then to set about identifying what it is you're anxious about. This will become clearer as we go through the various forms of anxiety.
4. The fourth stage will be to observe and note what's occurring biologically as a result of the anxiety that you're manufacturing, as in your belly tightening up, your chest tightening up, your eyes dilating etc.
5. The fifth stage is to note what the anxiety is telling you and then to note down what

practical steps could be taken to avoid what it is your anxious about, and if there are any, to commit fully to taking them in the appropriate way, at the appropriate time.

6. The sixth stage is to again remind yourself that fear is your ally. That fear is the ferocious power of existence itself upon which you depend for your existence, and therefore it's your ally, not your enemy. And therefore that it's OK to be afraid. I recommend highly that you start getting in the habit of reciting to yourself the affirmation,

'It's OK to be afraid', 'It's OK to be afraid', 'It's OK to be afraid', and so on.

7. The seventh stage, which is a development of the sixth, is to then ask yourself - and this is quite magical if you make sure you do it in exactly this order - having identified that its confected and not real, you say,

'Could I let go of wanting to change this?'

in other words 'Could I let it be?' 'Could I let go of wanting to change this?'

And you answer 'Yes, I could let go of wanting to change this?'

And then you say 'Would I let go of wanting to change this?'

And you answer 'Yes, I would let go of wanting to change this'.

And you'll find that by doing that, by the time you've finished reciting this, there will in fact, be no anxiety left.

This is something we'll be doing in every chapter and it will be emphasised each time to draw your attention to the fact that no matter what the fear, it all comes down to the same thing. And so it entrains you to do the same ritual if you like when there is a fear.

8. The eighth stage is to acknowledge that you yourself - and whether this is true or not, it's a stance, and we're talking existential experimentation here to see what result you get.

I'm not asking you to believe this as an absolute truth, who's got a handle on absolute truth anyway, I'm suggesting it as a stance to adopt. It works for me, and its worked for everyone I'veever taught it to - you acknowledge that it's you who has coalesced all the factors to make your life be exactly as it appears to be right now, in order to produce precisely this sensation of confected fear right now in your belly, because this sensation exactly as it is, is precisely what it takes to make you feel alive.

Now, this doesn't imply that you're mad for doing it. This is just your way. For whatever reason, you made it necessary to produce this level of anxiety because this is what it takes to make you feel alive. Fascinating this, because as soon as you do this, as soon as you lay claim to it, it vanishes and turns to excitement again.

9. The ninth stage, which is again a development of the eighth, is to do what I said before, with the idea of using love as an antidote to the fear. You love the fear. The way you do this is to address the fear as you're feeling it and say,

'I love you', 'I love you' 'I love you' 'I love you' 'I love you' 'I love you'.

It takes six times for it all to really penetrate into the subconscious. You'll then get the sense of

loving the fear. This instantaneously transforms it into raw pure energy, which is the goal of all this.

10. The tenth stage, and this is the basis of the whole first stage of School for Warriors training, is as follows: you stop holding your breath, you slow your breathing down, you deepen your breathing – your belly swells to let the air in, and you flatten it to push the air out – you relax your body, i.e. you soften all your muscles, with your mind you lengthen your spine – you stop it being all crumpled – you very lightly raise your breastbone – you lift your front a bit, but without arching your back – like a gesture to rising up to all that is noble and beautiful, you soften your heart – you visualize the two parts of your breastbone sliding apart like a pair of sliding doors – you let your inner essence be available, then you tip your mind into the rear part of your brain – you can tip your head back a bit if you need to, just to get a sense of your mind in the rear brain, rather than the front brain, then you tip your physical presence from your front into your back.

This will be explored in much more depth later. In itself it is the most powerful technique I've ever encountered in all of my training – you tip yourself into your back, rather than being shoved up in front of you - you then relax your kidneys specifically. And then you breathe the sensation of fear, albeit concocted fear, which is a way of sublimating real fear, you breathe that fear in and out, like the fuel that it actually is.

11. The eleventh stage, having gained some command over yourself, is that you ask yourself, if your horror movie that you've concocted in your head actually occurred, what would be the worst thing that could happen. Have the courage, play it through to its ultimate conclusion, and then like a warrior commit to the position wholeheartedly that no matter what, you will not let it crush your spirit, even if its dying the most pointless, painful death, you will not let it crush your spirit. This may sound melodramatic, but you'll find that this will put you in touch with the inner core strength that you already have at the root of you. It's empowering.
12. Twelfth stage is to ask yourself what you actually want as an outcome to the situation, as opposed to what you don't want, i.e. what you've been making yourself anxious about, and then you see it, in your mind's eye from the back of your head, you project it onto the screen that's inside your forehead. And you choose it with all your heart and soul and mind. Then as soon as you've done that, as soon as you've set that up, simply trust and know that it will be so.

Chapter 2

Separation anxiety

The joy that we feel, the intense pleasure that we can derive from connecting with each other is so wonderful in context of the infinite universe of infinite possibilities and various massive cosmic forces raged against us at all moments, the idea of connecting in the midst of what is otherwise potentially a major void is so glorious that the pain of it all going away again, the knowing that there's going to be separation creates anxiety, creates pain. As I said in the previous chapter, real fear is the fear that we're programmed with, and have been for four million years or more, based on very real dangers that we were beset by for most of our history, except for this last tiny fraction, since we became Gregorian and a technological culture, as we are now. For all we know, with everything going on in the world at the moment, we could find ourselves back there, at best. So the real fear has been there for ever, we know that. Nonetheless, the way we've got it set up has got to be probably the most privileged in human history, all things considered overall for the world, in terms of abundance and ease, and I'm including everyone, including unfortunately the people who are suffering from starvation and what have you. But specifically to the numbers of people living in abundance, I don't think we've ever had it this good, where we manage to outsource the actual sources of danger to a very large extent. And underneath that, the fear of survival, the fear of being hit, being hurt physically by a person or an animal, the fear of a loud noise, i.e. there's an animal roaring at you, or a person running at you with a club, the fear of falling off a high place and dying in a ravine, the ground giving way beneath you in an earthquake, and so on, all of which were a lot more prevalent all those years ago, really is the fear of death.

Death

That's the fear that underlies all fears. And then I posit that underneath the fear of death is the fear of oblivion, of the void. And actually it's not oblivion, it's the fear of being conscious in the void, in nothing. And the horror of the coldness of nothing. And what's actually informing nothing, as much as it informs something, is this ineffable presence that in the West we call God, and in the East they call Tao or Brahma or whatever you want to call it - the imponderable, the huge, the all embracing universal force, that is something so small that it fits in something smaller than the head of a pin, and yet it informs the whole universe. This is a scary concept and hence why, as I said above, we talk about god-fearing people. We are essentially, I would suggest, afraid of God, of the power of the universe. That's the underlying fear of all fears. But if you want to just keep it superficial relatively speaking, you can say that the underlying fear is the fear of death. And this fear quota, this part of being human, part of consciousness, part of energy moving through the system, doesn't decrease no matter what we manage to do with our world. And so we've chosen collectively to

sublimate this fear and transform it into second-hand imaginary fear, which is actually anxiety.

So we create horror stories in the head, and then we believe them, and then we freak out with them and this creates anxiety, which chemically is addictive because it's cortisol released from the adrenal glands, which causes us to do everything that's against our better interest, such as tense up the stomach, stop breathing, tense the muscles, collapse the front of the body, let the head hang forwards, and everything that will put us into a more and more fearful space, because we are addicted to the cortisol, horrible though it is.

So it's like a hamster on a wheel.

Pure raw chi

We're going to look at how to transmute this fear instead into the raw pure chi that we can ride on. That is the Taoists way of doing it. It's not to be in denial of fear, it's not to mask the fear, it's not to distract ourselves from what we think is making us afraid. It's all about transmuting what has now become just anxiety back into pure raw chi that we ride on. Now the only way that this is actually possible in terms of separation anxiety, is when we learn to situate ourselves properly inside our skin. When we're in the front of the body, we're with where all this anxiety is manufactured, with all the conversation in the front of the brain that results from the manufactured anxiety. And the stresses upon all the organs which then affect all the emotions massively is all going on in the front of the body. And because all the sense organs face forwards, so we perceive reality in front of us, and its compelling, riveting, fascinating, scary, exciting, promising, horrible etc. it draws us forwards into the front of our bodies to get a closer look. It gives us the sense that we can control it more by being closer to it. However, the Taoist approach, as I've said, is instead to flow backwards inside.

Thrust back into the back of the body, just sit back, the reason being that back there it's strong it's still, it's silent. And if you sit in your back you become strong, still and silent. If you sit in the front you become frantic, noisy, disjointed, as this is what the front is going through, you become vulnerable and weak like the front. The back is not that vulnerable, and it's pretty strong and steady, and you become that instead. And then you're able to gain psycho-energetic distance from the drama of the anxiety that you've actually confected in your mind and convinced yourself is something to be afraid of and therefore are afraid. But it's not real, genuine fear, its second-hand, toxic, manufactured, confected fear and needs to be addressed as soon as possible and then transmuted back into pure chi, before the toxicity poisons you and leads you into deeper syndromes such as panic attacks, paranoia, paranoid schizophrenia, OCD, and anything that's going to make the ride less enjoyable for you and unnecessarily so.

By sitting in the back we keep transmuting the fear back into pure energy, because primarily it's good to be afraid, it's ok, it's fine, being afraid is part of life, real fear is beautiful. Its life, its energy itself. It's the energy that keeps you alive, and if you didn't have it you would not have the sense to fear danger, and it's important, we have to have that, and we have to honor and love the fear. And its love that transmutes the fear into energy. That's what it means when we say love is the antidote to fear. It doesn't mean you have to go around being nice to everybody, then you won't be afraid. It's really about loving the fear. And not to be afraid of fear. The reason we live as we do is because we are afraid of fear. We try to distance it, cover it over, sanitize and decorate everything to avoid having to look at what it is that makes us feel afraid. In fact, the Taoist idea turns it on its head. We think we're afraid of an object. The object is in fact usually imaginary. For example, with separation anxiety, you're afraid of losing somebody, or something. So you create that picture in your head. And you think it's real because you've done it so well. You think it's an external object, that thing, or someone you become afraid of losing. What's actually happening is that your kidney energy has gone into a moment of deficit. There's been a contraction around your lower back because you can sense change coming and it's making you a little nervous, which is good and healthy. But as soon as that happens, fearfulness arises, As soon as fearfulness arises, the mind feels obliged to justify that because the front part of the brain where you're discussing reality to yourself incessantly, evaluating it, describing it, explaining it as best as you can to yourself, relies for its existence on justifying its beliefs, because the whole thing is an illusion.

And the only way it can maintain its existence, which is very much linked with who you think you are most of the time, the personality, the theatre, the drama of being you, is by justifying itself. And it does that constantly. You feel fear arising, that front part of the mind that's trying to make sense of everything says 'Right I'm afraid because of that object out there'. Which isn't actually out there, it's inside you, it's an imaginary thing, which might actually coincide with what actually transpires, but it won't necessarily, and it will be a fluke if it does. And then it does it so quickly that you think you're afraid of that object of fear, when in fact you're not, first you feel afraid and then the mind found the object to fear. That's how the Taoists posit that this actually works. Knowing this helps deconstruct the compulsive aspect of fear.

Power

By looking at the major groups of anxieties and deconstructing them we take the power out of them and that's what we need to do, because it's not real power. We must take our power back that we've invested in them and instead transmute that to grooving on the fear, riding on the fear of death, on the fear of the void, on the fear of God - we've got to ride that fear.

So separation anxiety comes at the top of the list for me, not because it's the worst anxiety, or the most pernicious, or most acute, but because it is totally insidious and ubiquitous. So it might seem like a nice, light topic to start with, but feeling that it's lightweight and that type of attitude towards any type of anxiety is a perfect example of how we tend to mask the pain of such a poignant effect. Separation anxiety, and its root cause first happens when we're very young, and so we're very young when we learn to mask it and pretend we don't care. Yet its effects are absolutely insidious and far-reaching. They undermine our entire choice

making process as we go along and cause us to act up in ways that don't necessarily promote the best for us, or others around us. So it's completely counter-productive having separation anxiety unacknowledged and unprocessed.

It's probably the earliest, and hence the original anxiety, and thus the one that instigates the pattern for all subsequent anxieties. It begins in the womb. Around the mid to the end of the seventh month in utero the awareness has already grown that the walls of what had hitherto been increasingly enjoyed as a state to pure saltwater heaven, absolute perfection, or as absolute as any of us will ever know in this present form, these hallowed walls of our mother's womb that protected us from the yin and yang from manifest reality, from the difficulties, and pleasure and all of it, and keep us in a state of rapture, were beginning to inexorably close in on us. And the sensation of this all invasive pleasantness was starting to turn into one of insipient claustrophobia. I've worked with a lot of babies. I had three of my own, and introduced baby massage into the UK in the early 80's, so I have a lot of experience of babies. And you can feel the response of the baby when you press the belly. You know this isn't just imaginary. And sadly, some babies find the awful pain of leaving the mother so great they actually pull out before term, and that's why you get still births. I'm not saying of course that that's necessarily the case, I'm just saying that's one angle on it. But for those of us who fortunately get to have followed the course through, we eventually found ourselves, compressed and decompressed with increasing ferocity and frequency until fully forced against our will, through a relatively tiny bony, skull squishing opening of cervix into the harsh light of day, or muted tones of a birthing pool, as it might be today, but nonetheless, when contrasted with the nirvana perfection of swimming free in the salt water heaven - we might not have been fully cognitive of it until six, or seven months in utero, but we knew that we were in it – the contrast of being in the birthing pool and having to breathe air was an enormous shock.

Or alternatively, we might have experienced the compression and decompression and the freak out of that, and then somebody slit the curtains open with a knife and brought us out through the front window, as in a caesarean. Either way, the loss of what the Taoists call pre-natal heaven was a profound shock to the system. We then had to instantly learn to breathe. It's not something that actually come naturally, which is why they used to slap babies on the bottom in the olden days, to get them breathing. It's a shock to the system to suddenly breathe. You've been a fish until then. Imagine that. Suddenly evolving to be a land based mammal in one second, having had your head squished quite severely. Or suddenly having the curtains opened and that light flooding in. You had to learn to eat, to digest, to eliminate, to make noise, which you had to do to attract attention, to move your limbs, to move your facial muscles, and immediately to induct fresh ever pouring torrents of information through your newly operative sense organs, through the air and your skin and so on.

And this is a major thing to go through, and we've all done it. But go back a couple of months, to that moment the ineffable intelligence informing your subconscious first alerted you to the obvious fact that you're going to have to soon say goodbye to the realm of pure perfection,

and undergo a radical shift of contact. Because we do know it's coming, that first moment of realisation, and probably even remembering from earlier rounds perhaps, that there is indeed no such thing as a free ride, or free lunch, and there's a price to pay for this future. It was at that point the very first seed of this separation anxiety took root. And similarly, that slight edge of nervous anticipation that would have been there for the inevitable. You're on a heightened state of alert, not all the time, but it grows and grows. Also, the mum is generally an anxious person by disposition, so you'd have picked that energy up as well - in the salt water in fact, so there'd have been a fizz in the salt water. And this anxiety would naturally have grown the more the walls closed in on you. And then when you were born and suffered the inevitable shock of dimension shift, that shock would have then justified the anxiety. So it would be like QED and you say, *'Right I was right, I'd better watch out for that one then'*. So anything like that I need to remember. Anxiety is good. That's where it began. It made anxiety the default response to upcoming change.

The next salient juncture in the process as I recall, and from having talked to hundreds of thousands of people over the decades, is leaving home for the first time, to attend childcare, or kindergarten. These days it is different, much softer and kinder. Nonetheless, it's the same story. Or your mum might have not been very kind, and really angry, but she was still your mum, and still what you were used to. And most likely she wasn't horrible to you. But either way, that knowledge that you were going to be leaving home for childcare, or kindergarten grew and came at you like a freight train. The knowledge that you were going to be leaving that lovely, beautiful extension of the womb, or at least familiar zone, into the world of noisy children, weird smells, funny floors and tables, child care workers, kindergarten teachers, lollypop men and dinner ladies, or whatever, and that it would be a total shift. This whole new culture you experienced was guaranteed to elicit another powerful feeling of separation anxiety. It will probably be the earliest we remember, but you can be sure it was actually a compounded version, a playback of the original uterine one.

And then, when the shock of the school, the surroundings, the interactions, the culture arrived, it would somehow have justified the anxiety. You may have loved it, but from my observation on the first day of kindergarten, everyone seemed a little bit on edge to my mind. And even if you weren't, it was a shift that would have justified having had some level of anxiety about the shift. This won't be the case for everybody of course. There are always exceptions. Many people may have loved that shift from the start. A lot of it's down to how the parents present the shift ahead of the time. And it depends on the quality of teachers and minders. However, what's clear for the majority of us at least let's say, a pattern has been set up at pre-birth of instinctively feeling fear of the unknown, feeling fear of change. It's essentially a survival fear. A six month old baby, or a three year old doesn't necessarily think rationally about a circumstance change, and is more likely to feel the fear of not surviving without a familiar reference point, so would naturally cling to anything that becomes a familiar reference point and correlate that with survival. This is an example of where we confuse correlation with causation. This is something we do societally, and individually. Because a reference point is associated with your survival, it correlates with it, but it doesn't

necessarily cause it. But we don't realise that, so we have great fear of losing the reference points we're attached to because we fear that without them we will not survive. It's not a logical train of thought, but it's the way we tend to do it, and just because it's not logical doesn't mean it doesn't have power.

To the contrary. And this pattern of fearing change, fearing the unknown, fearing having to let go of reference points because we associate them with survival is then compounded again and again throughout life with the mother, father, grandparents, siblings, nanny, teachers, friends, lovers, children, colleagues and so on. And it's compounded with places as well - houses, schools, the office building, anywhere you get used to, and with countries, and also situations, the way things are set up, with people - and the whole situation you're in, and with whole chunks of time, phases of life. Every time there's the feeling that an aspect is going to shift, any big reference point that you've associated with survival unconsciously as a six month old baby in the womb, so not the age you are now, but at the original age it first started, you know there will be this fear of change, this fear of separation from what you've grown habituated to.

Nostalgia

The opposite face of separation anxiety, is nostalgia. Say the nineties, or swinging sixties, or whatever, and you're looking back thinking it was so lovely back then – this is another device the mind uses to perpetuate anxiety about change. But the nature of nature is to addict, or habituate itself. Forms, such as you and I, or flowers, or even the grass to itself, things will habituate themselves to themselves, hence how they remain in shape as long as they do. Take us for example – even though every cell of us is constantly changing, and every molecule is constantly in a spin, you habituate yourself to a form of thoughts and patterns and behaviours, opinions and beliefs and memories, and the shape of your body as you perceive it, and the shape of your life as you perceive it. And it's that innate bio-energetic capacity for habituating yourself to a particular shape that we're able to have the appearance that we do of being in this form for as long as we do, just as with a flower, or a blade of grass, that's how nature works.

Hence, when the time is felt to be approaching for the inevitable parting of the ways between you and another it will automatically, autonomically really, cause a uprush, or an arousal of separation anxiety - and I say inevitable because every thing, every manifest phenomenon in this entire universe is in motion, and for a while the motion incorporates the orbiting of another phenomenon, or vice versa, but inevitably, because everything is in motion, it must be that all phenomena eventually separate from each other - that's just how it works.

Eventually, of course, the solar system will disband, the galaxy will disband, or be swallowed into a black hole or whatever, every thing will eventually lose everything to become one again. So, when you feel a parting, or separation coming between you and another occurring, or a place, or a situation, or a phase, or whatever, it will automatically, or autonomically, cause an uprush, or an arousal of separation anxiety. And this is the fear of change, the fear of the unknown, the fear of not surviving, underlying which is the fear of death, hence the fear of the void, hence fear of that which informs it all, the Tao.

Love

So here we cut in to the circle and we choose to love the Tao in the void. This is at the nub of everything. So we're interrupting the mechanism right at the nub of it all. Rather than fear the Tao in the void, you just entrain your mind to love the Tao in the void. This is not a concept unique to Taoism. It's in other concepts such as Judaism and Christianity. Jesus said 'You must love the Lord your God with all your heart and soul and mind'.

So there is this very close relationship of love and fear right there. Just allow your heart to open and love the Tao, from the back of you, so you don't rush forwards to do this in a sentimental or theatrical way, you actually sit right back inside and ordain the chest to open out and the love to flow from you. You simply love and trust, rather than fear and mistrust, the Tao. And you're trusting the Tao in the void. And when you do that there cannot possibly be fear, because change is a constant, it's obvious, everything's in motion. Therefore everything is constantly changing. So when you're thrust back inside, you're centered, your heart is open, and you're aware of the fear at the deepest primal level of change, you then love the Tao that is informing the void in which all this change occurs, it antidotes the fear instantaneously.

Pure raw chi

What's left then is just raw, pure chi – energy - for you to ride on to fuel you on your ongoing journey. And the separation anxiety, which is actually survival anxiety, hence why it's such an important one, is the only one really. It all comes back to this separation anxiety, which was first triggered in the womb when it was clear you were going to have to be ejected from this once heavenly place that you trusted, and as being amazing, which suddenly betrayed you and freaked your head out because you realized you had to actually get out, or it was going to crush you. And that was really painful, or weird, or both. So knowing this, you can transmute this confected, sublimated fear of the Tao you're feeling ahead of time to a great extent, before it even happens, before it even has time to take route, and so make all your upcoming transitions far more seamless, much less jarring, and hence of course more conducive to an enjoyable ride.

And that of course is the point of this stint. Just enjoy it. There is no higher purpose for our being here than to enjoy it. The Tao manifests itself as you and I and it does that to enjoy itself. It's not a masochist. It doesn't manifest itself to have a horrible time. It manifests itself to enjoy being here through us. That's our highest purpose. And therefore the more you can transmute this insidious confected fake fear of survival, expressed as separation anxiety, before it even manages to take root in you, the more seamlessly you're able to sit back and enjoy the ride. By extension you will then infect others with your enjoyment and that will then spread as a trend of life, a mean, and the more people who are taken by this feeling of joy, the more the Tao is able to enjoy itself through more people, the more magnificent and wonderful the world expresses itself and life becomes for everybody.

And the way it's done is this. Identify the separation anxiety, however subtle it may be. You do this by being vigilant, by taking note, by noticing what's occurring within you. So say as a fairly daft, but quite typical example, when you rise from your desk, or workstation at the

end of the working day, even though you're quite likely to be keen to go home, or go out, or do whatever you're doing next, or simply to get out of the office, or the workplace, there will be inevitably nonetheless a part of you feeling a very subtle, almost unnoticeable anxiety about separating from this space that you've habituated yourself to for the day, simply because it's provided a reference point, something reliable for a period of time, whether you liked it, or not. And any apparently reliable reference point will be latched onto by the embryonic mind by way of association as correlating with survival, therefore mistakenly assuming it causes your survival. Thus, there therefore will be separation anxiety, even from the office.

However, usually it will probably be pretty subtle. It might well be mixed with some excitement, or another feeling, but it will be there in core of the mix. It's a bit like a kick drum pounding a tune so incessantly you learn to ignore it. It's just there, right at the heart of it all. It's the fear of change, even if change is desired. And it's when we ignore it, as we tend to do, it gives rise to subtle, or maybe not so subtle, control or manipulation tactics to avoid acknowledging the anxiety. So for example, we get anxious about leaving people, or hurting people, about what we're going to say to extricate ourselves from the situation, as much as we get anxious about them leaving us. So we start talking differently, albeit subtly differently. We start shielding, covering, masking, lying, talking bullshit, throwing sweet flowers of nothing, criticising, enticing, alluring, mesmerising, bullying, cajoling, coercing, whatever, ever so subtly, but we do it nonetheless. So in this daft example of the end of the work day, colleagues invite you for a drink. The drink is there to mollify everyone's separation anxiety. Nobody's likely to see, or acknowledge it as that, but that's essentially what it is. Everyone's got to let go of their reference points of the day.

Fear of the unknown

This fear of the unknown is operating at a totally subconscious level. This gives rise to an almost discernible, but covered over, separation anxiety, which doesn't feel very nice. So people do what they can to cover it over. It is no different from the anxiety of leaving the womb to which you'd habituated yourself in that way. But obviously nobody's aware of it being that way. And say you decline the drinks because you've got something else to do. There'll be some little jibe from the others to mask the fact that they're getting separation anxiety about you, for example. They might say something like, 'Oh not up to a drink today, got some hot date, or something?'

And there'll be other anxieties, such as falling apart anxiety thrown in as well. But essentially it's the fear of change you're trying to deny, avoid and distract from. And this is all being acted out in some boring, laborious time-wasting charade, saying some bullshit to get you out of the thing, which takes time and energy, it's irritating, it's energy draining, and what's the point. Because it dehumanises you and them and it reduces you all to a bunch of clichés, rather than these magnificent spirits we actually are. On the other hand, in a truly enlightened situation if the separation was acknowledged and disclosed, for example 'Hey, I'm feeling separation anxiety about leaving you this evening', which at first in our world of pretending that we don't feel separation anxiety, would seem overly sentimental and inappropriate to say such a thing to a work colleague.

Pretence

We learned to pretend incidentally we weren't suffering from separation anxiety originally from leaving our mum, lest the other kids thought us wet, or soppy. We pretended to be really brave, and didn't feel anything about leaving our mum, when in fact, all the kids were feeling exactly the same pain. And you'd be amazed if you stick to saying what you're really feeling, as above, firmly, how it massively transforms the quality and depth of the dialogue between the two of you, or however many colleagues you might be talking to, from that point on. It draws out the softness and nurturing, the authentic, the inner child in each which we are beneath, our capable adult veneers. I'm not suggesting you have to actually try this in the workplace, but I've done this in a business situation where I've been sitting with a colleague and it's not a situation where you normally say to someone, *'I'm suffering from separation anxiety'*, but I've enjoyed the session, or whatever we've been working on so much that I actually notice that I've got separation anxiety and I have to change and go on to the next activity with somebody else, or whatever. And by saying it, if you stay with it and don't crumble with it and pretend you didn't say it, the other will respond in the same way. And it's remarkable how that opens up a true authentic meeting of souls in that moment, which is what actually all our souls are craving all the time. So, even with colleagues in every working day, if you shared it like that it would instantly do away with all the subtle bullshit manipulation that goes on in the office about going to share a good liver poisoning bar room session together, and it would save you so much time and energy for far more interesting, free flowing, genuine connections, for them and everybody else.

So that's the form. You access your vigilance, your mindfulness if you want to call it that. You notice the separation anxiety, however subtle it is, you note it – the fear of change, the fear of the unknown - you acknowledge it in yourself at the level of being that six month old baby, that embryo and you acknowledge it to the other

and then you drop back inside, you stick yourself in your back, rather than be up front where all the drama is going on, you sit back, you relax, which means you soften all the muscles of your body.

Which again takes vigilance because you've got to scan and notice where the muscles are

You stop holding your breath, you breathe freely. you breathe slowly because that helps your mind slow down, you grow outwards, i.e. you grow upwards and you grow in breadth, you elongate your spine, like in the Alexander technique, or tai chi, you visualize the crown of your head urging its way up to the ceiling to mentally give your spine more length. You drop your shoulders, you broaden the shoulders, you raise your breastbone.

rigid, and then you command each muscle group to let go. That's crucial because that sets the tone for everything.

Then, like that, you've grown in height and breadth. There's more of you, more of an arena to

experience yourself in.

And from that, dropped back inside, with your heart relaxed open and a sense of compassion for yourself and all of life, you note the separation anxiety, which you remind yourself is actually a compound version of the anxiety you first felt of leaving the womb, which you justified after birth as something that was worth feeling anxious about, and projected it onto all subsequent situations, and which is not actually a real, live fear at all. This is different from thinking that separation anxiety is just for babies, in other words just not acknowledging it and saying 'its mild, just kids stuff, I don't even have to think about that'. It's mild in its feeling, but it's very powerful and it's very subtle as I've explained. So this is very different from just pushing it away, because then it just comes back and poisons you. That's the point, and it deprives you of the real life force. So this is just acknowledging, noticing, the anxiety is there, the anxiety about change, the fear of the unknown, and its manifesting as this mild, but definitely there, separation anxiety. And this is the original anxiety of leaving the womb, projected onto all subsequent situations, including the one you're in and is not an actual, real, live fear, because you are not, probably anyway, in any real awful danger. There is no wild animal coming at you I'd imagine, there's probably not any psychotic human beings near you, there are no cliff precipices about to collapse as you're walking on them, no loud noises that can harm you and so on.

Confected fear

So this fear of change, of the unknown, is actually a confected fear - the separation anxiety of leaving the other, of leaving the situation, as if the situation of the other was your bedrock, as if that's why you were surviving. And this comes from being afraid of the Tao in the void, which is the basis of all of this. So by loving the Tao in the void you then allow this confected fear, or anxiety of leaving somebody, or something, to drift away. As this anxiety is produced by sublimating the real underlying fear of death, oblivion, God, the void, and so on, it's not actually to be afraid of, there's isn't anything to be afraid of there. However, the real fear that this anxiety is a sublimation of, is an energy raw and pure waiting to be tacked up and ridden.

And this is what you're denying yourself when you're in separation anxiety, when you're still subscribing to the idea that Tao is a fearful thing, and that you've got to cling to people, places, situations, phases for your survival, you don't. The real fear that is a healthy energy is raw, and it's pure, and it wants to be tacked up. It wants you to take hold of it and ride it. So you have to feel the fear of death. You have to actually envisage your eventual death. You have to feel that fear of the oblivion that you're afraid will follow it, and of the Tao that manifested that oblivion. You have to love the Tao in the void, really love it. And you have to love the feeling of the fear, rather than fear it. So you love the fear and you love the Tao in the void. And you breathe it in and you breathe it out.

And you may tremble as you feel it, you may not. It doesn't matter. What you're doing like this is, is you're riding that fear, like a wild tiger within you – as in tai chi there's a move called 'Step back to ride tiger'. And this is exactly what this is about. It's about stepping back inside, flowing back inside, occupying your back where everything is still and silent and steady and strong, knowing that the whole drama that you've concocted in your head about

who you are, what this is all about, why there's every reason to be terrified all the time, even though there actually isn't, and realising that all of this is pure concoction, it's a confection that you've been doing to entertain yourself as we all can, it's what we do. But as you breathe it in and out as an energy, the raw pure fear of existence, make it yours, ride it. It's like riding a wild tiger, and it's a beautiful thing to do, and it's a lot more satisfying and fulfilling than riding on the back of a mouse, or whatever the other way is.

Loving the Tao in the void - and this is something that you have to practice, it doesn't all come at once, you will get the initial burst of it, but it then has to be done constantly, - this is the way we're treating fear, you love the Tao in the void and as soon as you can feel a glimmer even of loving the Tao in the void, you know all at once, you can't help but know, that everything, all of this is just one within it, it's just different shapes of the one thing all going on inside the Tao. And no matter which of its myriad forms comes or goes before your eyes, no matter whether it's a lover, a mother, a father, or a child, the most able people to lose you can possibly imagine, it doesn't matter which of its forms it expresses itself through and which come and go through your life, there cannot actually be real separation from the continuum of infinite energy, life, and conscious, or it wouldn't be a continuum. And there cannot be a separation from the continuum.

Fake fear

Hence, though utterly cherished and sanctified from all the way back to six months or so in the womb, separation anxiety is actually a totally fake fear, it doesn't exist, it's an illusion, and a fundamentally bogus response to change. Hence it is no longer obligatory to pander to it compulsively simply because you started doing it to yourself when you were even still in the womb. Just because you did it then that doesn't mean it's sacrosanct. It doesn't mean it's a wise way to play it. It isn't. Instead, riding the real fear of God, - and I'm not being religious when I say this, I'm talking about it in its neutral, all embracing form - riding the real fear of the Tao, the void, the God, the big one, breathing in all the while, relaxing, flowing, and flowing backwards and backwards and backwards within you, rather than rushing forwards into the illusion again, reminding yourself it's perfectly ok to feel afraid, there's no longer any need to mask it, or pretend you don't feel it, it doesn't make you a baby to feel afraid. It's totally ok to feel afraid. Instead, ride the energy, it's beautiful, this is life, this is how you become like a super hero, it's the energy, not the denial of it, the actual riding of it, this is loving the fear.

'Could I let go of wanting to change feeling this fear?' and you answer, 'Yes, I could let go of wanting to change feeling this fear'. Then you ask yourself, 'Would I let go of wanting to change feeling this fear?' And you answer, 'Yes, I would let go of wanting to change feeling this fear'. And that magic sequence of words, you'll notice, has already vanished any essence of feeling of anxiety from within you, and has immediately given you your power back. It's given you that raw pure, chi.

So then again, next you ask yourself,

Then, just because it's nice to play devil's advocate, and we do have this well-developed

forebrain in which we like to run these movies through, so let's just satisfy that particular beast and roll the worst case scenario through. So say its separating from somebody you really love, a lover, a new soulmate, twin flame cliché, or whatever, someone you really love, and it feels really good, really beautiful, and you've been looking for this for years, all your life, and you've got to leave them, you know it's coming. I remember I had this feeling with my kids, I used to get this horrible feeling knowing that I was going to leave them at some point, that they were going to go home to their mum, and I wasn't going to see them for another week, or so. I used to get awful separation anxiety with them. So I used to roll it through, What if you were never, ever to see that person, or the place, or the scene, situation, or the phase that you're afraid of separating from, ever, ever again? What if destiny chose that by some bizarre twist of fate, war, earthquakes, or whatever, you were never, ever to see that person again? Obviously it's completely unlikely, but what if you were never were, would it kill your spirit? That is the question the warrior has to ask, 'Would it kill my spirit?' And the answer is no. It has to be. There's no choice with this one. This isn't stuff where you can go into the kind of neolistic meanderings of an intellectual narcissist and come up with some theory. This isn't about that. This is warrior stuff. This is the best approach to it. That's the question and is always at the root of it all. If the very, very worst happened, would it kill my spirit, and you're obliged as a warrior to say 'No'. It's very powerful that.

Psycho-energetics

Now let's look at the psycho-energetic, level of this whole thing:

The kidneys possess the fear. That's what they do. So this raw pure energy that gives us the thing to ride on is processed through the kidneys. The kidneys generate your life force. When this natural, raw, pure, healthy, non gm fear is compressed, it's confected into a horror movie in the head. Anxiety is then triggered in ourselves as our bogus most prevalent method of processing this fear. This then strains the kidneys. And because it's like poison, because it's fake, because its bullshit, the kidneys have to work really hard, it puts a strain on them. But kidneys are not really built for it. They're built for the real stuff, they're built for the pure thing, not the mucky, polluted shit they're then having to deal with. And when the kidneys strain, first of all you get more anxiety, because that's what happens. As soon as the kidneys get strained, the area contracts, this squeezes the adrenal glands, which pump out more cortisol, which produces more anxiety, which is addictive, and which therefore perpetuates itself as a vicious cycle. Not only that, when the kidney's strain, the liver chi weakens, because the liver relies on the kidneys to keep it cool. This then causes more toxicity in the system, even though only on an energetic level, and your chi, your thoughts initially, but eventually your blood become more toxic.

Now when your chi and your thoughts become more toxic it gives rise to imagining, in this instance with separation anxiety that the other might not even want to see you again anyway. This can arise with low self-esteem and that comes from the liver. It's liver toxicity and energy on the mental level which twists the pictures in the mind and makes you see what's not there. This gives rise to manipulative behaviour, for example, 'Oh you probably don't want to see me again anyway', the sort of thing we throw at people when we feel afraid that we've lost control of them. The manipulative behaviour will actually push the other person away, and therefore

When the liver chi drops, that in turn causes the heart chi to weaken, because that relies on the liver chi to give it its fire, its enthusiasm. And then because the heart controls the sense of self, you lose your sense of self and hence you lose your self-esteem and your sense of self-reliance, which makes you think and see the situation crookedly and blow it out of all proportion, because you feel that the other doesn't want you, or nobody really wants you anyway, and you feel lonely because of that.

prove to you that you were right in your negative beliefs.

And you don't feel very self-reliant, so you're clinging to people, or anything external for your validation and strength and so on. And because the sense of self is blown it makes you blow it out of all proportion. You lose your perspective.

When the heart chi weakens the spleen chi weakens, because the spleen relies on the heart for its heat, otherwise it goes all soggy – the spleen is earth, so it goes like mud.

The spleen provides the chi to organise yourself – it keeps the organs in your body in the right place and stops them from prolapsing, it keeps the blood in the vessels, it keeps your thoughts in a straight line, it gives your short term memory a bit of poke so you can remember where you left your keys, it helps organise your thoughts, your projects, it's like left brain thinking. And the spleen is also the original conduit for your mother's chi and psycho-emotional energy to you through the umbilical cord in the womb. The spleen was responsible for that as well. So what happens when the spleen chi weakens, is it causes addictive behaviour – reliance on chocolate, alcohol, drugs, sex with strangers in confined places, shopping, or whatever, as compensation for the mother nurturing that you want when you were in this sense of losing your clarity of mind and so on.

When the spleen chi weakens the lung chi weakens, because they rely on the spleen to give them their desire for you to stay on the earth, so you'll take your next breath. So the lungs will draw that next breath because of the energy of desire to stay on the earth given them by the spleen to live on the earth plane.

When the lung chi weakens it makes you look back with nostalgia, or regret. When the lung chi is too strong you tend to run into the future all the time, but when it weakens it makes you go nostalgic, or regretful, and that compounds the sensation of anxiety about change by reminding you unconsciously of every single time you've had painful separations before, just to bolster the case and keep you in that fearful anxious state, so it's not a pleasant vicious cycle. Now all this sounds huge, but it goes on at such a subtle, unconscious level and it's this

subconscious subtle level that depletes your energy, your vital life force. And that depletes your capacity for living this adventure like a proper full grown warrior, rather than a half person.

Obviously, as I say, it occurs extremely subtly, but unless transmuted, the anxiety will inevitably cause something along the lines of the above. That's how it works. Now knowing this in itself is enough to rebalance. There's not really much need to do more than perhaps think relaxation and warmth into your kidneys now as the antidote to the whole thing. It's really that simple. As you sit here all you have to do is just think warmth and relaxation into your kidneys either side of your spine at waist level and breathe and relax. It takes a little practice to know how to get your mind to focus like that, but it's only practice. Even now, you're probably feeling a bit more warmth in the kidneys. It's very hard to feel afraid when the kidneys are warm and you're relaxed.

The fear of death

So, it's plain to see in short that no matter how you disguise it, separation anxiety is actually the fear of death, and dying, of leaving eventually everyone and everything, because that's the fear when you play this one out - of leaving everything and everyone you know, every single reference point that you will have gleaned during your lifetime, most of which I'm sure you will have assumed are actually ultimately forever real and absolute, whereas in fact none of them are, because it's all just stuff changing in the world of appearances, including all the people, all the relationships, all the situations, all the design, all the infrastructure, all the morals, all the ideas, all the systems, everything we know in this material plane is merely a reference point that correlates with our survival, but is not always causative of it. That's the interesting part.

So, the fear of death, which is really the fear of the void, and the fear of the void, which is really the fear of God in the void, is antidoted simply by loving the fear, just love the fear that you feel of the void, love the fear, that you feel of death, and love God, the Tao, the great presence informing the void. Because the void is not empty. We know that. Dark matter is not non-existent. It exists as dark matter. What informs that as much as informs matter, what informs the dark energy as much as the light energy, is the Tao, the God, the Presence, whatever you want to call it, just love that, with your heart, your belly, your head, just let your whole body love it, surrender to it.

And as soon as you do that, no matter how much you're afraid of missing somebody that you're about to part with, the separation anxiety has vanished and instead you've got raw, pure chi. You know change is coming, you know there's going to be a choppy feeling when you lose them. You also know that there isn't a vacuum. It's immediately filled with the chi of love that this universe actually is.

Outcome

So then finally, having processed it, you ask yourself, *'What's my intention here?'* *What outcome am I actually desiring?'* Now this next bit is a possible suggestion, and I'm using it

in conjunction with the example of having to leave somebody, or something, or some situation, or some phase and you're feeling separation anxiety. An intention could be that you'll be delighted to see this person, this place, this situation again, if in actual fact destiny has it in store for you to do so, but that either way, the other and you, no matter how much you feel connected to them, how much you love them, you'll be able to let them go knowing they'll prosper and they will prosper in all ways regardless. You see this, you choose it, you have the courage to let go and trust the Tao, the flow of events, to do the very best for everybody. You feel the fear of the Tao in that moment. You breathe that fear in and you breathe it out, you love the fear, you love the fear of not knowing. You love the Tao for being so powerful, and you feel the fear transmute instantly into pure, raw chi, or excitement, and you trust the Tao to bring you your desired outcome of itself, without you having to contrive anything, without you having to manipulate, without you having to make plans, without you having to try and protect the person, or do anything about them. You just trust that your intention will manifest for the highest good, according to the free will of everybody involved, and then you let go and carry on as you were.

Chapter 3

Competition anxiety

If you are just doing this as a stand-alone, the template from which we're working will become evident as we go along. Bear with me for not doing a resume at the start of each chapter, but I think you'll find it all pretty self-explanatory. Otherwise everyone who is following the entire sequence through, which I will be the majority, I think by now you're starting to get familiar with the protocol. Really, as any good Buddhist, or psychotherapist will tell you, the very act of observation, or observation without attachment, or judgement of any particular process occurring within, is enough in itself to, shall we say, heal the suffering that has been caused by that. In other words dispel whatever complex, or syndrome it is, because the act of observation in itself implies that there is an observer and then there is the observed, i.e. psycho-emotional distance is created, space is created. And then the syndrome is no longer compulsive, it's an option, but it's not compulsive.

Psycho-spatial repositioning

This is very much facilitated by the Taoist technique, which is unique to the Taoist practice, of actually psycho-spatially repositioning yourself within your body. It's fairly common to all forms of yoga, because qigong, which is the practice of Taoism, is a form of yoga, yoga meaning yoking yourself to the big presence, the truth of what's going on here. And in the Taoist practice there are many kinds of aspects to the setup, but the gist of it is that you drop back inside, rather than stay in the front of yourself, The front of yourself is where all the fears and syndromes and all the drama of being human occur, the back of you is where there is silence and stillness and strength. The back of you is the home of the witness bearer, the home of the observer. And when you place yourself in the back, you are in the state of observing what's occurring in the front, and all forms of anxiety occur in the front. Pardon me repeating myself here, but it's important, real fear is essentially the fear of being physically hurt by another human or an animal of any sort, or the fear of loud noise, for example when you hear a loud noise you have instinctively a genuine fear someone, or something may harm you, such as a wild animal roaring, a loud noise can be shocking, and if you are about to fall from a great height physically speaking you'll have real fear.

These are the only genuine stimuli for actual fear. Underlying these stimuli is the fear of death of course, and underlying the fear of death is the fear of oblivion, underlying the fear of oblivion is the fear of what it is that informs the void, the big nothingness - the Taoists call it the void that is not empty, and what that is, is ineffable, undefinable and indescribable. The Taoists call it Tao, we in the west call it God. And if one strips God of any religious associations just for a moment, what we actually are fundamentally afraid of is God in the void. When the Tibetans chant om. mani padmi hum, om, mani padmi hum, om, mani padme, hum, what they're literally saying is *'I pay my respect to the lightning bolt in the thunder of the void'*, and its chanted to illicit a state of absolute trust in and love for that, rather than fear of it. And the reason that we call those genuinely religious people in days of old god- fearing is because fundamentally, as I've said before, the ultimate fear is the fear of God. That to which

we return when we leave our bodies. It's not actually the fear of death itself, it's the fear of what's informing this whole entire mystery – the dark matter, the matter, the dark energy, the light energy, all of it, it's so powerful, so awesome that we are afraid of it, naturally. Then the trick is to love that, rather than fear it.

Love the fear

On a more practical level this relates to loving the fear that you're feeling, rather than trying to make it go away. When you can feel fear in your body, which if you're alive you will be, because it's intrinsic to being alive. And it's a very important component of being alive. Without it you wouldn't be alive, you wouldn't have the reason to avoid traffic coming at you when you're walking across the road for example. So feeling fear is essential. When you can actually feel that coursing through your body and love it, rather than try and mask it, change it, deny it, distract yourself from it, or whatever, when you can actually feel it and stay present in the moment, rather than give way to future projections in your imagination, which I'll get to shortly, then you are imbued with raw, pure chi, or psycho-active energy, life force, which fuels you to stay in the game and prevail and abide. That's the gist of it all.

What we're looking at now is, for me I think, one of the more fascinating aspects of confectioned fear, and that is competition anxiety. Because we are not in an environment, at present at least, in which we're likely, most of us at anyway, to be hurt by another human being, or aren't being at this moment, nor a wild animal, we're not actually being subject to surprising loud noises all the time, albeit we're subject to a kind of heavy constant low-level noise most of the time from traffic, industry, radio, television and so on. And because it's unlikely at this moment that the earth will crack up and swallow us, or we'll fall from a height for whatever reason, we don't really have any real reason to be afraid. And yet, the fear quota is being processed nonetheless by the kidneys all the time.

Life-force

The kidneys are responsible for generating your life force, they're responsible for generating and circulating the chi. They do this regardless of whether or not there's anything to be afraid of. They will be there to keep you alive. Because we've managed to outsource all the factors that provide for our survival, because we've managed, at least for the time being, to tame nature to the extent that we're able to feed a global population, more or less, and keep it flowing with water and everything else people need, more or less - I know not everybody's got that privilege, and that's a shocking thing. However, more or less, most of the population most of the time is being catered for. We've outsourced all the reasons for really needing the fear, most of the time. Nonetheless that fear quota has to be used on something, so we've defaulted to creating fearful pictures in the head, we create horror stories of what could happen, and we invest in those pictures, in those movies quite heavily, to the extent that we actually mistake them for reality itself, and we become afraid of them. Again, this is not real fear, this is confectioned fear. This is what is essentially anxiety. And it's about something in the imagination, but we really believe it's real. We really believe that what we're afraid of is an external object out there in the world. In fact it's merely something in the imagination, but we're very clever, and our imagination is very, very powerful, and so we actually believe that

what we're imagining is true and make ourselves afraid of it. And that's called anxiety.

Confected fear

This form of confected fear, because it's toxic essentially, because it doesn't even exist, puts a strain on the kidney energy. It puts a strain on the whole of the kidney region in the lower back, which causes a subtle contraction, which in turn squeezes the kidneys. And on top of the kidneys you have the adrenals, which in Latin literally means *ad renum*, i.e. that which is sitting on top of the kidneys. When you're anxious you stop breathing and become tight in your muscles, the signs of stress. The adrenals release cortisol into the system, and cortisol as a chemical, gives a nasty effect, it is very strongly habit forming and that causes a compound effect whereby you stop breathing properly, you hold your breath, you tighten up your muscles, you crumple your posture, and that inhibits the free working of all the organs, especially the kidneys, and that increases the amount of cortisol, and therefore you have more and more fearful thoughts, you invest more and more in these imaginary horror stories, and so on and so forth. And that is how a lot of people are walking around. The various aspects of being human play themselves out as various anxieties. However, the different types of anxiety, like genuine fear, do have their value. They're the sort of synthesized version of fear, but they're the nonetheless useful to some extent.

Competition anxiety

So today we're looking at how we manufacture competition anxiety. Here we are, there's around seven million plus people officially on the planet, and we're competing for, what appears to be, a finite number of resources. We're not walking around aware of that, but that's what we're doing. And the anxiety associated with competitiveness gets you up in the morning, it gets you to improve your game, it gets you to make the most of yourself, it gets you to make the most of your appearance, it gets and keeps you motivated to excel at whatever you're doing, it provides fuel for the game we all play here while we're hanging around waiting to die, it inspires creativity and originality, and so on. But once you've acknowledged it, once you've spotted that it's competition anxiety, once you've taken the juice from it, and say to yourself 'ok I'm competing here, I've got to keep up, right, get out of bed etc.', once you've done that, which is taking positive action based on the awareness that there is competition anxiety, then you drop it. This is the art of the wise person, to drop it, otherwise you drop yourself. In other words, you lose your power to both do the things it's juiced you up for, and to make them work, so it's totally counter-productive. You've got to drop it once you've acknowledged it, and done the practical pragmatic things it's asking you to do. I personally wake up every single morning driven with competition anxiety, so I'm totally familiar with how it works. Not only am I driven by it when I wake up in the morning, it's there constantly, it keeps popping up throughout the day and night, and it is a great driver for a lot of the stuff that I do. Because of that I've had to look at it quite deeply, because, as I say, if you continue to suck it once you've got the juice out of it, all you're actually doing is sucking your own power out and that makes you really ineffectual.

So first of all, stage one is to be aware within yourself and notice how competition anxiety drives you. I'd also like to point out, and you probably notice, that competition anxiety

decreases at the weekend and that's because at weekends we've called a truce, a pause to stop competing. Now this is actually completely symbolic because the stores are still open, people are still working – I don't stop working at weekends for example, like now. This doesn't feel like work to me at all, it's an utter pleasure, but this would fall under the category of work if you were my bank manager, or whatever else looking at what I do. I'm writing a lot of weekends, I'm making music, and I'm sure you're doing stuff for yourself. The competition doesn't really stop at all at weekends, but we agree to believe it stops on weekends because that's the tradition and therefore competition anxiety decreases. That's one of the main factors that makes weekends fun for people. But it's totally illusory and this is indicative of how illusory competition anxiety is in the first place. It's the same with public holidays — because everybody's agreed it's a public holiday competition anxiety drops, it's like a day off, but what's it a day off from? It's certainly not a day off from necessarily working, it's not a day off from chores, it's not a day off from actually doing anything that you'd normally do – you may not go into the office, or whatever else, but because you've given yourself this idea that we've stopped competing for the day, you're allowed to rest a little bit inside. That's the difference between a weekend and other days, aside from that you may do similar things, just slightly differently and so on. I know somebody who, even on a Sunday has to tell themselves it's their birthday if they want to be able to stay in bed all day. It's really hard to justify just resting. I find it incredibly difficult myself. I had a fairy godmother so to speak when I lived in Taos thirty odd years ago, called Patricia, who's dead now, but who was a complete magic woman. And she was very, very lovely. She used to say to me, 'Young man, one of the greatest lessons you're ever going to have to learn in your life is how to idle, idling is one of the greatest talents there is and one of the most important that you can ever learn in your life'.

Idling

I'm still a real novice at it myself, but I'm beginning to scratch the surface of it, and I know what she meant. It's really important to be able to go into neutral. That's why I meditate. It's a moment of neutrality, hence tai chi, it's a moment of neutrality. So, it's when any anxiety, and in this case we're talking about competition anxiety, reduces your ability to rest, or idle to near enough zero, and thus is depleting your kidney chi, which is the very chi required to process anxiety in the first place. This then instigates a vicious loop, and the aim here is to transmute this excess of competition anxiety back into the raw, pure chi, which it should be, which paradoxically then fuels you to compete more effectively. And it's not actually that competing is the only mode to play this game, as we'll be discussing shortly. We don't call this the human race for nothing. However, as for competing it started right back when the very seed of your being, i.e. your father's sperm, was racing an infinite number of its competitors to fertilize your mother's egg, because if it didn't get there, like all the others, it would die. So serious stakes, and no doubt that wee sperm was feeling the fear in every bit of its tiny wee frame. Definitely there was no time for that sperm to have actual anxiety about whether it was going to win, or die, and what would the other sperms think of it if it failed and so on, or how much of a disappointment it would be to get all the way there, and just come second, because there are definitely no consolation prizes in that game. That little sperm simply went for it, like a demon, it swam like a demon to the mothership and it got there. But the residue of that original experience, that is the very, very first experience of you, the residue

of that, the imprint of that, was and is to this day right there at the very nub of your circuit boards and it continues to influence your energetic patterns to this day.

The need for inclusion

What's interesting about competition anxiety is how much of a factor it is in what you might think is survival anxiety, which we'll be discussing in the next chapter, or the fear of poverty, the fear of failure, and even the fear of death. This is because status - looking good, being right, being seen to be right, being seen to be good, being important, being respected, being acknowledged, being honored, being celebrated, - the drive for all these comprises an essential mechanism for the human herd bonding, and they all boil down to the need to be included. And that's what everybody wants, to be included. And if you are not with status, if you don't look good, if you don't look right, if you don't seem respectable, if you seem unimportant, and so on, it's as if you're not going to be included. And this provides a major drive for competitiveness.

The reason that people want to become super rich, that they want to become super important and so on, is because at some level they're yearning for inclusion, and they believe that by attaining to this high station they will be included. In fact, to be included all you have to do is just include yourself, but this is something that doesn't run on a logical level. It's so deeply wired in, that it's no longer to do with anything rational, or logical, and it's not just an emotional need, it's a very real one. This is because aside from rare individuals reared by wolves, or bears or whatever, if you're excluded from humanity you don't last long. The most excluded people I suppose are homeless people in the streets of big cities and so on, or maybe they've excluded themselves from the general swing of the way things are. Homeless people of course also have their own sub-culture, in which at least some loose form of inclusion is imperative. This drive for inclusion originates of course from primeval times, when inclusion in the clan, in the process of hunting, gathering, preparing, and sharing the food, was essential for survival. It's only been in the past relatively miniscule phase of human history that we've managed to outsource these moves, and ingeniously, and in fact somewhat efficiently, yet wastefully, managed to globalise the growing, the manufacturing, the processing, and distribution of food, the channelling of water and so on, and outsource all the other factors requisite for our survival - housing, house building, sanitation, and everything else we depend on the globalised infrastructure for.

But even though right now, at least for the time being, we most of us thankfully, at least most people reading this book anyway, don't have to face exclusion from any clan, or whatever, we nonetheless still have that program running deep in our circuits, and the fear quota associated with it. It's still being catered for by the kidneys, even though it has nowhere specific to go, so what happens to it? Well it drives us to create horror movies in our heads, the subtext of which is being excluded, or not being included by the clan, so the horror movie is 'I'm going to be excluded, or I'm not going to be included in the clan'. And then anxiety arises. The way it will present action wise in the horror movie in the head, on the surface of things, will be for example, anxiety about being humiliated, or losing your status, or being disrespected, or disregarded, or discarded, or dishonoured, or being unimportant, being a nobody and so on. Usually in the horror movie this will be on account of imagining ourselves failing in our

careers, or partnership, or falling ill, becoming decrepit, plain, unattractive, being unfashionable, looking square, looking stupid, becoming destitute, dying young, and so on.

Status drop

And as I say, we'll be looking at the fear of illnesses, and fear of death and poverty as part of survival anxiety in the next chapter, but a large component of those fears is actually this fear of status drop, which derives from competition anxiety. And it's a potentially tricky one to dislodge, as the underlying drive is that original sperm that fertilized the egg, for which it had to compete with millions of others and win. It's so intrinsically wired in right from the very inception of you. And it's majorly compounded then by being at school, because, unless it's an enlightened education system, like Steiner for example, you're entrained to compete with your peers in your age group, in your year, and this goes on. It would do, because you're being trained from a very early age into that paradigm, into that way of seeing things. And so it will continue long after you've left school, for most people all the way through till they die, or become senile and forget about it. You go to university and you're competing with your age group. It gets slightly less clear then because there are mature students and so on, and the age group changes a little bit, it's a little bit more flexible.

Nevertheless, by the time you're thirty you believe that you should have achieved this and achieved that. By the time you're forty you definitely feel that you should have achieved this or achieved that. If you're not married by the time you're thirty five say, there's definitely got to be something wrong with you — you know that's not true, but that's how the programming works. You're competing for signs of status, status symbols, such as marriage, or a house, or having two kids, and your kids doing well, by a certain age. And that's all related to school, competing with your own age group. And then as parents, if you remember your own parents would have almost certainly done it, you project your competition anxiety onto your kids. You're pushing them to do well. And along with competition anxiety, unless you're number one in your field at that point in time, or perceive yourself to be, will be that you'll be comparing yourself to others, who you will assume are doing better than you in any given area. This leads to violent communication with yourself, along the lines of 'I should be doing better'. Of course, you could be doing better, but that's a whole other thing. But this inner slave driver says, 'You should be doing more, you should be doing better'. I know from sitting down writing, or reading material, completing one task, which might have taken an hour, or whatever, and then immediately slamming into the next one, there's this inner slave driver saying 'You've only done that' the list is huge, you need to get on with the next thing'. What I could have done was say 'Well done, well done, you've done all that, that's really good'. The 'I should be doing better', the slavery to the 'to do' list, I often ask myself the question, what happens to the 'to do' list when I die? As if it has some life of its own. It doesn't, it's a complete illusion.

As an antidote to competition anxiety, which in fact is really a fake and highly inefficient one, we use up huge amounts of personal energy posturing and parading, pretending and prevaricating, in order to create an impression of respectability, of value, of worth, of importance, of looking good. You put on 'your face' to go out into the world. Perhaps you're a raving nutter at home, and when you go out you pretend to be really respectable. This is

ubiquitous, it's not just you, or me, it's everybody. We express it in our clothes, in our makeup, in our hairstyles, in the car we drive and all the rest of it; in the way we decorate our homes, in the sort of homes we have. Even if you're living in a really humble place, you'll want to make it look as good as it can possibly look if guests are coming over. There's this need to impress. And all of this occurs collectively, as well as individually, on a global scale. Hence the power of brands, of the advertising marketing medium to support and facilitate the brand's success. And hence huge amounts of resources are spent within the manufacturing, and packaging industry, and marketing and distributing. And huge, huge amounts of produce is sold on a daily basis, produce that exists mostly merely to play to our insecurity and vanity, caused by this desperate drive to be included, misdirected completely and expressed as competition anxiety, which originates from that very first sperm racing for the egg.

The drive

So, this drive that derives from the fundamental need for inclusion is fuelled by competition anxiety. The fear of poverty and/or failure for instance, is far, far less, once you strip it of competition anxiety and if you weren't intrinsically driven by the fear template, initiated at your inception by that sperm that got through. Similarly if this drive wasn't due to the intrinsic herd bonding mechanisms, which it had to have — to bind us together as a herd. And competition anxiety is a big one, it's a very, very clever mechanism by which we bond and remain in the game with each other. And we need to do that for our own survival as well collectively. It's all very, very clever stuff, but it doesn't mean it's sacrosanct. It doesn't mean you can't claim power over the process and transform it through your will. And that's actually what we're doing here.

So if the drive wasn't an intrinsic herd bonding mechanism and originally instilled to ensure that you got your bit of rhino meat, or whatever for the night, and therefore you felt no concern as to how good, respectable, clever, or important you were in the eyes of others, in other words, stripped of the humiliation factor, poverty etc., failure would be far less fearful a prospect. If you didn't feel that you would look like a complete idiot if you messed up, or perhaps because you were poor, if you didn't fear looking unimportant, you wouldn't care that much about not having money, or about failing at any particular task, you'd just get on with sorting it out and getting more money in. There wouldn't be that awful anxiety about it, or it wouldn't be nearly as great at least if it wasn't for the competition anxiety factor. And were you no longer with the need therefore to posture, and parade, or show off, were you not feeling that underlying anxiety about competing, or more precisely failing to compete, you would be far more able to feel the contentment, and even the elation, which is your birth right, about already being in the world with the biggest gift there is, the gift of life itself, to which all other gifts are merely secondary, no matter what you care to mention.

The miracle of being here

After the initial gift of consciousness, with a body, with apparently the free will to move around, and move limbs, assuming you can, that is the gift of all gifts, just being here. This the miracle of all miracles. And it's a miracle that if left in your natural state, without running

interference on yourself, it will illicit an ongoing perpetual state of utter delight. If you didn't have competition anxiety driving you to posture, parade, and impress and show off, and so on, and all that goes with that, you would be able to feel that elation, feel that contentment all the time, because that would be the ground of your being. You'd no longer be distracted from your contentment and elation by noticing, for example that someone else had more than you, had achieved more than you, appeared cleverer than you, was prettier than you, was more important than you. It would become completely irrelevant. Say you were living in a humble home, really content, really elated to be alive, the fact that the humble home was humble was probably quite enjoyable too because it meant less cleaning work, and less upkeep and so on.

You were very, very happy to be in that state, until you looked across the street and saw somebody in a much bigger, swankier looking house, and then you suddenly felt like a loser, you think that you're an idiot, you're not up to it, how come you haven't got that house, what's wrong with you. You may even succumb to envy, which is very auto destructive, and would therefore reduce the level of energy in your body, which would reduce your ability to manufacture whatever else you wanted anyway, ironically. If you weren't as susceptible to comparing yourself with other people because of this competition anxiety, your life would be far, far, far more enjoyable each and every moment on every level as a result. And if you want a measure or prescription of success, which is a pretty invulnerable one, it would be that you're able to enjoy each and every moment to the full. Why would anybody want to manifest enough wealth to buy a superyacht, a private jet, a super car, houses etc.? It's because they want to enjoy themselves, that's the whole point, that's why they're doing it. They're doing it because they want to enjoy being alive. It might be a misguided way of doing it, it might be the right way of doing it for some people, it's irrelevant though. The success that everybody is after is the success of enjoying being here, enjoying the gift you've got, that is success.

But we don't live in a world of either/or, we don't really live in a dialectic reality, as much as we've kidded ourselves into that, we live in a trialectic reality. We live in a world of this and that, of both. Therefore in reality, there will be contentment, and there will be competition anxiety. The trick is to process competition anxiety and transform it into raw, pure chi you can ride on as you go along. And this isn't a once and for all job, it's something you keep doing as you go along. And that way the preponderance of contentment, of elation about simply being alive, in other words the realisation that your true success could prevail over competition anxiety and the noise the static that goes with it, the discomfort produced by the unnecessary measure of the competition anxiety, in other words, after you've taken the juice out of it, once you've got the message and got out of bed and done a bit better at whatever you're doing and so on, that excess of competition anxiety becomes much, much quieter. The static of that becomes much less, and you're able to enjoy yourself more. And ironically, as you've probably found out, the more you're enjoying the gift of being alive in each and every moment, the far better you do at everything you're doing. In other words, if you want to call it competing in a human race, you compete way better by enjoying being here, rather than being ridden by, and driven by competition anxiety.

Awareness

So the way, is to first notice that it's happening, this is the key. This is what differentiates somebody in a complete trance and somebody who's awake. The awake person notices what's occurring within constantly, consistently, and acknowledges it. So you notice competition anxiety arise, and rather than being caught up in it, rather than being totally absorbed and invested in the drama of competition anxiety, you notice it, you drop back inside and notice the competition anxiety in the front of the body, in the front of the being here — the anxiety caused by feeling that you're not competing well in the human race. Once you've noticed it, you acknowledge it by saying something like 'Aha, there is competition anxiety'. This is the first stage of dealing with it. For instance, you spot yourself feeling a bit glum, or fed up, and you can't actually think why. You're perhaps feeling agitated inside and at odds with yourself and the world around you because you think you should be doing better, you should be doing more, you haven't done enough, there needs to be more done, you should have achieved more today and so on. And this is invariably triggered by comparing yourself with someone, or something that you've seen on tv, or out in the street, or in your imagination, or whatever, where you perceive yourself doing much worse than them, they're perceived as doing much better than you. You'll probably find yourself tending towards envy, or you notice yourself always having to be right in conversations, and there is your signal that you're giving yourself competition anxiety.

Because if you weren't feeling competition anxiety, you wouldn't need to be right, or you wouldn't need to be seen to be right. And you'd also know that it doesn't matter anyway, right and wrong are completely relative, they're only opinions. You may notice yourself waking up in the morning feeling as if you're in a race, the human race - you wake up and you feel the vibe in the air, on a Monday morning for example, and you have this feeling that you must get up and it makes you rush out of your natural tempo to some imaginary one. You get the sense that everybody's moving fast, and you have to keep up. This is because you've lost the tracking on your own tempo, you're running with a tempo that you're perceiving is the collective tempo. And again, that's a signal that you're giving yourself competition anxiety. And I say it's you giving yourself competition anxiety, rather than you suffering from competition anxiety, as with the conventional western way of putting it, because then doctors can prescribe you drugs etc., because you are not a victim of competition anxiety. This is very important. Even though, the reflex originates way back in that sperm racing for the egg, therefore would seem to be completely out of your hands because it's so deeply wired into your circuits, you are not a victim of it, it's still you choosing to trigger the anxiety, even though it's probably completely unconscious. Hence it's also you who is equally at liberty to desist. However, you can't even begin to do that before you've noticed it and acknowledged it.

Having acknowledged the anxiety, the next stage is to acknowledge that it's merely a confected fear, it's not a real fear, you're not actually in a race, you're just here, that's it. Then you look at the actual primal fear beneath it, the real fear, which is on a primal level, and bear in mind that the amount of time we've managed to live in this creative environment where we've outsourced all our survival mechanisms, therefore we're running on programs that have been going on for four million years, or whatever, the fear of exclusion from the clan, the fear of starvation as a result, the fear of death as a result of that, the fear of oblivion as a result

of dying, and ultimately the fear of whatever power it is in all of that that informs the void, i.e. the fear of God, along with everything else not in the void, — you've got to look to that fear and acknowledge it. Then instead of fearing that fear, you've got to love it, instead of fearing God, you've got to love God, the Tao, or whatever you want to call it. Well you don't have to obviously, but it's an option and helpful if you want to deal with this anxiety/confected fear.

Dropping back

To do that, you've got to drop back into your back, instead of being shoved up in the front of yourself with all the noise and drama of the fear and anxiety and so on. You drop back into the back where everything's silent, everything's still, everything's strong – the back is the home of the witness bearer, the background presence just watching it all, without preference, without prejudice. It's delighted just to be, that's the gift, the gift of life. The part of you that sits in your back is the part of you that's perpetually delighted just for being in the universe.

And when you drop your noisy self back into that, when you slide your mind back in the rear brain area, so you can witness yourself without attachment, then you drop your chi, all that energy that would normally be in your brain, down into your belly, into the kidney area where it belongs, where it's being generated in fact. When you lift your spine so that you stop slumping, when you drop your shoulders, when you soften all your unnecessary rigid muscles, when you stop holding your breathing, and breathe freely and slowly instead, and so let the mind slow down – in other words when you let go of the addictive cortisol style by relaxing everything, and specifically relaxing your kidney area either side of the spine at waist height, and you keep breathing, and you love the fear, and you love the God in the void, before you know it the competition anxiety that was troubling you and running static on you, is transformed into pure raw chi, and you're riding it like that sperm winning the race to the egg, that's you given your primal power.

And if looking at it and loving it doesn't work for you, and doesn't get rid of the competition anxiety, you say:

'Could I let go of wanting to change this feeling of fear?' and the answer would be 'Yes, I could let go of changing this feeling, then you asking yourself, 'Would I let go of wanting to change this feeling of fear?' and you would answer, 'Yes, I would let go of wanting to change this feeling of being afraid', because it is perfectly ok to feel afraid.

And you'll notice that as soon as you've gone through that little ritual, the fear has pretty much neutralised into pure energy again. And as I say, fear, genuine fear, is really only an aspect of pure energy. When you love that, when you breathe with it, when you roll with it, rather than push it away and sublimate it into anxiety and create horrible pictures in your head about it, it gives you the juice to keep going – that's how you get the juice to compete, if competing is what you want to do. So having done the above, you then adopt the stance that it's you and no-one, or nothing else, who's actually generated all the conditions that you're perceiving as comprising your life at this moment, exactly in the coalescence that you find

them, or more precisely, perceive them. It's you who has created this horror story in your head to be afraid of, and the reason you've done this is to elicit precisely this feeling of confected fear, this anxiety, in your belly right now, because it's precisely this feeling of anxiety you need right now to make you feel alive. You don't then start questioning whether you're insane, or not to do that, you just accept it,

'Ah it's me who's generated this feeling right now because this is what it takes to make me feel alive'.

Now as soon as you acknowledge that, you automatically stop feeling it, because it's obvious that you don't really need to generate that level of stress in the belly to feel alive. Actually, what you need to do to feel most alive is to relax into your back and acknowledge, *'I'm alive, that's the gift, thank you'*, and then you feel alive. You'll also notice that the anxiety instantly transforms into the raw, pure chi, into the raw, pure fear of death, of the void, of God, of the Tao, so you allow yourself to feel that, and then, instead of fearing that, instead of trying to push it away by saying/thinking, *'I shouldn't be feeling this fear of the divine, I shouldn't be feeling this fear of dying'*, you instead say,

'I love this fear, I'm loving this fear, I love this fear'.

And as soon as you do that it's turned into energy again, and you're feeling excited instead.

Discipline

Now, as I say, this is not something you do once and it cures it forever, because it's not a disease, it's something you have to keep training yourself to do. It's a discipline. And it's really down to whether you enjoy feeling anxious or not, because if you enjoy that nasty feeling of cortisol going round your body, if you enjoy creating horror movies for no reason in your head and kidding yourself that they're real, and then freaking yourself out about it, you don't have to do anything. You can just keep doing that compulsively, there's no rule about it, that's totally fine – if you want to waste your precious gift of life running interference on yourself like that, it's totally your prerogative. But you will not be getting the full deal. You'll be getting a tiny fraction of the experience, and when it comes to that last breath, you'll think *'I wasted that whole journey driving myself nuts when I didn't have to'.*

And that's why adopting the discipline is to your benefit, because with only the slightest bit of application, you could dispel the anxiety and transform it into actual juice that you ride on, every moment if you need to. But what you'll find is that with practice, it probably only needs doing once, or twice a day, and you'll be living in a state of increased energy, and therefore able to achieve far, far more. Our kidneys, as I say, are responsible for processing fear. Now the way that it works psycho-energetically speaking, in terms of how we produce anxiety is that when there's nothing real to feel fear about, i.e. there are no wild animals close by that could harm you, no wild people coming at you, no loud noises going on with potential, or real earthquakes underfoot, and so on, the kidneys are obliged to keep working anyway and process the fear that you're feeling for no real reason, and this weakens their energy. For example, it's like when you're sitting in a traffic jam revving the car at full revs. It would weaken the engine if you did that, apart from using up all your fuel, polluting the air all around you, and the air that you're breathing as well, unnecessarily. So this kind of confected

fear poisons the body. The kidneys have to process it nonetheless and it weakens their chi.

When the kidney chi drops like that, anxiety arises of itself as a psycho-energetic state. Whenever your kidneys contract, you will feel anxiety. Then because your mind has to have things make sense, it very deftly and quickly creates an imaginary cause of fear. And it will always be a very plausible one.

For example the fear of looking stupid, being humiliated, losing your status, money, position, importance and thus being excluded by the clan, by the herd, and therefore dying.

So the mind very quickly creates something to be anxious about. You will believe that the reason for your anxiety, your, what seems like real fear, is something out there – in fact it isn't, it's just your imagination, and it is not the reason you're feeling what you're feeling. It's just your mind kidding you that that's what you're fearing. You're not actually fearing anything external at all. All that's happening is that your kidneys are contracting and this is creating an anxious state. This further squeezes the kidneys and adrenals of course, which then increases the amount of cortisol, which, as I say, is addictive and habit forming, and so therefore incites you to keep creating horror stories in your head and embellishing them. And so the cycle spirals in the form of worrying all the time.

Creativity

But then, if you look at the opposite of what competitiveness is as a mode, its creativity. Creativity combined with a willingness and urge to collaborate and cooperate with others, rather than dominate them. You could say that competitiveness is the yang mode, the male, masculine mode, whereas creativity is the yin, or the feminine mode, I wouldn't hold that as an absolute because everything's relative, but in a sense competitiveness, that objectivity of going for it, and the falling short of which generates this anxiety, we could call the yang mode. The creational mode could then be seen as the opposite of that, along with a willingness to collaborate and share with others, to co-operate in projects that would be for the benefit of everybody because the mother energy of the yin wants to nurture all the children. So this is an alternative mode. And in this instance, what we're doing here is looking at potential.

Intention

Creativity means creating an intention of what you actually want, regardless of what anyone else is getting up to, or getting for themselves, and so on. So rather than seeing yourself in a race, you see yourself in a state of infinite potential, in which you can create whatever it is you want, without that interference of that competitive mind, of competition anxiety, blocking and jarring the flow for you. As I say, there's a certain element, or degree of competition anxiety required to get you to focus in the first place, but once you've taken the juice from that and dropped it, as above, as previously mentioned, and you allow yourself to go into full creativity mode, which has got nothing to do with what anyone else is doing, this is you sitting

in the heart of your universe creating an outcome that you actually want, as opposed to creating an outcome you don't want by worrying about it all the time.

So, you create your intention now based on the assumption that as you create it, and this is one of the metaphysical empirical laws, but let's just call it an assumption for now, that as you create it internally, you spontaneously, or instantaneously ordain it to create itself externally by way of the outside invariably reflecting the inside. And that's the opposite of the confected competition fear/anxiety. That's a position of power, as opposed to where the inside is reflecting the outside. Because when your inner world is riddled with stress derived from competition anxiety, it's because the inside is mirroring what you're perceiving to be outside of yourself, i.e. everybody rushing round doing stuff, and you're not. And so this is spinning it round to the opposite way, where the outside is now reflecting what is going on in the inside. And the inside is you with the intention to create the reality you want for yourself, or the version of reality, the description of reality, that sits best for you, that works for you, rather than against you. And this need not in any way be specific, it can be as simple as intending to succeed in the grander sense of enjoying every single moment of your life, and having all the resources to facilitate such enjoyment. By the way, this is not to suggest that success means necessarily having somewhere to live, money and so on – if you could be enjoying every moment to the full, with absolutely nothing, and sleeping on the street, then good on you, but very few people I imagine could actually achieve that.

So we're talking about succeeding and enjoying every moment as you go to the full, with all the material practical resources provided to facilitate that enjoyment, and that all aspects of your life are providing you with the full hit available, and that you're doing it all easily, without effort, with elegance, enjoying it as you go along, that you're being utterly effective at everything you do, and that results of everything are totally excellent. And this is regardless of what anyone else is doing, or thinking, or saying, or what anyone else has got, or has achieved. So, there's an intention, a beautiful intention. Imagine that now, or don't even imagine it, just entertain it. Intend now to succeed in the grandest sense, in respect of all aspects of your life, easily, effortlessly, elegantly, joyfully, effectively, and excellently, regardless of what other people are thinking, or saying.

And that in a nutshell, save to say pay special attention to keeping your kidneys utterly relaxed at all times, to keep breathing, and to keep loving the sensation of fear, rather than messing with it and turning it into some toxic anxiety in your head, will give you all the tools you need for the rest of your life, if you use them carefully, assiduously and diligently, to transform the very disruptive power of competition anxiety into something useful that you can actually ride on, which ironically will help you compete far more effectively in the game of life, if that's how you choose to see it. Myself, I prefer, when I remember, to see this as an ongoing university course where I'm obliged to take various modules. So that rather than gauging how well I'm doing by how much I've achieved, I say, *'Well I've learned a lot today'*. Even if it was shit in terms of how things went, I say *'Well I've really gained today because this is a university course, and today I was meant to learn about how you deal with things going in a really bad way'*, or, *'I've been enriched, how wonderful'*. If I see it all as university then that works as a model for me much better than if I see myself racing against everybody else. Now as I say, we're not in an either/or scenario, we're in both. So there'll be an element of me racing against

other music producers, other writers, other people, and so on. And then there'll be the other part of me, ideally the most of me, just being delighted in the fact that 'What a rich wonderful experience this is, learning this university course of life.

Chapter 4

Survival anxiety

This is a big one, and I was just thinking about it as I was walking around the city center just now, in a very relaxed way I'm sure, and if you'd have seen me, you'd have said, '*There's a very relaxed chap*'. When I was eleven I started training in earnest in the arts of pugilism, the martial arts, with an old Japanese man, called Aikido, and he was a brilliant, brilliant teacher. Not only did he teach the technique, but he also taught awareness of what's going on around you to be able to check what's occurring, to get a sense of the sensations you're feeling in your body as you walk past certain people, or as you approach certain people, becoming aware of the sensations in your body of your peripheral senses picking up signals from the sides, and also from behind you. And indeed, when I went on from Aikido at the age of eighteen to learn the Taoist internal boxing forms, which I've been studying, and practicing and teaching ever since, they really lay great strength in what they called listening behind you. This all ties in with the whole Taoist idea of flowing backwards, which is to situate yourself in the back of your body, where you're strong, and your silent, and your still, because from there you've got command of the front, and hence you've got command of the world around you far more. When you're in the back of you and you're listening behind you, and even looking behind you with the back of your head, you can feel what's occurring anywhere.

Now there's a reason for learning martial arts, the obvious ones are that it gives you confidence, it makes you better with your coordination, and it enables you to take care of yourself in a fight situation. And really what it does is teach you not to get into fight situation in the first place. Myself, I've only had a couple of minor incursions. I've had one to my person in a pub, which I've neutralised with the minimum of fuss, to the point that only one other person noticed one of them happening and nobody noticed the other one happening. Fortunately, the only time I've had to use my skills is to break up fights between other people, and even those were done without any physical force, or even touching anybody. The tai chi, hsing yi, pakua and so on give you that facility. That's why you learn it in the first place. Because the reality is we are living in a potentially dangerous world. This aside from the sensationalist aspect of magnifying localised events, some of them quite large localised events, for the sake of selling their services.

When you strip away all the sensationalism out of the news packaging the amount of people perpetrating violence against each other is very much in the minority. But still there's a lot more than meets the eye. And working in mental health, I'm aware of anti-psychotic drugs dispensed on a daily basis in the UK alone. It's a huge, huge amount. Now if somebody forgets to take a dose, or if they're not taking enough, or they couldn't get hold of it, anything could happen. There's a lot of people out there, as I was just observing in the city centre, as I mentioned above. It could at any time erupt into behaviour that would be a violation of your person. So at all times there's a need to be alert. And this is instinctual, it's important, even though we are not generally in danger. The chances of something blowing up is slim. Nonetheless the possibility is there and we have to be ready.

Apprehension

If I had to put it all in a nutshell, as a result of this need to be alert at all times, there will be tension in the solar plexus area. There will be a nervousness and apprehensiveness. Along with this comes the tendency, without realising it, to hold your breath. This actually exacerbates the stress levels in the body and pushes more heat and energy than required into the upper part of the body, and specifically the heart, which is considered to be the seat, the house of consciousness, and is a servo unit to the brain. This causes there to be an imbalance in the way you're seeing things and the way you interpret what you're seeing, and an imbalance in the way you react to what you interpret what you're seeing. Nonetheless we have become so skilled at pushing things away and distracting ourselves, diverting ourselves from the mucky side of life, that's why we've made the world as sanitized, and pretty looking, and lit up, and as deluxe as we can make it, it's to pave over the mess, the smell, the dangerous side of it.

But that doesn't stop it being there, and instinctually we know that. However, because of this tendency to push away the feeling of anxiety, we're generally in denial of the feeling in the solar plexus. We kind of overlook it, in a similar way that I might notice there's a pile of dirt on the kitchen floor, and I would walk past that pile of dirt at least five times before it occurs to me to clean that pile of dirt up. It was somehow irrelevant to me. So my selective awareness pushed it to one side and I didn't consider it, until the better part of told me that I might as well clean it up, rather than leave it on the floor. It's very similar with this sensation of anxiety in the belly. Now, and this is it in a nutshell, if we can become aware of it, and acknowledge it for what it is, which is actually sublimated survival fear, and if we can then breathe with it, as in let go of the diaphragm, let go of the tension in the solar plexus to some extent, and breathe freely and fluently, and purposefully, the sensation of tension transmutes almost instantaneously into what I would call raw, pure chi, or energy, a composite of which will definitely be fear, of that there is no doubt. Fear is an intrinsic aspect of the overall energy mix. It has to be there, it keeps us alive. Walking through the city centre, breathing that fear in and out, I'm a lot more empowered, as would you be, than if I'm in denial of it. And I've learned to do this through training. And this is really the gist what I'm passing onto you.

Survival fear need

And now to expand: Survival anxiety is the post-modern residue of a genuine and necessary fear, without which we'd not be here discussing it. You wouldn't have got out of the way of an oncoming bus for example, because you wouldn't have had the fear. You wouldn't have thought to look left, or right, or whichever way it was, and seen that big monster coming at you just in the nick of time. The actual immediate genuine fears, the fear of being physically damaged by other humans, or by wild animals, the fear that's triggered by an unexpected loud noise, which is a shock to the system, or the fear of falling from a height, by either been blown off a ledge by a strong wind, or by the ground collapsing because of an earthquake, at this point in time, for most of us still, is mostly redundant. And even the just as real, but much more stretched out attenuated fear, when for example being held hostage, or undergoing a raid, or any of those situations where your person is about to be, or is being violated, by somebody who has control of your movement, is also thankfully still, for the majority of us,

mostly redundant. This, at any moment is liable to change of course, or could change. However, we tend to interject kindness into the collective mix as an antidote to the insipient tendency towards violence and so on. Nevertheless, it is still going on. So the actual survival fear is still, and will always be, fundamental to our survival.

Nonetheless for most of us, most of the time, when that stuff is not happening, the level of fear, the fear quota, that's been programmed into us over the last four million years, or more, is still being processed by the organs that process fear, which are the kidneys.

And because the system in our complex body doesn't know what else to do with it when there isn't actually any real stimulus for that fear, the mind obliges by creating, as with the other fears, what I call horror movies in the imagination in relation to surviving at any point. And it does it so so skilfully and convincingly, that we actually make ourselves become afraid of what we're seeing in our imagination. We are able, and do, fully mistake it for something that's actually real in the external world. It's a complete delusion, yet it feels completely real. Now the fear that we generate in response to the horror movies we create in our imagination is not a real fear. Therefore, as with the previous fears we've discussed, it's a confected fear, which would technically be called an anxiety.

Forgive the duplication here dear reader, but as I said in the beginning, some repetition is necessary and inevitable as all modern day fears are for the most part confected fears. They just express themselves in different ways, depending on the horror movie you've created for yourself in your head. So the way this confected fear about survival finds expression in our modern/postmodern world, seems to be primarily through poverty anxiety, financial insecurity, the fear that you're going to lose your revenue stream, and by losing it you're never going to get another one, and you're going to wind up standing in line, if you're lucky, at a foodbank, or a soup kitchen, as I've seen people do today, lining up for your food to stay alive. And just as it's possible that you could, in fact, be attacked by a stray tiger, you could also find yourself in the poverty situation – it's true, there's no point deluding ourselves, anything could happen to anybody, we know that – but right now this isn't happening. And if the mind is creating the horror movies about it and generating anxiety, we're using up energy that we could be using to ride the dragon of life say. And it's that letting go and riding it with power through the breathing, the relaxing and the acceptance of the fear, the genuine archetypal fear, that we're best placed to take advantage of what's going on around us, and produce a revenue stream.

The anxiety about losing your freedom – of movement, expression, choice in other words, dependence anxiety, whereby you have no money, and along with that, as discussed in the last chapter on competition anxiety, you become a nobody, you lose your importance, you lose your traction, your currency, your value, your capital, and as such you're dependent then on the kindness of others. Actually the Taoists would say that you're then dependent on the providence of the Tao. It's a very different ballgame once you start looking at it from that perspective, in that if you were to find yourself in that situation, the Taoist approach would be to, rather than resist it, to love it, not fear it, accept it, and know that by going there, a miracle would occur, some episode, whereby the grace of another person would be shown to such an

extent that it would flip your situation around, and you'd find yourself coming back into full financial health in no time. That's the yin, yang effect of the wu wei process, following the path of least resistance, but that's as may be.

Freedom

The fear of losing your freedom of movement and expression comes under survival anxiety. If you were held hostage, or kidnapped, or held in a situation against your will for example. And being trapped is also a real fear. We don't want to be trapped. It's part of our instinctual nature to avoid being trapped, and thus for which we have to remain alert. And this is another reason that survival fear is part of the mix, it keeps us alert. And alert means being alert to signals and signs that are not necessarily taken in by the conscious mind. But the subconscious mind notices and can help when there is something amiss in the situation. But by becoming alert doesn't mean becoming paranoid. This is one of the advantages of course of the martial arts, is because a daily practice imbues you with a sense of confidence enough that you can negotiate yourself out of a tricky situation, all being well. You certainly stand damn good chance of it anyway. It affords you the capacity to feel relaxed and confident around others, and therefore somehow not emitting tension, and instead emitting some kind of love, which then doesn't elicit strange reactions from those around you, and allows you to observe clearly what everyone's up to. It enables you almost to hear what they're thinking, and this gets you out of trouble, it keeps you out of trouble. So there's this aspect of survival anxiety, freedom of movement and so on, which is very important.

Species annihilation anxiety

Another fear that comes under the survival anxiety umbrella is species annihilation anxiety, i.e. the world coming to an end. We have to acknowledge that this has been part of the collective psyche for as long as people have been talking about being here. The bible is full of it – the year 1000, it was clear it was all coming to an end, and the same in 2012. Somehow there are always enough indicators to justify a view like that. But I'm not promoting that view. I'm an eternal optimist, and all my work is designed to help everybody make the most of it, and in my making the most of it, it helps everybody else make the most of it, because for me that is one of the most direct antidotes to people making the least of it and making it worse for everybody. My work is based on us continuing and finding a way through life's challenges. Whether we do survive or not, is another question. But surviving is what drives me. Not that I'm not aware of the alternative possibility at all times.

This is also wired in and for many people nearly every single day, it is the end of the world, for example floods, earthquakes killing many people and so on. Annihilation is not something that doesn't happen in other words, it's real. The chances of it happening to any of us right now however, are very, very slim. But we still run horror stories about in in our heads, and that's ok to a point. When you take note of that and you do whatever it is you can do to remedy it, however tiny that might be, or prepare for it if that's what your mind's telling you, or both, as in make sure you're as physically fit as you can be, make sure you're emotionally resilient and flexible as you can be, make sure that you've got some kind of skill that you can carry round with you that's useful to people, and so on, all the stuff you can do that is practical.

Kidney energy

On the other side of it all, if you then go beyond that, and this anxiety continues to drive you, that's when it's a psychopathy, that's when it needs attending to, because that's draining of your kidney energy, which in turn depletes your chances of surviving if something should happen anyway, assuming anyone could survive. And it's really important that you keep your kidney energy flowing strong, so that you can ride this adventure and love every minute of it as long as it lasts, otherwise what's the point. The point of it is to enjoy every moment. So know that it's not a real fear you're feeling, it's merely the residue of a genuine fear. Acknowledge the genuine fear, feel that primal raw fear in the belly, relax the belly, breathe with that fear, and it becomes energy, and you're back on the adventure again, loving it. And that can be done very, very quickly, it just takes practice and the discipline to do it.

Then another branch of survival fear is dying anxiety. Again, we're not dead right now, so there isn't an actual fear necessary. We're probably not going to die at this moment. We're actually going to speed it up if we waste that energy worrying. And draining of the kidneys energy will actually shorten our lifespan. So again, it's really important to acknowledge the fear. Don't be all brave about it, everybody has a fear of dying, its built in, we need it to stay alive. But once having taken note of it, and then acted on it in whatever way feels appropriate for example you could choose longevity in your mind, and you could say, *'I'm choosing to stay alive here'*, that itself is really effective. It could be that you're going to take up a new exercise regime, or change the way you eat, or just change the way you're living to provide you with more energy, self-love and self-support so that you have the chi to keep going. But once you've got past that and you're still walking around anxious about dying, you're wasting energy and it's counter-productive.

Health

Of course, going along with the dying anxiety, is health anxiety. People worry about getting ill. This is the same. The body has always got something going on with it. Given that, there will be times when it's messaging you that you need to do something, something that needs to be sorted out. Probably it all just comes down to the need to profoundly relax more to allow your energy to flow more freely so your body rights itself. That's literally what health anxiety does indicate, a need to relax more profoundly. Ironically, if you get into anxiety about it, and you get carried away with it, that's going to seriously limit your chances of doing that. So you really need to learn to relax properly, instead of being anxious. Another common anxiety is weakness anxiety, anxiety about becoming weak and not being able to move things. Again, once you've taken note of it, and you've decided that you're going to learn to strengthen yourself in various ways, even if it's just visualizing yourself lifting heavy weights and running mountains and so on – once you've made some kind of positive gesture, then this tendency to be anxious over being weak has to be let go of, and instead feel for any fear underpinning this, which in this case again, is survival fear, i.e. weaknesses that might stop you surviving. You feel that survival fear, you let go of tension in the belly, you breathe, you move with it, and you're not weak anymore, you're strong.

Inertness

Another survival fear is inertness, the fear of becoming lazy, and being apathetic and not doing anything. And if you don't do anything you'll die, so the anxiety about becoming inert must be noted. There are remedies for inertness – for example, you can pummel the tops of your thighs – this is a crude technique because what it does is release trapped motivational energy as this is where it's stored, in the front of the thighs and within minutes of doing so you'll have motivation to stand up and do stuff. Another way, which is more discreet, is to visualize yourself getting everything that you want to get done, done, easily and effortlessly and enjoyably, and you see it very, very clearly, and you relax and let go, and before you know it something will trigger you to overcome the inertia and you'll be up and doing stuff. The energy for it will come though just by understanding what inertness anxiety is. As stated above, it's the residue of genuine survival fear. Feel that survival fear in the belly, love that fear, breathe with it, roll with it, and you'll be doing stuff again.

Making choices

Making choices is another common anxiety, and making the wrong choice in their life, or not being able to make a choice at all. This is a very interesting one. The Taoist approach to making choices is that you don't. The only choice you make is whether you want to relax in this moment, be real, as in acknowledge the fear that you're feeling in your belly, breathe that fear, ride with that fear, and love being here – or do the opposite and indulge yourself in the horror movies, freak yourself out, close down and resist life, and not enjoy doing things. If you can let go and love it, life then unfolds according to its own pattern and will you mysteriously to the place you desire to be, without you having to make an effort, choices will make themselves. That as it may be, the anxiety about not making the right choice, is again a survival fear, sublimating into a confected fear, because if, for example, you didn't choose the right path through a forest and fell down a quicksand pit, or you were set upon by a tribe of cannibals, or whatever, that would be a problem. So it's programmed into us as well, very, very deeply to make the right choice. And of course sometimes people don't make the right choice and do fall down a metaphorical quicksand pit, and that's why it's crucial that we acknowledge this one. We know that its survival fear, so you breathe it and roll with it, because when you're in your power from doing this, you're with the flow and choices become simply what feels good, i.e. where am I being drawn directionally, which choice feels warmer. The body will tell you where to go, what to do, whether its walking the right path in the forest, or taking the right job, or the right business deal, or being with the right person, and so on. You don't have to think about it very much, you just have to feel what's occurring in the body, and the yin, yang of life will bounce you to where you need to be.

Dying

Underneath all these fears, these anxieties, as I say, is the fear of not surviving. And this isn't a selfish, narcissistic thing, it's nature, nature wants us to survive, that's the experiment. Therefore, it imbues us with fear, because if we didn't have the fear we wouldn't survive. When the fear becomes anxiety, it limits our chances of survival, hence the need to process it. Beneath the fear of not surviving, there is of course, the fear of death and along with that the fear of dying. The fear of dying is the big one, because it's a projection of your mind into an

imaginary future. If you've been through a period of pain and discomfort, and fear and so on, the thought of dying may be uppermost in your mind. And again, it's imaginary, because you don't know if it's going to happen at this point. The fear of death itself is a different one, its more profound. It's the fear of there being nothing, of you no longer existing, and there just being oblivion. And the fear of that void is a really real fear. When you take away the cities, when you take away the whole human infrastructure that we have constructed, you're on a planet in outer space, this massive infinite outer space, and there are around 84,255 marauding asteroids, and black holes that swallow things up, and galaxies that collide into each other, and stars being born and dying. Its ferocious, its huge and massive. And the subatomic level underneath that, because even all that is just show, what's in there, this nothingness, this absolute nonexistence, this invisible realm, where we go when we die, somehow we intuit, we feel instinctively, that what is there is the Tao, if we grew up in the West, we'd probably call it God. Strip away religious connotation from that, it's just a name, it's so powerful, and so huge, yet so infinitesimally small, so imponderable, this force that makes all this, including you and I. That's what sits in the void, that's what's creating that void as much as it's creating the substance, and instinctively we fear that power, and rightly so, because it is all powerful – it's the fear of God, as we would call it.

But in dealing sensibly with these anxieties and transmuting them into the pure, raw fear you can ride on, because it becomes pure, raw energy, we also have to make friends with survival fear more fully. So firstly, what's underneath this survival fear is the fear of the god in the void that we meet when we die physically. We have to learn to love this god in the void, we have to make friends with it. That's a discipline. When the Quakers sit for fifty minutes in silence each day perhaps they're doing that. When very religious people get down and pray perhaps they're doing that. When the Native Americans talk to the creator or whatever perhaps they're doing that. When we meditate perhaps we're doing that. We are learning to make friends with this power, this consciousness, this primordial presence in the void. The more we can do that, the more we can open our hearts and love it, rather than fear it, the less we'll have this underlying anxiety eating away at us all the time.

Honor the fear

But it's important not to be in denial of the fear, we really have to honor the raw fear, and welcome it as a gift from the Tao, from the God. It gifts us this fear, and it's important we cherish it as a gift, because if you ever found yourself, heaven forbid in a chronically dangerous situation, where you're being held against your will, may it never happen to you, or anyone you know, but if you were, the survival fear that this would trigger would instigate a flow of crucial intuition, and this will keep you alive. That's what I was talking about earlier – when you walk down the street, you mustn't do so like a zombie in a trance. There must be an alertness to signs and signals, indicators that something might happen and masses of people, having to walk round them and maybe feeling the need to give them a wide berth, this comes from the intuition. For example, I was walking down the street in East London late at night. It was a very rough area. There were two guys, in a fight, both good fighters. I could see from a distance, that they were well trained. When I got close one of them had been pushed into the road by the one who looked the superior fighter and my inner voice, my intuition told me I

needed to stop the fight. I didn't know what to do, so I just approached them slowly and humbly. Then my intuition told me to watch out for the mobile phone. Within seconds of hearing that message, the phone of the guy who had been pushed into the road, fell out of his pocket and it fell on the ground. I walked over, picked the phone up, and said 'Excuse me, you dropped your phone', while they were bashing away at each other. It was utterly incongruous. And that incongruity is what actually broke the fight up, because they were both in complete shock that some stranger had come up and said that, as if they hadn't been fighting with each other. And that is the way intuition works. The subconscious mind saw that the phone was going to fall out of the pocket. Perhaps it saw it sticking out, it was probably nothing more than that. But that was how it worked. The subconscious is the way of everything. But you have to be aware of what's going on and can't give way to anxiety. You have to stay in the moment. So even though most of us may not be in a dangerous situation at the moment, we do have to remain alert. It's very important for all of us. However, if we give way to anxiety, beyond the level of getting the message and being alert, we're leaving ourselves with a limited chance of survival, that's why it's so important.

We have to honor and actually hone the survival fear. So, step one is again, noticing the anxiety. So, if you're finding yourself worrying about money, worrying about bills, worrying about how you're going to deal with it in a month's time, a year's time and so on, you note that 'Ah there is poverty anxiety'. Underneath that is survival fear. Honor that. Honor the fear of what other people might think of you. The anxiety about poverty itself is a lot easier to deal with, it's not nearly as vast - you don't care what other people are thinking about you and so on, as in competition anxiety. And just focussing on the fact that you might lose your revenue stream, the whole set up that tends to go wrong with poverty and the emotional anxiety. Or the fear that you're going to become infirm, and hence dependent, and so a dependent pauper, or so on. Having taken note of the version you think will happen, clarify this with yourself. You then strengthen your mind and body to it. And you attain some kind of panoramic perspective on the coming and going of species, and you stop yourself taking it so personally. In other words, you attain to the enlightened state with perspective of everything. This can be done with a bit of meditation practice. In other words, doing what you can and making a note of what you intend to do about it. At that point you have to drop the anxiety, because otherwise it's chronic and weakens your kidneys, so will limit your chances should any threat to survival possibility arise anyway.

But you know that at that moment you're not under any direct threat, assuming you're not that is. You then acknowledge that your mind has created the horror movie, that's important. You have to remind yourself of this. Say for example, *'This isn't real, this is me imagining in my head'*.

Then you note that the fear that you generate yourself is confectioned fear, you can feel it in the middle/lower part of your back gripping and contracting softly for no reason. Then you note that your kidneys gripping and contracting actually elicits anxiety. That's what happens when the kidneys contract, the body contracts and feels the anxiety/fear. And then your mind will very deftly provide an object for that fear, something you can pin the anxiety onto, something that will justify feeling that way. And you will believe that you're afraid of that thing that you will believe is out there somewhere. Actually it's just in your imagination, it's not real. The reason to be afraid is not because of that thing you're seeing. You were actually afraid because your kidney's contracted. Even processing just that gives you enough psycho-emotional distance from it to regain your strength. You remind yourself that its you've who generated this version of reality, and the accompanying sensation that elicits in your belly. It's you who has generated this sensation and the reason you've done this, is because this is what it takes to make you feel alive right now.

Now, the anxiety might be disproportionate, you'd probably be feeling alive with a lot less tension in the solar plexus, but the acknowledgment initially that it is you who has generated it because this is what it takes to make you feel alive right now is important. This in itself gives you your power, it puts you back in command. And you'll notice that there'll immediately be a recalibration going on, because this is the part of your mind that understands, and it will reduce the anxiety automatically. You just have to remind yourself that this is what is going on. Then there's this little kind of ritual, as described in chapter one – it works for me, and for everyone I've passed it on to.

First you ask yourself, 'Could I let go of wanting to change this feeling, this fear in my belly?' And you say 'Yes, I could let go of wanting to change this?' And then you say 'Would I let go of wanting to change this feeling of anxiety in my belly?' And you answer 'Yes, I would let go of wanting to change it'.

And amazingly after going through that process you feel another level of feeling relaxed and centered. Then comes the most powerful move in the whole world probably, but certainly in the Taoist practice. This is that you actively tip backwards, sitting back inside, rather than being in your front, because this whole anxiety drama, this whole syndrome goes on in the front of your body. When you go into the back of you, there's no anxiety, there's a stillness. You feel the kidneys contracting, but when you go into your back that in itself smooths out the contraction, because where you are there isn't room for anything, including contractions, there can only be you. So the more fully you fill your back, the more powerful you become, and the more able you are to take this panoramic view of everything, to observe and to accommodate the process of being you, without identifying with it. While in the back of you and with practice this process becomes very quick – you take this opportunity to relax everything, because when the muscles are tense you can't operate effectively, the engine

doesn't flow too well, the blood gets stuck, you're just not on form. To be on form the body has to relax, and relaxation means a softening of the muscles. You watch any boxer, any martial artist, any extreme sports person, any professional dancer, you'll see that all their muscle groups are relaxed, other than the ones that are required to be used in the moment.

Breathe

The breathing is the most important element you've got. Breathing correctly is helped by doing the above, sinking back and relaxing all the muscles, you also expand your skeletal frame so that you're not all crumpled up. You lengthen your spine, you drop and broaden your shoulders. You become bigger, because the bigger you are the more room there is for your organs to sit and work better, and everything just flows better. When you're crumpled, you're not in your full power. Then you breathe properly – you stop holding your breath and you actively take command of the breath process. And you move the breath fully, purposefully, but in a relaxed, flowing, healthy way, so there's this active motion occurring in the belly, as you're breathing in and out. And this becomes central to your entire experience. But you're doing it from the back of you, not the front of you.

You're sitting in your back and you relax your body. And in the back the truth is going on, rather than being in some strange delusion, making horror movies in your head. In the back you can feel the primal fear inside, you're with the fear, you're loving the fear. The fear is the fear of God itself, and you're loving it, not hiding from it any more. You're being a warrior and breathing with it, and that's empowering. It's a bit messy, you know, having a bit of fear is not that pleasant, but life is messy, trying to push the mess away is what actually leads to anxiety, and

Choice

So, this is the choice really, get real, be the warrior and breathe with the fear, and don't divert the fear, and then you've got power. In this state of power you then note your intention for what you actually want. Those horror movies in the head are like making intentions for what you don't want. I'm not the superstitious type whereby you mess up the magic because you had a negative thought that just gets in the way and is not worth thinking about. But what is worth thinking about is that you have the choice to create a clear intention in each and every moment about what you actually want. And it doesn't have to be some grandiose five-year scheme. This just has to be for the moment.

So for example, when walking down the street in a busy city centre, with a few dubious characters walking around, your intention made from the back of you, in a state of relatively full power, is that, *'I arrive at my destination safely, I spread good cheer around wherever I go, people feel relaxed around me and not inclined to do anything daft, and the way is fine and clear and beautiful, and the result is a joyful one, I and everybody else, arrives at their destination safely'*.

Or in the case of poverty anxiety for example, *'that I somehow or other manifest enough revenue to keep going whatever'*, just let it be that simple.

Or if its health you're anxious about, *'that I manifest sufficient health to keep me going, 'or enough perspective to handle whatever happens without breaking up, without wasting precious time not enjoying my life', or, 'enough of everything so I'm not dependent on anyone', 'enough presence in me so that if I were dependent it would be ok, and they'd look after me well'.*

Or for full freedom of expression and movement, or longevity, and seeing as we're in the Taoist idiom, the intention that *'I'll have the ultimate prize of spirit, immortality, by developing my immortal spirit body'*. This I must say, is a major antidote to the fear of dying - the daily practice of what I teach in School for Warriors, 1, 2 and 3, which is the inner alchemical process that develops what the Taoists call your immortal spirit body. This is the vehicle that is the background presence of you that you feel when you're in the back, made into some sort of vehicle that carries you through the veil when you drop your body. They don't want to say what happens after that, there's no need, but there is this definite promise that that is what happens if you practice. It's not a faith, or a belief, it's just something you start feeling the more you do it. It's pretty obvious that's what it's doing, and I do highly, highly, recommend it. But even that's by the by.

Then, following on from the above, you have an intention for all humanity to abide in peace, and have good conversation, and communication, so that we find our way through without destroying each other. And then you see the intention played out in front of you, however it is, with all your heart and all your soul, with all your mind. In other words you bring the formative person to bear on the intention, and it seeing the intention. And then, because we're talking about the heavy one here, survival fear, and the need to survive, I think it's really important that you do the honouring of the ancestors, the past in other words, and the destiny angel. There are many forms of expression of this, but it basically goes as follows - and I do this on a daily basis, and I highly recommend it. You would generally stand with your palms behind you a bit as if you're propping up a wall, as a gesture to what's behind you, and its figurative, because it's not actually behind you physically of course, and you get in touch with your story as its happened so far, your life as its been up to this point. And you give thanks to it, because being thankful for it to this point, as a complete unit of a story, fills you up, it means you're ready to go if you have to, you wouldn't be ready if you hadn't said thanks.

Ancestors

Behind all of this as it were, are your ancestors, the lineage that you come from. And to give thanks to the ancestors and the intention for all their healing back in time, which collectively comes back to you, forms what the Taoists call the guardian, which is an entity, a force that protects you within the Tao, and that's somehow linked with your ancestry. You feel a sense of this timelessness that goes back to before the beginning of time, it's the power protecting you from all the way back there. And then you stand facing destiny, you have the apparently unmanifest future coming at you from the front, figuratively speaking, and the tendency is to fear that, the tendency is to see that as the enemy to be outfoxed, because it will lead to the ultimate failure, i.e. death. But knowing that death is actually your friend, its coming home, and you have your vehicle to do so. There is fear, but you honor and love that fear, rather

than push it away, till you're merging with the power of it, and destiny is now seen as the medium through which your life will express itself, and it's your friend, not your enemy, it's not here to trick you, it's here to support you. And you invite destiny in as an entity, as an angel if you like, into your body and let it fill your whole body, as an angel – and I'm talking about angels romantically of course – looking out through your eyes.

So destiny becomes an entity in you, and is your ally, and it awaits your command. So you say to destiny, *'take me to somewhere beautiful, let this unfold as beautifully, magnificently and elegantly as it possibly can, take me to the festival of all angels'*, whatever that looks like to you. I'm not saying you must do this, but I strongly recommend and advise it as a daily practice. It doesn't always feel like it's doing something. Some days you're just going through the motions, but cumulatively, over a period of time it builds up exponentially, rather than incrementally, and you find yourself feeling progressively more fortified in the face of the unknown, you feel much more relaxed and at one with it, and able to love it rather than fear it, or able to love your fear of it, rather than be afraid of your fear of it. This is really the nub of what we're doing here.

Subconscious

Having done this, I also suggest you ask the infinite intelligence provided through your subconscious if it has important messages for you, concerning your survival and the survival of those you love. This is not an invitation to engage in some sort of paranoid process where you start imagining all sorts of nonsense to freak yourself out with. This won't come as those kind of messages. It will be much more succinct and much less loaded, in fact it won't be loaded at all. And don't expect the answer straight away. You just ask the infinite intelligence being channelled through your subconscious if there's anything you need to be aware of survival wise, and to let you know. And then you relax and forget about it, and it will just give you messages over the next twenty four hours or so. If there is one to take notice of, that you need to know, and you actually know it already, but it will just highlight it in your awareness.

Chapter 5

Deprivation/displacement fear/anxiety

Deprivation anxiety, more commonly known as the fear of missing out is massive, and seems to affect pretty much everybody. The fear of not getting the very best on offer, the fear that you're going to go down the wrong road, and mess it all up, the fear that you're missing a trick, is really endemic, and in fact is a large hook used by the advertising and marketing industries to get us to buy stuff that we don't need at all because of the fear that we're going to miss out on something if we don't. 'Don't miss out', is something that is used a lot in advertising slogans. Everybody fears that they're missing out, that they're not getting as much as they possibly can. And this even includes people who have everything that people fear that they might be missing out from having. I spend a lot of time around people who have absolutely everything that everybody wants and who still fear they're going to miss out on something. Even these people fear they're missing out on stuff, that they're not going to be at the right party, or they're not going to get the best thing that they possibly could in a situation. So it's not a logical thing in other words, it doesn't depend on logic. Along with the fear of missing out comes the fear of limiting yourself in some way, sabotaging yourself, being inert, being lazy and so on, somehow messing up the opportunities that come to you. Along with this is displacement anxiety, the fear that you're going to find yourself on the wrong place, or that you find yourself in unfamiliar territory and you can't get your references.

The main, or obvious drain on the system, arising from deprivation anxiety, the fear of missing out, will be the fear of making the wrong choices. Because at every turn we're presented with what looks like a series of choices, options, and at a certain point these appear to be many, there are many, many options, that you don't know what to do, which one should you go for. This is endemic as well because we're living in a multi choice reality, with things changing faster and faster, missions changing faster and faster, and therefore apparently requiring us to make more choices, more quickly. As I'll explain shortly, this is in itself an illusion.

As before, to recap, what we're dealing with here is transforming anxieties that we create ourselves in the front of the brain for whatever reason into horror movies and then being afraid of them. And the antidote to this is transmuting these fears, these movies and taking them back into their original form, which is the underlying survival fear, the fear of death. So it's about getting real about the fear, loving that you've got it, because it's part of being alive. And so breathing with it, rather than trying to push it away, or abstract it, or turn it into an anxiety that you've concocted yourself and as a result feeling that you can in fact be in command of it, is at the root of all this.

Missing out

So this fear of missing out, and I've observed this and seen it going on many times. As I said, I did baby massage in the UK in the early eighties and I've seen so many babies go through this. Picture a small baby struggling to get the mother's nipple in its mouth - say the mother's

nipples are sore from breastfeeding, she's tired from lack of sleep, she's a bit grouchy, and probably, if a first time mum, a little bit confused of her identity and role in the world, because she's not always been a mum, so a little bit overwhelmed perhaps by the enormity of this little bundle of real life that's she's got to look after, and obviously wants to, but it's an enormous responsibility - and her conflict is transmitting to the baby, whether she wants it to, or not. And there's a moment of discord, and the baby can't get its mouth to the nipple, and it gets no milk. So it gets frustrated and cries, and allows itself to get so wound up it can't stop crying. And the mother's getting really frantic as well, the baby is very hungry and unsoothed, and is completely wrapped up in a momentary melodrama of what I would call, of the entire universe closing in. Now if it doesn't make the right choice so its mother can calm down, it feels like it won't survive. It feels like if it can't suck, life is dangerous, and it's true, it is. And this is the level where I suggest the fear of missing out originates at a sort of basis level. And it's real - if it we don't do the right thing and get the nipple in that right way, we'll miss out, and we will die.

Or you could put it in a socio-biological level way – the primal survival fear. Imagine yourself sitting in a cave, you're waiting for the hunting party to return, or perhaps you're one of a hunting party. And it wasn't as if they/you'd go out in the day and hunt something and everyone would be fed the whole time, quite often there were many days between meals. So it was vitally important you got some food when the hunt was successful. And if at that point when the hunting party got back say, and you didn't manage to stake your claim, and so you didn't get your bit of meat, you'd go very hungry, and could quite possibly die from hunger. And this fear of missing out is at that level, it's programmed in that far back. The fear that you might not eat and so die was real. So this fear is crucial to survival. It's deeply, deeply wired in to us at a cultural, cellular level.

If you take bushmen in Namibia by contrast, they don't even have a word for the kind of greed that results from this fear of missing out. Everyone shares everything with everyone in the tribe, however meagre. Had you been with them you'd very likely not have this programmed into your cells at all, and instead would rely on resourcefulness. It's just interesting that it is part cultural. In contrast to the bushmen, and in our globalised culture, we're collectively driven by greed that comes from the fear of missing out, and the short term profit motive, and there's a growing deficit of social empathy, which is derived from this deprivation anxiety. In other words people get really ruthless and will ride roughshod over others to get what they want. Fortunately, this trend is balanced by the more conscious among us, hence this book for example, to promote this, otherwise we'd be facing an even larger and much more imminent extinction crisis than we are. So what we've managed to do is to spread and mitigate the risks of missing out on the spoils of the hunt, and therefore there's no actual imminent danger of really missing out to that extent for most of us anyway, as things still stand. But the very real and very crucial fear of missing out is still running, we still have our quota of that, because it's only been relatively extremely recently in human history that we have managed to mitigate the fear of missing out. The vast majority of time on this planet we have needed to really be scared of missing out, and so still have that as a survival mechanism. We're still processing it, and yet quite obviously it has nowhere to go. And again, at the risk of being repetitive, it's the kidneys that are responsible for processing fear and turning it into energy, into fuel. And,

whenever the kidneys are strained, which they will become by processing fear that doesn't actually have anywhere to go, an atmosphere of fearfulness will arise inside the body. The mind will then deftly create an object for that fear. It creates a movie. And before you know it, you think that's what you were afraid of, when in fact you were just feeling afraid. And you then make yourself afraid of that picture, which exacerbates the fear, which weakens the kidneys even further.

And they're processing it still, even though there's nothing to be imminently afraid of. And so what happens is, again, as I said earlier, the mind obliges by creating horror movies which occur in the front of the brain, in which you perceive yourself missing out, and then you become scared of what you see in your imagination, as if it's happening externally. In other words what happens is the following:

Imagine for example everybody's been invited to the party, but they didn't invite you. You might say to yourself, *'That's not fair, why didn't they invite me?'* Or if some people receive awards for something and you don't you might say, *'Everyone seems to be doing really well, why aren't I?'* or you might say, *'All my friends have boy, or girlfriends, why haven't I?'* It's also usually the really inconsequential things that seem massively important at the time. And they're generally, in fact, imaginary and things/circumstances that we've concocted in our heads, rather than ones that are actually happening around us. But we really believe they are happening. And that will then lead to us becoming envious at times, as much as we wouldn't want to, and being enlightened we would think we wouldn't, but this is part of being human. Once this anxiety is up there and you're afraid you're missing out, you'll become envious of people who appear not to be missing out on whatever it is you're afraid of missing out on, and doubt your choices. You then lose motivation, you fear making the wrong choices further and missing out further as a result, and the cycle goes on.

The liver

And aside from counterproductively depleting the very life force you need to state your claim to your rightful dues in life, the kidney chi, once weakened, fails to adequately support the liver, which is what they're meant to do, they're meant to keep the liver cool, and functioning optimally. When they're not doing that and the liver overheats, it stops functioning optimally, and toxicity levels thrive. This affects the thinking mind, as much as the body. In

other words, your thoughts become toxic, and that's what leads to envying others. Again, you'll then be wasting liver chi on that, and energy which would normally provide you the zest to play the game like the hero you can be. So again, it's counterproductive. You'll find yourself envying people, rather than focussing on what you need to do. This happens when the liver chi goes flat. As before:

The liver chi when depleted in turn then flattens the heart chi, because normally the heart is supported by the liver chi. And when the heart chi flattens, your spirit gets diminished. When your spirit gets diminished, your sense of you in the world, i.e. our self-worth, I deserve to etc. - all the kind of positive thoughts that will promote you getting your bit if you like - that gets diminished, and your courage to do what has to be done is diminished. Courage incidentally, derives from the Latin, le Coeur, meaning heart, so courage is a property of the heart energy. When the heart energy weakens, the energy that it would normally send to warm up the spleen, which is one of its regular functions, becomes, what I would call, soggy, cold and damp. And because the spleen controls the intellectual faculties, practical thinking, and so on, instead of thinking practically, it makes you worry about things in ever decreasing loops, and therefore not able to think straight on a practical level.

This further reduces your chances of getting the bit that you are rightfully entitled to, and that you would be afraid of missing out on. When the spleen chi weakens, the lungs, which it normally sends strengthening chi to, also weaken.

Inspiration

The lungs are in charge of giving you a sense of inspiration, hence why restoration/respiration, meaning drawing in spirit in the breath. When the lung energy weakens it leaves you feeling uninspired, and generally regretful. So you'll also be worrying about having made the wrong choices in the past, not only worrying about making the wrong choices in the future.

Depression

Incidentally I would like to point out that what I've just described is yet another example of what a national health professional would call, in my humble opinion, lazily and ignorantly and irresponsibly, as depression. It's such a crude way of putting it. I personally posit that there is no such thing as depression. It's not an illness. It's something that's kind of created as an illness if you like, a way of categorising various subtle states, so that they can prescribe drugs for them. The way I'm looking at it is a way of seeing how missing out anxiety is actually at the root at a lot of what we call depression. Meanwhile the fear of missing out, the actual real fear, the biologically programmed in primordial fear of missing out, is crucial to survival. The anxiety that we transmute that into however, is utterly counterproductive, as I've just explained.

The method

So in dealing with this fear of missing out, which comes under the realm of modern neurosis, stage one will be to differentiate between the front self-drama and the back self-stillness as I've explained for each of the fear categories described above. It is not always easy to feel yourself in the back of you as it were, so I will now explain a method that I think will help:

If you look at where your shirt, or dress seams would be at the side of your body, let's say that you put a line between those two, that would separate the front part of you, the front sector from the back sector. We are with our sense organs facing forwards, and we perceive reality as occurring therefore in front of us. If I said to you for a moment, close your eyes and think about your life, I bet you that you'd think about it in front of you, not behind you, or even to the sides, probably not above you or below you. And of course, what we're actually seeing as our lives is merely a concoction, it's a set of perceptions occurring, which we're interpreting more or less realistically, but it's not actually the external world itself. And our perception of the external world is by nature interesting, riveting, exciting, and fascinating - there's movement, there's light, there's color, there's immense power in the sun, in the planet, in the orbit of the planet around the sun, in the earthquakes, in the movement of people, in geopolitical movements, in the economic movements, in the dance movements, in the trend movements, in the fashion movements, in the movement of animals, of the insects, of sunlight, of the colors of the trees as they change with the seasons, of cars going by, of planes going by, and so on. The sense organs perceive all this going on in the front of us. And because it's riveting it pulls us forward into the front sector of the body to get closer to it, and also so that we can control it a bit better, we presume. What happens then is that we acquire the qualities of the front of the body, which are by nature noisy, weak and vulnerable. The front of the body, as you know is vulnerable - your belly, your groin, your throat, your face. Relative to the back, the front of the body is pretty weak, other than the diaphragm, the rest of the muscles in the front are not necessarily that strong, certainly not in comparison to the back muscles. And it's noisy, both physically, in terms of the peristaltic motion - the noise of the lungs, the heart, and so on - but it's also noisy psycho-emotionally - it's where we process all incoming information, in the solar plexus, and information which comes into the subconscious mind is unlimited, it's a constant flow of limitless information.

In other words we are, at a subconscious level, at this moment calculating the speed of a storm passing over the pacific ocean say, the gravitational pull of mars as it shifts - a zillion bits of calculation are occurring, more powerful than any known computer could do. Our conscious mind is not aware of this of course, because it acts as a filter, which limits the flow of information to the amount we can actually cope with, according to the situation we're in and our stage of development at the time. But the subconscious is processing all the information that ever was, is and will be.

Now we exist as human beings, as entities, for the time that we do exist, by virtue of the fact that we resist in the sense of an electrical resistor. If we didn't resist we wouldn't be here. It's our nature to resist with every single nano bit of every single bit of information that's streaming through each nano second. And it's the solar plexus in the upper abdomen where we do that, not actually the brain, in the same way we process food, the solar plexus is where the energy comes from to do this. The solar plexus is therefore in a state of going no, wait a minute, ok no, wait a minute, ok, no, wait a minute, ok, on information it is receiving all the time on multiple levels. That is why we all have tension in the belly. So there's that noise. Then there's the all the noise going into the heart area overloading it and causing it to close down a bit, which means that our natural soul level love is not flowing, and that puts us into a place of self-consciousness, rather than flow, and there's a noise in that as well. This also causes the throat area to contract, which inhibits our ability to communicate authentically, not only with others, but with ourselves as well.

And this inability to communicate authentically removes us at a soul level from the plane of reality. And this is painful. We're not aware of it consciously. We were the first time it happened, as little children, probably when we started school and so on and had to interact with a different system than we were used to. But we are aware of the effect of it on our bodies, in the throat area, there's a noise there about it. And then there's this incessant internal dialogue in the front of the brain. The front of the brain is a relatively recent evolution. It was actually evolved to be able to discern, or evaluate after the event, to interpret what the subconscious mind understood. And therefore some kind of ability to shape reality going on around us. But this part of us has taken over. The reason for this is that once there is this tension in the front of the body, the head which is quite a heavy object, gets pulled forward subtly, and that being pulled forward causes all the energy in the brain to collect in the front of the brain, in what modern neurologists would call the insight area – I wouldn't call it that, but that's what they call it – and this causes a speed up in acceleration and intensification of the internal dialogue that we're using to describe what we're perceiving as the external world around us. This causes us to think much less clearly, and incisively about what's going on, and therefore be far more susceptible to what you might call the social superficial level. For example, a couple of years ago, it was very cool to walk around with your midriff bare in the winter, that was the fashion, even in the most cold areas, and especially there. Women would walk around with their kidneys and bellies exposed because it was fashionable for whatever reason. This is what you'd call a social idiosyncrasy. It was completely ridiculous, and not founded on anything sensible, or healthy at all, and yet it caught on. It's the same with guys who walk around with their underpants showing over the top of their jeans. Again it's a totally stupid social superficial thing and nobody questions it once it's lodged. And that's what we become a lot more susceptible to when we're caught up in the front.

So with respect to the front and back parts of us:

There's this mental noise in the front, and when we're in the front of our bodies, we become that. We become the noise of the conversation, we become the conflict in the solar plexus, we become the weakness that comprises the front of the body, we become the vulnerability of the front of the body, we become in short a drama, the drama of being who we are. However, as any seasoned martial artist will tell you, if you want to have power in a contest, or fight situation - and we could say that all of life is that really, and the martial arts are merely a metaphor for everyday life - if you want power so that you're not vanquished by events, or other people, or what have you, you must sit in the back all the time, not in the front. The reason for this is because then you acquire the qualities of the back. These are, strength - if you think of the spine, that's the strongest support in the whole body, the muscles running down either side of the spine are the strongest muscles in the body, relatively invulnerable. The kidney area and back of the neck are vulnerable, but much less so than anywhere in the front. In the back its also silent, there's no noise going on in the back, other than maybe your spine clicking when it releases air when you get an adjustment, or adjust yourself, for example. But otherwise there is no noise in the back, the back is still. Mechanically speaking, if you deliver a punch, or a kick from the back of you, it has the weight of your body behind it, therefore is far more effective when it lands, than if you just punch from the front part of you, which relies on strength in the arm muscles. The back part of you is also the bit where the background presence sits and observes. Literally, the background presence sits in the back of you.

I'm referring now to that aspect of your consciousness, which has observed you going through the throes of life since you were conceived - the way you found it too squishy, squashy in the womb, to stay in there anymore and you were forced, if not a birth performed by caesarean, to have your fontanelle squished so that your skull became pointed, to get through the birth canal, which would not have been pleasant; when you had to gasp your first breath of air; when you had to start sucking and digesting for the first time, all of these things.

Witness bearer

These shocks that you went through were being observed by the witness bearer, the background presence within you. Through every big shift in your life, and of course all the bits in between, there's been an aspect of you bearing witness to it, that just somehow knows, that no matter whether you go through the difficult, or the easy bit, the yin, or the yang, that you are constant at your deepest level, your consciousness, the consciousness informing you, is a constant, it doesn't fluctuate, there's always that part of you. It might be a bit romantic to put it this way, but the primordial energy and consciousness that informs matter from the subatomic realm, which we would call God, or the Chinese would call Tao, we might consider that as the background presence. As I say, that might be romantic to you, but I see

and feel it as a presence. And that background presence behind all reality, is also within you, and it sits in your back.

When you sit in the front of you, you don't have a back, unless it's hurting. When you sit in the back of you however, you have that, and you also have command of the front. And then when anxieties arise, rather than say, 'I'm anxious, I'm afraid of missing out', you would say 'Ah, there is anxiety about missing out occurring', and that in itself, that ability to observe, and discern what's occurring, is a major part of the transformational process, of this transforming of poisonous anxiety into pure healthy fear, i.e. energy that you can ride on.

So you could say that this is the supra-intelligent aspect of you that sits in the back, whereas the bit that sits in the front of you, when you're in the front, that is definitely not supra-intelligent. If anything its sub-intelligent because it's totally confused and misguided, and misinterprets everything that's going on most of the time. So the art is to learn to sit in the back.

So, the very first thing I would say, before doing anything, let alone this, is to sit yourself in your back. It's the easiest thing to do in the world, yet it's the most important technique I could ever teach you. When you're sitting in your back, you are in command, life will then sort itself out once you've intended it to do so. When you're in the front you're like a headless chicken running around in the mud, picking up scraps, trying to sort of tidy things up and ensure somehow that things are going to keep going your way, which is actually impossible, because all parts are in motion, there are many parts to it, and apart from anything else, you're not actually interacting with the external world, you're interacting with a version of it going on inside your head. So the chances of being able to keep it under control at all times satisfactorily are minimal, if not actually nil. And if you do manage to, the amount of energy and life force used, the amount of people you're going to have to ride roughshod over, and so on and so forth would imply a psychosis, which for sure is what is prevalent today, people acting out psychotically to get what they want, rather than actually sitting back as I'm describing and allowing what the Taoists call wu wei, in other words, the flow of effortless action, to bring what they want, or need, to them. So before attempting to transmute anxiety into a useful fear, you can't do this in your intellect – you can, but it would just remain intellectual, a conceit, an abstraction – if it's to become visceral, if it's to become real, it can only be done from the back of you.

So, discerning the difference between front-self drama, and back-self stillness is the first stage. Then you drop back - you breathe slowly, you relax your muscles, you expand your skeletal frame by broadening your spine, and broadening your shoulder girth and pelvic girdle. And of course you intend on keeping your heart relaxed and open, because that makes you warmer and more loving and more friendly, and makes you feel better as well. But essentially it's all about dropping back, and having the awareness, or exercising the awareness, to note anxiety going on in the front self, acknowledging it, and also acknowledging that it's something you've confected, it's something you've created, and it's based entirely on an imaginary reason.

Acknowledge that, saying

'OK, I'm afraid I'm going to miss out here, I'm afraid I'm going to make the wrong choice, I accept that the picture I'm seeing, or half seeing, of me missing out, is merely imaginary, and is not the actual cause for this anxiety. The actual cause for this anxiety, is evidently because my kidney energy is a little low, because I'm having to process deprivation fear, when there isn't anything to have this deprivation fear about, and which is ultimately survival fear, because I'm not living in a cave with people where I've got to get a scrap of meat, or die, right now thankfully, for the time being at least, this is not the case'.

So, the next stage is to honor the actual fear errantly transmuted into anxiety, this ultimate survival fear, which is essentially showing as the fear of deprivation. Beneath the fear of deprivation is the fear of death, beneath the fear of death is the fear of the void, oblivion, not being here anymore. Beneath that fear is an even more profound fear, which is the fear of the multi-versal power of this whole thing, or Tao, or God, or whatever you want to call it. Because in the void there is something, the void is not empty, it's filled with something. Whatever made that be so is a profound, ineffable mystery, and that's frightening. To feel that primal, primal fear of death, of the void, and of the God in the void – feel that fear physically as tension in the belly and feel it as the tendency to hold the breath. But feel it without attaching it to the horror movies that you habitually make in the front brain, you just feel it as a sensation. Then you let go of the tension, and you breathe, you breathe the fear freely, rather than be afraid of the fear, rather than push it away, rather than abstract it by going to your intellect, rather than ride roughshod over somebody else to get something that you think will make up for that fear, just breath the fear, breathe through it, feel it, until it transforms into the chi that you can ride on, which it will do, within a breath or two.

Acknowledging this and the compulsive aspect of the anxiety is important. As soon as you allow yourself to love the fear that you're feeling in your belly, rather than go through a whole self-flagellation you then become afraid of as a chronic anxiety, i.e. become neurotic, as soon as you begin to breathe that fear, it instantaneously transforms itself into pure energy, which is exactly what you need to not miss out on anything. To help this along, you have to

remind yourself constantly, that it's OK to feel afraid. I suggest repeating this as an affirmation for about an hour out loud one day.

'It's OK to feel afraid', and you can shift the emphasis on the syllables to keep it interesting, but just keep saying it, 'It's OK to feel afraid'. You can write it down, think it, say it, until it becomes the kind of wallpaper pattern on the interior of your mind, you just know that its OK to feel afraid.

You would then run the sequence that I've suggested previously, i.e.:

'Could I let go of wanting to change feeling this fear?' and you say to yourself, 'Yes, I could let go of wanting to change feeling this fear'. Then you ask yourself, 'Would I let go of wanting to change this fear?' and then you answer, 'Yes, I would let go of wanting to change this fear'.

And after that very elegant, gracious, non-violent way of talking to yourself, by the time you've gone through this sequence, there is no fear, there is pure energy instead, you'll feel it immediately.

Feel alive

Then you remind yourself that the levels of tension you're feeling in your belly, this confectioned sensation in the upper abdominal area, the solar plexus, is generated by no-one else, or nothing else but you, it's you who is generating this feeling. Of course, you're not doing it consciously, but it is still you generating this feeling. The reason you are generating this level of tension at the moment is because this level of tension is precisely the level of tension that it takes to make you feel alive.

So you tune in to the sensation in your belly, in the upper abdominal area, and say to yourself:

'It's me who is generating this sensation, this tension in my belly because it makes me feel alive', and just doing this attenuates the tension instantly, because you're taking command of it. But again, this can only be done from the back of you, from everywhere behind the side seams of your dress, or shirt, or whatever. This is where you place your mind. When you're in the front of you you're in the noise, there's nothing that can be done effectively. But when you drop back and you sit in your back and say to yourself, 'I'm generating this tension in my belly because it makes me feel alive', and you don't own up to it like somebody making a confession of some weird perversion, you own up to it like a warrior, taking command of it saying 'Yes, that's how I do it, that's how I do it', and in just doing that immediately the mind can adjust by saying, 'I don't need that much

And that generally is what will happen immediately, without you having to think about it.

Love the fear

Once you've gone through this process, you're then able to love the fear. You can really love it. Then, you breathe it and you stop trying to change it to make life be perfect. Life is already

perfect as it is, it's difficult and it's easy. Don't be precious and try to make nature, something as powerful as the cosmos, as you're breathing it in and out through you, conform to a very limited view of what you think reality should be, instead of being like a real warrior, like the animal that you are. You breathe that fear, like the hunter that was in the hunting party, you would have to breathe that fear, you couldn't be worrying about the nonsense in your head, you would have to just breathe with that fear. So from the back of you, you love that fear. And then you're able to love even the fear of dying, you can love even the fear of oblivion, you can even love the fear of the God inside the void - love the fear, love the God in the void.

From this state, and having been brave enough to do it, you then look at your eventual death, you look at the void, you look at the Tao in the void, and you love it all, rather than fear it. Stay in your back, and rather than go with the anxiety, the drama, 'Oh I'm going to die' etc. which goes on in the front, you're in the back, which is the part of you that will never die, because it was never born, it just is, and you're able to love the fear, to love the fact that there is oblivion, to love the fact that there is this awesome imponderable universal power informing this void. You can love it when you feel yourself in your back. To help that along as you confront the fear of you dying, or the image of you dying, you just say 'Fear, I love you, fear, I love you, fear, I love you'. That works. Next is to remind yourself of the option of following the Tao, the great way of all things, the universal presence if you like, rather than following so called rational thinking. And this would be on the premise that the Tao is benign, because it generates all life, so why would it be anything other than benign. And that destiny will bring you the very best possible, and life will evolve with immense elegance at every turn, when you let it, and hence that the only choice to make, when fearing you'll make the wrong choice, is between whether to relax and trust, enjoying life, as the Tao delivers you to where you're meant to be, and delivers you what you need, or to resist it, to doubt and dislike it. And then to remind yourself that the more you choose to relax and trust, and enjoy the ride, bizarrely the better things work out anyway, simply because there is this basic metaphysical law that the outside always reflects the inside, so get your internal landscape in order and the outside will conform spontaneously, in the fullness of time, if not immediately.

Once you've done that, you form the intention of how you want things to go from here. So:

The next stage is to breathe as if directly, into your kidneys. It's like you feel your kidneys in your back, with the idea of you in the back, just feel as if you're breathing directly in and out through the kidneys themselves. Just doing that stimulates the kidney energy and makes them stronger, and this reduces the anxiety in your body in moments.

this fear of missing out is presumably not how you want things to go. Your intention therefore, would be to receive all the abundant gifts that life has to offer and there is nothing you could miss out on. That you will always be replete with the very best there is at every juncture, every leg of the journey. And this applies to the emotional state, so that you are feeling satisfied, rather than dissatisfied, most of the time that you're aware of your psychological state, so you know philosophically that everything is as its meant to be, and it's all fine, at the financial level, so that you see yourself always having enough resources to do what you want to do, at the personal/love life level so that you'll always have the intimate

connection with people that you need to sustain you, at the social level, so that you've always got a support network of people who love you, and you them, at the professional level, so that you've always got professional support set up, and therefore that you'll always be OK on that level, and so on, and so on.

Stillness and Equipoise

And along with that, that you're always in a state of stillness and equipoise, and clarity and focus that you need to be, in other words, in command of the fear. And you keep changing it and refining it, but from the back of you and from the kidneys to create the intention of how you want it to be. And then choose the mode, or mood, you want to relax and enjoy from now on, or do you want to resist, and not enjoy, do you want to do it cheerfully, or miserably, do you want to do it boldly, or cowardly. But this has to be done from the back of you, as I say, or it's pointless.

Once you've done all this, you get clear about how it is, what you imagine others have that you don't, people who have things that you feel you're missing out on, for example, the happy couples walking round if you're single, or the rich people if you're feeling poor, or people who are really having it off, when you feel that you're not, and so on. But again, this has to come from the back of you, because otherwise it's just an intellectual conceit. Because yin and yang, the forces of contraction and expansion are cyclical inevitably, and they control, or underlie all movement of all phenomenon in the manifest universe, everything external, whether it's a Ferrari, or a job, or an amount of money, or a love affair, or a house, or whatever you care to mention, it all has two sides. It has the dark, the yin, as well as the light, the yang, in other words, it has the responsibility as well as the joy. And as you know, as much as something looks lovely and glittery before you've got it, when you've got it and the responsibility aspect makes itself known, you often feel swizzed, conned, and think 'I wasn't signing up for that'. So it doesn't matter what you manifest, it will always have two sides.

The only place that will ever give you the satisfaction your soul craves, is this being in the back of you and loving being alive, which is already the prize, there is no greater prize than being alive, all other aspects of life are merely secondary to that.

So when you're afraid of missing out on anything, be aware that you're missing out on the dark as well as the light, and give thanks. When you can be thankful for what you perceive as your life as it is, rather than as you imagine it should be, it tends, again bizarrely, to respond to you far more favourably, because what you focus on grows. So focus on the goodness you enjoy already, and that grows. Focus on what you don't have, and what you don't have grows. In other words, the lack grows. As I say, this philosophical stance is only helpful, valid, in light of doing all the above – dropping back and all the rest of it.

Watch your mind

So, in summary, you watch your mind, and even with all that sensible input, I bet it's already right now creating the next horror movie about which you're already making yourself afraid.

At some level, there's probably thoughts such as, 'What if I limit, or inhibit, or hold myself back on account of low self-esteem, low self-worth, low confidence, and so on, what if I don't have the stamina, what if I sabotage it, what if I blow my opportunities, what if someone I care about banishes, or abandons me, and so on. So you drop back, you acknowledge the fear, you notice, and you get the message from the anxiety, and its saying *'Don't miss out, don't miss out'*. So you make a note of anything practical you can use that information for, such as, *'What can I do to make sure I don't miss out? There might be something, I know, I need to make a phone call to so and so, to make sure I get that money in, or that job'*, for example, or whatever it is. Make a note of it.

Once you've done that, you let the anxiety go, and you don't hold on to it anymore. Instead, you breathe the real primal fear in and out of your kidneys. Rather than pretending everything's neat and tidy in the world, you acknowledge that everything's rolling around, and the place stinks, and all the rest of it. You've got this fear, don't pretend you haven't, don't mask it, there's nothing wrong with having fear. It's real, love it, and breathe it in and out in your belly, in and out in your kidneys. And as you do that, fear becomes a useful life enhancing energy, rather than a sick, damp energy that's pulling you down. From that place in the back of you, you create the desired intention. Rather than waste energy, you're using positive energy to create the desired intention. You then state the intention to yourself, and then you let yourself ride that fear, ride that raw energy to your destination.

And as for choices, making the right, or wrong choices, when your intention is clear, as the Scottish say, 'What's for you won't pass you by, and what does, wasn't for you'. The only choice therefore is between relaxing and enjoying the ride, or resisting and literally wasting it. Because if you don't enjoy this ride, and you look back and realise you resisted the whole way through, you've wasted the opportunity, the greatest gift you'll ever get, has been wasted. There is no greater gift than being here. And that contains all the other gifts, the, what I would call, sub-prizes, all the possible sub-prizes, all of which, without exception, are merely scenery, dressing, flavour, that's all they are. You've already won the prize, there's nothing to miss out on. And certainly there is nothing to miss out on when you know you already have it all. You've already got it, you're here. All the rest is mere detail.

May this serve you well. It serves me well, and I'm sharing it with you.

Chapter 6

Abandonment anxiety

The first woman that I was truly in love with and with whom I formed a great attachment was Anna. I was 4 and she was 19 and the love was clearly mutual in the pure way that it could never go anywhere. Even though the rational part of my young mind understood that this wonderful, beautiful Danish angel of a woman, who was working with us as a Mother's Help, as they used to be called, and who used to read me to sleep nightly in her lilting Scandinavian tones with Hans Christian Anderson fairy tales, would inevitably have to leave when the year was up, and even though I knew that, I experienced the actual parting and the feeling of being abandoned as cruelly painful, and that compounded with my intrinsic abandonment anxiety, acquired much earlier, as it is for all of us, as will be explained shortly.

A little later I recall aged 5, Mrs Nathan's, that's a great name isn't it, who used to help my mother with the cleaning, took me out shopping to a busy market somewhere in North London. I forget now where exactly it was. We went on the tube, the London subway. and it was the first time I'd ever been on the tube. It was hugely exciting and noisy, and busy, and smelly and underground and I recall imagining how horrible it would be if I lost her in the crowd or vice versa. I even recall knowing that I was producing that horror movie in my head and making myself afraid of it. I also recall acknowledging that it was a useful anxiety as it would make me stick close by her at all times. I clearly remember that. This went on also in the market which was a very unfamiliar environment and then all the way home again. And I recall enjoying the excitement of feeling that anxiety. I only say all this to maybe elicit memories in you when you were feeling abandonment anxiety as a child.

Abandonment anxiety actually begins in the very first trimester in utero, when you're in the womb, and with good reason. For, as you know in the first few weeks of pregnancy anything can happen, and the embryo's tenure is in no way guaranteed. There may be miscarriage, there may be abortion, anything can happen in those first twelve weeks, and especially the first six weeks. And the embryo knows instinctively that it might be abandoned from the womb at any moment. And that is where the fear originates, and again, for good reason. If you again cast your ancestral memory back so to speak, to the days we were all living in caves, if the clan were to abandon you for whatever reason, perhaps deformity, or disability, or disease, or weakness, or old age, or because you fell out with someone, the chances of survival would have been slim – its hard hunting big wild animals, and cooking them on your own, of course. So again the fear of abandonment is residual, primordial and primal and important as it might keep you alive. As a little child, the fear your parents might abandon you, if say you don't perform, or the fear that they might die and abandon you that way, it's plain to see when you cast your mind back. Or if you observe a small child when its parents, or parent go out. In teenage life, when you normally have your first romance, in the majority of cases, except in the rare instance where childhood sweethearts stay together until old age and they die, these romances are doomed to failure, and the pain of separation from the object of romantic desire at such a tender age, is a major, major upheaval for the heart.

Diverting

And we learn to mask this, compensate for it, divert it, divert ourselves from it, in all manner of ways. Simultaneously we all make a great show of being 'I'm alright Jack', and very few people would admit to even having abandonment anxiety, normally described as having abandonment issues, covering it over with a show of bravery. But it runs deep in all of us. Everyone suffers from it, and no-one is exempt from it. So feeling it doesn't mean you're a freak, or in any way weak, it's primal, it's biologically wired in to your system. Left unaddressed, or if in denial about it, it festers, just as anything will. Any energy which isn't addressed authentically, will fester, and the toxicity from that results in manipulative behavior, intended to entrap the other into not abandoning you. We've all experienced this meted out by another to us, and we've all experienced ourselves doing it to another. It's very subtle and insidious, and it's all-embracing. Ironically, this will have the reverse effect, and generally tends to push the other away instead. But either way it's unpleasant, and constrictive to be around, and leads to mutual misery.

Likewise it's unpleasant and constrictive to be perpetrating. And/or, it manifests as an inordinate fear of being alone, of being lonely, which tends to lead to people to remain in highly dysfunctional, unhealthy, unproductive, unhappy, untrusting relationships for years, or decades, just to avoid facing themselves being alone. And it manifests as an irrational fear of dying alone, because rationally, no matter which way you pass it, you die alone, just as you were born alone, no-one can do those trips with you. And it manifests as a fear of being alone, and having no-one look after you when you're old and infirm, should you make it that far. Likewise, even if you hang in there with someone till that happens, there's no guarantee that they'll also be fit enough to look after you, or that they'll be around when that happens. There's just no way of guaranteeing that. It results in possessiveness, and creates jealousy, and all the melodrama associated with that. It results in a craving to find a partner, rather than relaxing and graciously allowing the Tao to bring you whoever you need, whenever you need them.

In other words, it causes you to contrive meeting people, through dating sites, or going out looking for people, and so on, rather than allowing the magic of life, destiny, to bring you together with whomever destiny decrees you be brought together with, which is surely a much more refined, and higher level of activity, or action, than when you contrive it. Contriving it results in self-depleting, inauthentic, disingenuous, often people-pleasing communication, even with yourself. You'll stop being authentic with yourself, you'll stop being authentic in the way you talk to yourself, you'll obfuscate, and lie to yourself, what Freud called, your ego defences, just to avoid seeing yourself as that person who's being inauthentic. And you'll perpetrate all sorts of dishonest ploys just to fit in, because fitting in means you're not being abandoned. You can see this in the way people dress according to fashions, for example, making sure that you're wearing the right cut, or the right color, or the right shape of shoe, or have got the right hairstyle, because if you didn't the fear would be that you wouldn't be accepted, that you would be abandoned by the tribe. So all these fashion statements so to speak are actually subtle signals that we're sending each other, the subtext of which is include me, include me, accept me, don't abandon me. The same goes for the trim on

the car, or the make, or the engine size, or the color, and all of that sort of thing, or being seen to go to the right places, and do the right thing etc. all of this is with the subtext of 'include me in, don't abandon me'.

Healthy fear

The actual fear, as I said, is absolutely healthy, it's a fear that can and will keep you alive. It may, and will also serve to remind you to be loving, and generous and reciprocal and fair in your transactions with others, so you manage to maintain the very necessary support network of loved ones, and friends, and colleagues, and so on. It might and probably will remind you to maintain hygiene about your person, and about your house, and make yourself presentable. All these things may seem and are, relatively superficial, but they're all part of what makes the world smoother and easier to negotiate, for others and for ourselves, and are a sign of self-respect. But because the clan is no longer a small clan living in a single cave, but is in fact worldwide, and because we have made sure that the connection networks between us all are manifold, such as radio, tv, all the social networks, and the phone networks, and all the opportunities and systems that are extant and enable us to connect, or even just walking out into the street and see life going on around us, the actual chances of the entirety of humanity abandoning you are slim. However, the fear is deeply programmed in over millions of years, and this new state of connectedness of this global family, is very, very recent. We haven't yet evolved to that. Our biology if you like, is still only developed to a bit before this, hence the fear quota that is used up by abandonment fear still has to be processed, and yet it has nowhere to go most of the time. Now this processing of the fear, as I've said before, is effected by the kidney energy in the middle lower back area, either side of the spine. And when there's no actual reason to be feeling this fear, and yet they have to process it anyway, it causes them to strain, which in turn gives rise to an anxious tone of thought, of being, within. So,

Whenever the kidneys strain and the energy becomes depleted, an anxious tone within arises spontaneously. The mind in the front of the brain, which relies for its very existence in making sense of things, that's what it's there for, to attempt to make sense of things, then feels it's impelled to make sense of things, or it will lose the very reason for its existence. So it very deftly, very quickly, like a slight of hand that you can't see happening, imagines a reason for you feeling this anxiety, and will then very quickly produce an instant horror movie projected into the front of the brain for you to be afraid of, and you will get afraid of it. What this is, is you confecting a fear, or actually anxiety technically speaking. And it will really seem as if you are afraid of this horror movie that you've created in your head. It will really seem that this horror movie is real, that it's actually occurring externally, you'll be totally convinced of this.

Yet, and this cannot be stated often enough, in fact it's merely an imaginary scenario that you've created in your mind without having realised it, and then made yourself afraid of it.

Yin Yang

Now in terms of the yin, yang equation, yin signifies the structive tendency, i.e. that which inclines to create structure to hold things steady, to give form to everything, while the yang signifies thoughts, or motion. There has to be a healthy fluid admixture of the two, it's not a static balance, it's a healthy fluid admixture of the two, for life to proceed successfully. The part of you that needs the structure of people remaining in your ambit is the yin. When abandonment anxiety is left unaddressed, it indicates a need to strengthen the yin. In other words, when you are driven by abandonment anxiety, not even aware of it yourself, via the elaborate complex of your ego defences, and are probably starting to act out manipulatively, aggressively, jealously, for fear of loneliness and all the other things bouncing round the edge of your mind, but being denied, it indicates that your structural energy, your structive energy, is slightly weak. It's therefore doubting itself, and it feels the urge to shore itself up with the outside, with other people, with situations externally perceived that it feels will nurture it. In fact, it won't, the yin can only be rebuilt from within. When the yin is strong you feel secure within the underlying structure of existence in total, and you need to rely far less on others, or anything external to provide it for you.

What belies abandonment anxiety? It originates from being abandoned by the mother in the first trimester in utero. It's wired into us from all the way back to our ancestors where, if you were abandoned by the tribe, you would probably die.

Beneath the anxiety of abandonment, lies the fear of death, beneath the fear of death is the fear of oblivion, the void, beneath the fear of the void, is the fear of all fears, which is whatever it is which makes the void be there, i.e. God, or the Tao. Which is actually, ultimately, the fear of your own self, if you bear in mind that you, me, all of us, are manifestations of that same God in the void.

Afraid of self

So essentially the entire issue of being afraid of being abandoned, which if left unaddressed, causes twisted transactions on every level, which have a twisted effect throughout your life, and therefore limit the possibility of receiving and enjoying the very fullest that's on offer is fundamentally arising from being afraid of your own self. This is fairly profound. R.D. Laing, my teacher, often referred to it on a psychotherapeutic level as psychophobia. He coined the phrase, meaning fear of your own psyche, fear of your own soul, fear of your own mind. And the soul is primordial, you didn't invent it, you don't own it. You've got a handle on it for the time that you're here, but the consciousness that informs it is universal and primordial. It is synonymous with God, it is the Tao, it is the primordial being. And ironically this is the antidote to the fear.

Feel the fear

Feel the fear now, just allow yourself to drop into yourself and let yourself just feel that fear now. Don't be afraid of the fear, don't be afraid of feeling the fear. This is the primal life force in all its raw, honest, terrible glory. Being afraid of it is what came to you erroneously, transmuted to anxiety for all these years, and to even be in denial of that anxiety and all the ramifications of that. Instead, just experiment right now with breathing that fear in and out,

let it subsume you for a moment, be completely engulfed in the fear. Visualize if you dare, your eventual demise, leaving your body, passing into the void, into oblivion, and coming face to face with yourself as the creator. In other words, come face to face with the Tao, and it happens to be you. It doesn't get any bigger than that. And you've every right to be afraid of it. It is absolutely nothing to be ashamed of, or afraid of.

Now, drop into your back and hold steady there. Breathe fully and purposefully and feel the fear. By that I mean, just to remind you, everywhere rear of the side seams in the garment covering your upper body. Let yourself drift backwards and occupy there. This is the most profound level of self experienced in human form. It's the background presence inside of you. Let yourself drop right back there, hold steady in there, and in the front of your body breathe fully and purposefully. Let your belly rise on the in breath and fall on the out breath. And as you do, feel yourself channelling the fear. Feel that fear in your solar plexus and breathe it in and breathe it out. This is the fear of dying, of passing into the void, and coming face to face with the God in the void. This is the fear of being abandoned by everyone, by life, and popping through the veil into the void and finding God there, and having to face it.

Signs

Now let's return to looking at the anxiety. So, there are the horror movies that you project into the front of your brain, this time to use up your quota of abandonment fear. And these will look like the person that you love abandoning you, the life that you love abandoning you, the society you admire abandoning you, the goals that you aspire to abandoning you, the talents and skills that you have abandoning you, your social status abandoning you, your wealth abandoning you, your friends abandoning you, and eventually your body abandoning you, and the fear that you might have to go through this all alone, in a state of absolute pain. See that horror movie running in the front of your brain, whichever one it is that you're familiar with, and thank it for flagging up that you need to be alert. Because on one level it does have an advantage. These horror movies and the anxiety that they cause you to generate are potential signs that you need to be alert to something, possibly, not always, but sometimes.

Make a note

So this is the moment you would make a note of anything practical you could do to avoid any form of possible abandonment by anyone, or anything in the immediate future – for example there may be a situation you're involved in that requires some diplomatic renegotiation and your pride is preventing you from doing that, and if you don't do it, the chances are that the people involved will abandon you, and your rational mind might discern that that would be eventually disadvantageous to you, and that there would be more advantage in healing the situation, even if your pride finds that distasteful. Just make a note that if there's a way to heal that you will let it be so, in other words you'll intend for that situation to be healed in a magical wonderful way that works for everybody, spontaneously and so on. Or you might have been told by your beloveds that you've got body odour and they can't bear being around you, and your anxiety might make you alert you to the fact that you should go and buy some bits and pieces and shower and spray deodorant, and do whatever it is you have to do. I doubt anyone with a pure soul suffers with such a thing, but you know what I'm saying. In

other words, once you've spotted anxiety, thank it for making you feel alert and then make a note of anything you might need to do, and then let it go, because to indulge the anxiety past the point of taking any value from it, merely increases the toxicity in the body. And the more you indulge in anxiety, the weaker the kidney energy grows. And then you return to the real fear, that fear of the void, of the God in the void, the depth, the profundity of the mystery of existence itself, to which we all return. So return to that now, feel it - it's a primal fear, it's in the belly, in the solar plexus, it's not to be denied, it's not to be distracted from, it's not to be obfuscated, or masked, it's to be breathed and felt, and lived and loved, and valued, and appreciated, and honoured.

Sense of self

Being unduly unsettled by this aspect of relationship between you and the ultimate, so to speak, in fact indicates a deficit of heart energy, heart chi. Now heart chi grants you a secure and steadfast sense of self at all levels, from the most superficial, the personality, all the way back to the sense of being the supreme being at the core of existence. The sense of self from an ego level is Freud's term, and in no way is intended pejoratively - ego merely means 'the I', the sense of self at the personality level - is not something that must be vanquished, or let go of, because without it you couldn't exist, anymore than you could exist on this plane without a body. What Freud meant as the aspect of us that needs healing, making whole, is the ego defences, as he called it. So when people say to you, 'That's your ego, get off it', what they really mean, if they were educated properly, is 'That's your ego defences, you need to heal those'. The ego defences are the lies that we tell ourselves, to kid ourselves we're doing fine, when actually, we're not. Now, we can't live without those either, we don't live in an ideal world. There will inevitably arise, in each and every moment, the tendency to kid ourselves, and kid ourselves we must, because if we were to allow ourselves to be cognisant of all the information that's coming through our subconscious mind in any one moment, we would probably go insane.

Hence, we have our conscious mind, which limits the view, the spectrum, to what we can appreciate and cope with, while getting on with what we call our daily lives. But this involves cutting our awareness off, it involves selective awareness. So we could be, for example, feeling really chuffed about scoring some fantastic goal, some achievement, and in that moment, not give a hoot about the fact that all the support for us, the resources, the life support system that we rely on is in severe danger. That awareness will go completely out of the window when you've achieved something, or get something you want, when that moment of triumph occurs. And right that it does because you need to feel that celebration of the moment. You could be gloating over your victory, which has caused somebody else's suffering, but be completely oblivious to their suffering, in order to get on.

Survival of the fittest

Darwin would put this into the of survival of the fittest equation. We have to have selective awareness it seems to live in this world. The art is to become more and more aware of the lies that we're telling ourselves so that they become less and less and less, and that we're able to get more real in each and every moment, rather than less real, which if you look around you at

the world, appears to be the trend. Life is becoming less authentic. More and more people are using Botox at younger and younger ages, and putting cellulite in the lips to airbrush their appearance. Life is becoming more and more airbrushed, more and more X Factor, with the brash production that makes mediocrity looks spectacular. I think that's the general way, it's becoming less and less real, people are acknowledging their fears less and less, and this is causing more and more mental health problems, hence why vast numbers of our population around the world are on prescription anti-depressants, anti-psychotic drugs, and so on and so forth, because we're not acknowledging what's really happening, and part of what's really happening is this huge fear, and one major aspect of this fear is the fear of being abandoned. That's why everybody's so obsessed with being up to date, being cool, knowing the right words to say, the right abbreviations, the right clothes to wear, the right dance moves to make, the right music to like, the right places to visit, and all of that is coming from the fear of abandonment not being acknowledged, and this comes down to having low heart energy.

Heart chi

Now, aside from the fact that the heart energy is weakened by armoury in the chest, the connective tissue in the chest becomes rigidified, in an attempt to protect you from the pain of betrayal, of being let down, of disappointment, of separation, of loss, of abandonment. Low heart energy is also caused by low kidney energy. The kidneys are poetically called water, and the heart is poetically called fire. The fire of the heart warms the water of the kidneys down in the belly, and this causes energy to be produced. This is a very poetic way of putting it. When the kidney energy is low, when that water is insufficient, the heart fire has nothing to do, it has nowhere to go with its heat, so it dissipates. And when the heart fire dissipates, i.e. heat escapes out through the head and the ears, and the eyes, and the nose, and the mouth, and everywhere else, the sense of self dissipates with it. And then the need to compensate for that by effecting various acts, and disguises, and masks, and subterfuges, and ruses increasingly grows. In other words the tendency to be disingenuous increases. And while this may be initially enjoyable and fun, it robs your life of any true value, and leaves your soul bereft. All it does is exacerbate the anxiety. And this is when people will be more prone to taking drugs, and getting involved in various addictions, and habitual patterns that don't serve them to further mask the feeling. None of us are perfect, this is not an ideal world, we all go through phases when we're compensating. The idea is to be at least 51%, if you can percentage wise, authentic. So the heart chi needs to be strong if there's to be a healthy sense of self.

Kidneys

The kidneys meanwhile, also support the liver, and help keep the liver cool. Now, the word liver comes from old Germany originally, meaning you literally live, as in the thing that lives, that makes you live, not in the sense of the heart beats and that keeps you alive, but the thing that wants to make you live life, that thrust that makes you want to go out and play the game, the partaking of the world of dance, that energy originates in your liver.

Liver

They say that your liver is the home of your inner primal self, the wild uncultured primal self, the one that wants to beat its chest and wave its arms in the air, and dance and express freely,

without the constraints of social mores. And the irony is that because society is so structured, and has to be because there's so many of us, and therefore its highly complex, the opportunity for people who are not given to psychotic behavior and hurting other people, and so on, the opportunity to give vent to the inner wild one, is often only facilitated by going out and partying, and taking loads of substances, and drinking loads of alcohol, to free up the spirit so to speak, of the primal self. These ironically however, are things that are going to make the liver even more tired, even more overheated, and therefore even less efficient, and so make it even harder for you to express your true self with others. There is a happy medium whereby if the liver energy is strong, and you're able to express yourself authentically, and freely, but in a way that is shaped to be congruent with the aesthetic sensibilities of those around you, so that its appropriate and it works, and doesn't cause abandonment to occur.

Toxicity

So when the kidneys are weakened through anxiety they're not able to cool the liver, the liver will then overheat, and the levels of toxicity in the body, in the energy, and in the consciousness increase. This leads to all kinds of unsavoury patterns, jealousy, possessiveness, manipulative behavior, people pleasing behavior, the authenticity, the lies, obsequiousness, talking behind peoples' back, two facedness and so on. And these all arise when the liver energy overheats and toxicity increases in the body.

Use this opportunity, at this very moment, to drop into your back again. In other words, flow back and fill up the part of you behind your side seams, and remain there for a moment, be the witness bearer, be the deep self who resides in the back, and notice that all the anxiety is occurring in the front sector of you, everywhere forward of the side seams. Bear witness to the anxiety, to the fear that underlies the anxiety from the back of you, and you'll see that you are no longer the anxiety, the anxiety is no longer all pervasive, it just happens to be occurring as a phenomenon in the front of you, there is just anxiety, so what. Remaining back behind your side seams, pay attention to your chest – imagine the two parts of the breastplate opening like a pair of two sliding doors in a gesture of opening the heart center. You could if you like visualize a cluster of precious rubies, a beautiful lotus flower, a jewel so radiant, so sweet and fine, its indescribable, and a rose gold light/mist radiating from you in all directions. Visualize tendrils of love spreading intimately in all directions from your heart connecting you to all sentient beings, certainly to all humans on the planet right now, these tendrils serving as connections up and down, in which your love flows, and the love of others flows back to you.

In the back

Back here, in the back, be aware, that you are connected at source to every sentient being in the entire multi-verse, let alone the universe, thus it's impossible to actually be alone. What you can be, and what we're working towards being, is being all one. Grasping this, you will never, ever experience loneliness again. Nor will you be so prone to succumb to the manipulative, possessive, or otherwise unhealthy modes of behavior that you would otherwise have succumbed to for fear of abandonment. Now, this doesn't happen overnight, just by your reading this. It's a practice that you have to evolve for yourself. But as you can see, it's a very handy, portable practice. It takes up no space and no time, because as you go

about your daily business, you just have to remind yourself that you have these side seams down your shirt, your dress, or whatever you're wearing. And again:

When you can remain in the back of you fairly much all the time – of course you'll oscillate because what's occurring before you is always compelling and will naturally draw you

Everywhere behind the side seams, that's where you sit, because that's where it's still and silent and strong. The back of you is the place that you occupied when you were in the womb, it's your natural abode. The front of you, everywhere forward of the side seams, is where all the drama occurs, the self-confected drama that you generate to make it all seem more interesting, more intense. The horror movies that you generate in your mind, which you then become afraid of, are occurring in the front of the brain. The anxiety you're feeling is occurring in the solar plexus, the drama of being you in relation to what you're perceiving as the world in front of you, is all occurring in the frontal section of your body.

forwards, but as long as you can remember to drift back again, and occupy the back of you, and keep your heart open so that your love's flowing, after a very short while you'll notice that you will never, ever feel loneliness again, therefore loneliness is not anything to feel anxiety about. You'll no longer need to generate horror movies about being lonely. Now breathe slowly, slow, fully breathing, feeling the belly rise on the inhalation, and fall on the exhalation, and, as I said, you'll notice that this reduces anxiety immediately, and in itself calms the mind.

Remind yourself that it's ok to feel afraid. Be willing to love the fear, and to love the God in the void that you're so afraid of. If you like you can talk to this fear as if it's a person and say 'I love you, I love you, I love you', and you keep saying it you actually feel it. And then the fear magically transforms itself, and it's no longer unpleasant, it's no longer horrible. It's now just raw, pure chi.

Interior of a Cave

Now talking of the mind, sink your mind again into the rear brain. For help to do this, visualize if you like that the inside of your skull is the interior of a cave. And at the rear of the cave, where the rear bone of your skull is, is a pile of beautifully constructed cushions made of wonderful fabric that are a joy to sit on. And they've been placed thoughtfully at the rear of the cave. And you sit on this pile of cushions like a little Buddha with your face on, your back leaning into the rear wall of the cave. And you'll notice that back here, supported by this huge presence within, behind the side seams, there are no horror movies. In fact there are no movies of any kind being projected onto the screen in the front now. Everything is completely and utterly silent. Now, from this space notice and acknowledge the primal fear in the belly. This is the fear of being abandoned by your loved ones, of being abandoned by society, of being abandoned by life itself, of being completely and utterly abandoned and having to face the

void, absolute oblivion, and beyond that, having to face the God in the void, the ultimate fear, alone. Feel that primal fear. This is nothing to be ashamed of, and nothing to be afraid of. Feel that fear. Be there and honor it.

And that's the fuel you need to ride on. And you need it because you're going to have to ride the journey right through to the other side when you do lose the body, into the void, into goodness knows what, and meet that God in that void. You need that energy to fuel you on a journey like that. This is the big one. And then again, as before, you ask yourself:

'Could I let go of wanting to change this feeling?', and you answer, 'Yes, I could let go of wanting to change this feeling. Then you ask, 'Would I let go of wanting to change this

You'll then notice that, having run that thought sequence the fear is now pretty much transmuted into pure energy, rather than anxiety. Rather than something toxic and unhealthy, it is now something vibrant and health giving.

Alchemy

This is major alchemy that you're performing on yourself. Then remind yourself that the sensation that you're feeling in your solar plexus right now, is there solely because you're generating it. And you're generating it, not because you're insane, not because you're a masochist, you're generating it because this level of sensation is what it takes right now to make you feel alive. And you say to yourself:

'I am generating this sensation in my belly right now, no matter how much it might seem otherwise because this sensation is exactly the intensity I need right now to make me feel alive'.

But also saying it positively like that, rather than self punishingly, you'll notice that the sensation has now subsided. It actually starts to feel rather pleasant in the belly. If you could cast your mind to when you went on a night out that was really magnificent. They're not that often, they're quite rare, they might even be once a year, but every now and again you'll find yourself at a gathering, an event, a party, some kind of celebration, which will really be magnificent. It will be one of those events where you will feel, *'This is what life's all about, this is what puts it all in perspective, this is what I've worked for, this is what I go through everything I go through for, it's for this feeling of celebration'*, and everybody's feeling the same thing together. If you could examine physiologically what you're feeling, during those times, the solar plexus is relaxed and warm and the tension levels have been reduced to a murmur. And this is the reason people drink alcohol, take drugs in social situations, it's to engender this sensation of being relaxed enough for the tension levels to feel no more than a murmur. Now to address the kidneys directly, to address the energetic level:

Breathe in, as if breathing in directly to the kidneys in the middle lower back, either side of the spine visualize that as the breathe enters the kidneys it warms them. This is the effect of the breath acting upon the kidneys - it warms them. And as you breathe out, breathe out as if you're breathing up and out through the heart. This cools and relaxes the heart. So you're breathing in as if in directly through the kidneys, and this breath entering the kidneys is warming them, and then you're breathing out as if you're breathing upwards and out through the heart, and this cools the heart so that it relaxes more. Now this relaxation that you're starting to feel in the heart spreads down to the right where your liver is and shares that with your liver, and you'll start to feel your liver relaxing. Still aware of the God in the void, acknowledge that now and honor your role as this vital nugget of local might, consciousness, chi, in the vast continuum of eternity.

At this precise moment you're connected to all other nexuses throughout infinity right now, also throughout the past and the future. Take a moment just to visualize that now, that you are a vital nexus of local energy and consciousness in the eternal continuum that spans the past, the presence and the future, throughout the multiverse, connected to all other nexuses right now. Now switch the focus to your heart again and:

Breathe as if you're breathing in and out directly through the center of your chest. And as you do you'll start to feel a stimulation of heart energy, what might be described loosely as a subtle tingle. From this perspective close your eyes and feel tendrils of love spreading out in all directions to connect you with all the other nexuses throughout time and space in every direction, still breathing that primal honest fear in the midst, because the fear is chi, yet sharing and radiating the love with everybody, throughout time and space, every nexus of light and consciousness, every fear.

Love

And we're all connected with the love. And now just confine that to us, the human family right now on the planet, this mere seventy five billion of us. And include yourself in this huge family at a soul level, because it is mete to include yourself, and trust that you'll always invariably be sent those that you need when you need them, and that life will never abandon you because it cannot, because you are life.

Now focus on your intention, which without wanting to put words in your mind, will go something like this – that you will always feel the warmth of connectedness inclusion and belonging in the human family, who will always support you and companion you, and that providence will always bring you whoever, and whatever, you need. And again remind yourself that it's ok to feel afraid, and that there's no need to mask it, or transmute it into anxiety anymore, because we know that doesn't work. But instead you're now free to ride it as raw, pure chi, as fuel for the adventure.

Chapter 7

Performance anxiety

Looking right is one of the biggest drivers in human society, performing optimally likewise, hence we have the fear of being judged. It seems that certainly most people are primarily driven by the need to look right, to look good in the eyes of others. Not just in the physical aesthetic level, but in the way they operate, the way they live their lives, the way they're seen to be. To look right is the most powerful driver. And doing whatever you have to do well, in the eyes of others is part of that. You could say that everything you do is a performance. In other words you're putting something through a form. You have an idea to do something and then you act it out, you're performing it, you're putting it through a form so that it can exist. And with this comes the fear of being judged, or you could say that this is arising from the fear of being judged. Now it has its positive aspect because it spurs us on to accomplish great feats, to progress in all our endeavours. For me I spend a lot of time listening to music and the educational curve is exponential and the anxiety that my performance will be under par is a very big part of what drives me to progress in my education of the mastering of the skills and so on.

And I apply this to anything, this book for example. And I could have been aware of performance anxiety before I began this. You could say the whole of life is theater, that life is a show. I used to be the house doc at what was one of the originators of all the psychedelic clubs in the world, it was called the Whirlygig. It started out as the monthly dance of the humanistic, psychology association event basically, but then developed into a weekly club night, and then twice a year the crew, a fifty strong tight family, headed up by Queen Mary and King Richard as we used to call them headed off to an old Palmerston Fort on the Plymouth Sound, on the south west coast of England. It was an old Victorian fortress that had been turned into a hotel/conference center place overlooking the sea high on a cliff, and we'd take it over for five days. There would be constant deejaying day and night, and fifty people coming and going in different states of repair, and dancing and frolicking and playing, and doing all the stuff people do. This could be described as a fairly extreme hedonistic event, but with quite a conscious deep undertone, bearing in mind that this all started out as a humanistic association dance.

So it had this underpinning of consciousness and cognition about what was going on. I remember at one of these sessions, it evolved spontaneously and naturally that everybody in the crew one by one got up and went into the middle of the room. Richard and Mary were sat in chairs looking like the king and queen. And one by one everyone did a little turn, for example juggling, a dance, a spoken word piece. It wasn't planned, it wasn't a contest, it was just a pure spontaneous offering of one's talent and skill. And the fascinating thing was that there was very little performance anxiety, because everybody felt very safe with each other

and no-one was there to impress anyone. But there was just enough of it so that when you did do your thing you didn't do it stupidly, you did it well, you put your all into it, albeit it was an informal gathering. And this was done as a gift to the other. So our performing is not only something we want to get right to impress the other and to not be abandoned by the other, performance is something that if done well, is a great gift to the other. Hence, why we pay good money to go to the theater to watch great actors, or watch dancers, or whatever it is.

Sensitive

Again, it's very likely that the inception of performance anxiety, or fear starts with the sperm, in competition with millions of others to win the race to personalise the egg, and while competition anxiety is also in there, the seed of performance anxiety would probably be in there as well. But more obviously it starts as wee babies, as soon as we realise that we get a frown from our mother if we've performed whatever task it is badly, and a smile, or the softening of the facial features when we've performed well. The baby is incredibly sensitive. I've met loads of new born babies, as I said earlier and have been very privileged to have observed clearly that the mother's facial features hardening just a tiny bit is enough to trigger the baby off into a crying fit for example, or the softening of features is detected as a reward. As soon as we get that, which we do instinctively, because we're infinitely intelligent as babies, as we are as adults, in fact in many ways more so as babies because we're not cluttered up with all the learnings of the world.

It's even before we're sure, or understand what performance is meant to be, or even by which criteria the performance is being judged. We're aware of it and it's often very, very subtle, most of the time, but none the less potent for it. So if we learn at that tiny age that we're being punished or rewarded for every tiny action, or non-action – burping, not burping, crying, not crying, soiling the nappy, not soiling the nappy, taking the nipple, not taking the nipple, smiling, frowning, approximating words and all that sort of thing, and if say the parent, or parents are ambitious for the baby to turn out to be a high achiever in later life, which is the case a lot of the time, it's obvious how performance anxiety will attach itself as a bolt on.

Cave-dwelling

And then if we go back to the cave dwelling days, performance fear was crucial and intrinsic to the hunt succeeding. You had to perform well, you had to do your bit in the hunting pack well. When it came to you to throw your stone, or throw your spear, or throw the net, or stalk the prey, or whatever it was you had to do, your performance at that moment was crucial to everybody succeeding in the hunt. Similarly with cooking the food when the spoils of the hunt were brought back to the cave. And then you could take it later and relate it to when we'd organised ourselves into societies and armies - you can imagine during early battle field scenarios performance fear would be so essential to cause you to get your moves right as best as you could as there it was instantly, a matter of life and death.

Rough justice

Also before anything like the rule of law, people would have been judged, probably on a totally spurious subjective, superstitious set of criteria. And rough justice would have been

meted out. For example witches, wise women, i.e. women who understood the old magic of the herd, the old ways before Christianity took over, when this kind of Gynophobia, this fear of women, took hold in society by the Middle Ages, they'd just wipe out whole loads of women for being witches. They did the most awful, horrible things to them, they burnt them at the stake and so on. And this is not just in ancient days unfortunately. It's still true today with all the gross abuses and miscarriages of justice with modern day witch hunts that go on, the torture, the beheading and so on.

So the fear of being judged wrongly is not a pointless one, it's not unfounded at all. If you come forwards in time from the cave days to own teenage years and you think back to those early teenage years when you might have been developing your moves in front of the mirror, for example your facial expressions, your phrases, your accent, your body language, your posture, your dance moves, all of it, this is all to do with the fear of being judged wrongly, of not getting your performance right. If you look at how it has developed in the young generation now, because our technology and all the systems that support it, and our social structure, has become at least on the superficial level, incredibly sophisticated, the young people are obliged to really get their performance slick, even if they're not doing it professionally. So when you go to a club night of electronic music, for example with an audience of nineteen to twenty year olds, and the music comes on, the audience knows the moves, they know how to do all the set dance moves and they do them perfectly synchronised as if they'd been studying the form, which they have.

So even as a member of the audience you've got to get it right. If you look at the narcissism that pervades our society, for example if you get a group of people out to dinner celebrating a birthday or something, it will inevitably arrive to a point where they do selfies and photos of each other to post so other people can see them sitting having dinner taking selfies of themselves. They've got to perform correctly. When they do their pose to the camera, what they're doing is mimicking professional models, or actors or whatever. It's all a performance. We don't have to perform these days, in most instances at least, so that if we don't come up to scratch we're going to die there and then. It may come back to that, but where it is at the moment, for most of us if we do a duff performance we'll live to see another day. We've attenuated that threat and spread it out by having police and military and industrial farming and all the rest of it, so that we ourselves are not directly confronted by the need to perform brilliantly at every turn. Yet the fear quota still has to be processed. It's been four million years of getting to this point where we can literally farm it all out so to speak. And we haven't evolved to encompass the complexity of systems that we've generated. We're still running on fear distribution living from four million years of non-agrarian living, and it's only been the tiny bit of that that we've changed into this highly technological society, as far as we know at least. So the programming is really profound at a cellular level and that fear of underperforming is still there, there's a quota of it that still has to be processed. So what to do?

The mind as before with the other fears, deftly and swiftly creates horror movies and then you get scared of them. This is anxiety, it's not real fear, its self-generated fear, confected fear. And it's toxic fear because it isn't real.

It's like if you drink coca tea, or chew coca leaves, if for example you're in South America it gets rid of vertigo at high altitudes and gives you a nice euphoric feeling. If you take the synthesised processed version of that, i.e. cocaine, it's evil. As soon as we put something through a process it becomes toxic. And it's exactly the same with fear. When we don't deal with the fear and honor it in its true form, and honor its value in its true form, it turns into a confected fear, an anxiety about these horror movies that we're generating up in our head, which we mistake for being real. We get deluded into believing it's happening externally. And we're generally dealing with humiliation for example with performance anxiety. Note that embarrassment is the closest thing to bliss. It's the flip side of bliss. Either way you're beside yourself, you're out of your drama. In a state of bliss, in a state of rapture, you've transcended the human drama momentarily. In a state of embarrassment, again, you've transcended, but you've done it in a toxic way.

Humiliation

So the horror movie is of being humiliated in front of other people, of looking stupid, of falling flat, of people walking out of the room when you're talking, if you're doing public speaking for example, of being seen naked, caught in the act, being criticized, being dominated, of being bullied and not being able to stand up for yourself, about being imperfect, of getting it wrong, and being seen to get it wrong, of disapproval, of not being able to fulfil your expected role, say of looking after your children, or mother, or whatever it is. You'll have your own versions of them. The horror movies we create about underperforming, or performing badly and what will happen, obviously they're completely irrational and unfounded and ungrounded in anything real, most of the time. But the fear itself that's driving them is real, and it's useful, even today with our technological society. If acknowledged and utilized, it spurs us on to invest time practicing our art, our moves, and so on. If left unaddressed it festers and the horror movies in your head holding you in anxious thrall stymie you and prevent you in taking the chances that would optimise your adventure. In other words it totally works against you.

All walks of life

Performance is around in all walks of life, not just theatre, dance and so on, but for example, sales, coming up with ideas in meetings, getting the numbers right in calculations and so on. And also at a personal level, your sexual performance, the way you get undressed, the way you walk on the beach, your party personality and how that performs, which is a big reason why people take cocaine and alcohol. And people say they only do it because they're shy. But I suggest it's not shyness, it's probably that you know that when you're on form and you go to a party, you really have fun, you enjoy talking to people and interacting, so you want to make sure you're on form. But when you've got low self-esteem, lack of confidence, when you're

tired, and don't really feel like going but you have to and not really on form, you don't feel that you'll be able to do your bit, to engage fully that will make it fun for everybody, and so people take stuff.

Low liver energy

Incidentally, this lack of confidence, this low self-esteem, when it comes to social engagements, is again as with abandonment anxiety, or fear, derived from low energy and deficient blood in the liver.

The liver is the chamber that houses your wild inner primal self so to speak. And when the liver energy is flat for a variety of reasons, the primal, wild, natural uninhibited wild primal self is suppressed and that's what we call shy, awkward and so on.

We always seem to go for the poison that's going to remedy it momentarily, but instead it which will actually exacerbate the situation, and hence comes the addictive pattern of alcohol, cocaine and so on. Because you're gradually weakening the liver more and more by taking it, which is reducing your confidence at a fundamental level, inducing you to take it more and more. The way you dance at a club, or a party, people are not going to care how you dance, but in your mind people will care. You want to perform well. Or the way you walk into a room, are you walking funny, or do you look awkward, the way you conduct yourself even among your friends - you want to perform well. Or perhaps you're in a competitive social environment and somebody very funny is telling a great story and it seems that everybody will have to tell a good story, and you're anxious about whether you're going to do your bit when it comes to your turn, are you going to be able to do it well, the way you drive, the way you walk to the train station, the way you walk onto a train, looking confident, looking like you're somebody who's enjoying their life. All these things are instances of performance.

Positive message

So you take initially whatever positive message you can from the anxiety. The first thing is that you have to develop cognisance, these days termed as mindfulness, as if it's a new thing. It's been going on with the Buddhists for thousands of years. But anyway, the modern thing is called mindfulness, being aware, being cognisant of what's going on inside. Doing so, you'll notice anxiety arising, performance anxiety. You note it. It's not you. You're not anxious, you're just observing the anxiety arising.

Take note of any positive message there might be in it, for example something to improve the way you do things, and what you can practice to develop, or enhance your game. Then as soon as you've made a note of what it is you can do to improve things you drop it. Because if you don't drop it at that moment it eats away at you.

Spleen energy

Performance skills themselves, any kind of form, putting things into form, depends on the spleen energy support. On the lateral plane it sits on the left under the ribs opposite the liver. It is associated with the element of earth, while the liver is associated with the element of wood, for example with trees that grow, therefore expanding and growing into yourself and interacting with others helpfully. So the spleen is all about putting things in form. The earth is a sphere, a big hefty piece of spherical matter. Anything that's in the world of matter, anything that's in form is governed by the earth element. And everything associated with managing yourself on the earth plane, for example all the practical skills, short term memory, clear thinking, mind body coordination, spatial awareness, and skills in terms of making things change in material terms. It could be creating something from a piece of wood, or creating a piece of music, or creating a dance, or enacting a business idea, or even making a cup of tea. All that is supported by spleen energy.

Now, the anxiety, the confected fear that you generate yourself by watching these horror movies in the front of your brain, which are of your own making, but which you delude yourself into thinking are absolutely real and happening externally, that kind of confected fear as I've said, weakens kidney chi.

Now, there are two aspects to kidney chi, the yin and the yang, or the water and the fire. So you have the water kidney energy and the fire kidney energy. Some people say that the left kidney is water and the right kidney is fire. I don't think it was ever intended as that. There are just these two elements to the kidneys, the fire and the water. The fire aspect of the kidneys relates to adrenalin – the adrenals are little sacs that sit on top of the kidneys, that's why ad renal, added onto renal, the kidney. That's the western equivalent of the fire of the kidney. But also it relates to the sex drive, the procreative urge, whereas the water of the kidneys is more associated with urination, the control of the bladder and all the other known renal functions.

There has to be a good balance of fire and water in the kidneys for you to not feel afraid, or anxious, and be filled with will to do what you need to do and so on. When running interference on yourself by not processing the fear honestly, but instead going into denial about it, and then being spurred on by that to unconsciously create these horror movies and then get afraid of them weakens the kidneys. The fire aspect of the kidneys helps keep the spleen heated up, keeping it warm, which the spleen needs as it tends towards going cold and damp, just like the earth will if there's no sun on it. When that happens, it's like walking through cold, wet mud, just like you might do at a festival in England for example, and it slows your walking down, your wellington boots get stuck in it and it's much harder to walk, it takes a lot longer and you can't go as far and the experience is quite repetitive in a way because you're focussed on just walking. The same with the spleen itself. When it gets cold and damp it generates worry loops, in place of the practical thinking. Generally when the spleen is at a healthy temperature and its functioning well it enables you to think practically, clearly and in an orderly way, getting things done. When the spleen goes cold and damp it, instead of that straight line thinking you go round in small circles, worry loops, you keep repeating the same concern.

The kidneys meantime, are also responsible for providing the pull down aspect of the breathing mechanism, by which I mean when you inhale you pull the air down into yourself, into the lungs. That's not, according to most medicine, most medicine will say it's controlled by the lungs themselves. The lungs are responsible merely for the breathing out, the expelling of the old air. But the breathing in, the fresh life, the fresh opportunity, another moment of life, is controlled by the kidneys, which are the organs that produce the vitality, the generative force inside your body.

When the kidneys are weakened through anxiety they don't pull down properly and the energy gets backed up in the lungs, which causes the lungs to have to work harder. This is also to do with why you get a build-up of gunk at the bottom of the lungs - because the lungs aren't functioning properly on the in-breath. They have to work harder to take up the slack, which then weakens their energy. Now, as I said earlier, the breathing that the lungs facilitate gives you inspiration. The word inspire, if you look at the second syllable 'spire', just like a church spire is of the same root of the word 'spirit'. Being inspired means being filled with spirit. Respiration, which is another word for breathing, as you know, means filling yourself up with the spirit again. So each time you breathe you're drawing the spirit into you again. Inspiration means that you have original thought happening and you create from that. That's your inspiration, your muse is the spirit, and the energy that is facilitating that is the lungs. When the spleen is soggy and damp and cold it can't support the lungs and you can't even breathe out properly. You also have no inspiration so you can't let go of the old. You get stuck with the old. This causes the spleen to weaken more, because the lungs stop drawing on the spleen, which makes you worry more and so on.

Rituals

One of the ways people allay performance anxiety, or defer it at least, is by setting up a series of rituals, and the idea that if you can perform these rituals well, everything will be ok. It can work on a positive level. It's when it goes out of control and becomes extreme that's what these days we would describe as OCD (Obsessive Compulsive Disorder). Personally I don't go with these acronyms and names of diseases, I think they're incredibly crude and clumsy. All they do is put people in boxes that might suit the person for a while saying they've got this thing. But they're inventions. They're just mere inventions of psychiatrists who want to make a face for themselves coming up with a new condition, for which drug companies can come up with a drug and then the whole drug pushing business can continue. They might have their uses to classify things so that they can be discussed. But personally I don't go with any of that and find when I'm working with people it works to not go with that. You just take what they're doing, so if for example, somebody is succumbing to an extreme ritual on a daily basis, rather than tell them that they're ill, or have a condition, both of which are completely wrong as far as I'm concerned, you just point out what they're actually doing is enacting a series of rituals. Now if you get the rituals right everything will be ok, but when it goes really wrong the voice in the head says you didn't do it right, something bad is going to happen and so on. But we all do rituals, for example not stepping on cracks in paving stones, not walking under ladders, or if I do my tai chi in the morning I can do anything, or everything will be ok. These are all rituals. If I perform this way then I can perform well. And there's value in that.

So the first thing is you have to notice performance anxiety, and that means insight and cognition as it occurs almost every second of the day. And this would have been useful when the world was wild of course, but now it's nearly useless. So you observe it. Then you do as before:

You acknowledge that the horror movies in the head are again ones you are creating, they're not real, they're merely imaginary and they're really convincing, they really grab hold of you. You really believe that they're going to happen. Yet they're actually purely imaginary and you're the one generating the fear about them. The fear, the anxiety happening outside of you is not real, you so acknowledge that. Next you look at the real primal fear that underlies it, i.e. that if you don't perform well, you'll fail. And if you keep failing, you'll die. Hence, what underlies it therefore is the fear of death.

So the horror story would be something like as follows - if you failed in every single performance you wouldn't earn any money. Then your performance entailed having to go to social security to get benefits, and you didn't perform that well, so you didn't get the benefits either. Then your performance is to beg on the street, but you don't perform that well either,

It's the fear that underlies all the other fears, the fear of death. And beneath the fear of death is an even deeper one which is the fear of oblivion, the fear of the void. And then beneath that there's an even deeper fear, the deepest fear of all and that's the fear of meeting the prime cause that's making this whole universe be here, and that is you. At the deepest level who we all are is that – The Tao, God, or whatever you want to call it. And it's actually the fear of acknowledging that this whole thing is one vast illusion.

so you die. So eventually if you don't consistently perform well you'll fail, and if you persistently don't perform well and keep failing you'll die. We're all going to die. anyway, but that's the fear.

And it's primal and it's powerful and it's a very beautiful fear, god-fearing, it's the fear of God in the void. This underlies all other fears. The antidote of this fear is love. So what you do is as before, you acknowledge the fear, don't try and make it go away, feel it in your solar plexus right now – you can envisage your death, you can envisage the void, you can envisage the god in the void, you can envisage the power of it all. Feel this fear in the solar plexus now, don't deny it, love it, breathe with it, and just say to it, 'I love you, I love, you, oh I love you', and then you'll feel it as a positive source inside of you, rather than an enemy to be pushed away, or overcome. Then you can ride on it.

Now The Tao itself is generating this illusion. It multiplies itself from the state of nothing into all this, and it imbues all constituent parts with amnesia so that no-one, and nothing remembers that it's the Tao. There are always little bits of course because you can't get away from reality, from the truth of it all. Then ensues a cosmic game of hide and seek that it's playing with itself. That seems to be its fun. So here is the one undifferentiated absolute,

unmanifest being, the cause of both existence and nonexistence, the dark primordial being that doesn't actualise itself at all. It simultaneously actualises itself as this entire for all we know multiverse. And it's continuing doing it. It didn't just happen once as far as we know. It's continuing to do it, this vast illusion of the cosmos. It then has the game of hide and seek with itself. But actually the reality is of meeting itself and having to face the fact that it is just this one being, that all these different diversions are only that. That ultimately there's no great romance, there is ultimately no story. It is all ultimately nothing, other than this illusion. It knowing this in itself, and I'm projecting my own psyche of course onto this, there's a great fear in that. In other words we have the fear, the awe of the power of that meeting deeply ingrained into us.

Then, when you consider the ineffable presence that does inform all of this, the awesome power of it all, which one presumably meets and then dissolves on an ego level and it then returns back to source, the antidote to the fear of that is to love that as well. Hence why Jesus said 'You shall love the lord thy god with all your heart, and soul and mind'. That's the traditional Jewish prayer. That's the fundamental point if there was only one thing about the whole way, it would be that. That's the key to everything.

Love it with all of yourself. And that's the antidote to all fear ultimately, being able to say 'I love you' to the God in the void, 'I love you, I love you', and just keep saying it until you feel it. That will antidote all anxiety.

You don't want to antidote the fear itself, it's useful it's powerful, it's a beautiful thing, it's part of what keeps us alive. So you breathe the fear, you love the fear, you ride the fear. Rather than go into denial about it, or set it down, which you can't do anyway, that just won't happen.

You remind yourself regularly, but specifically right now, that it's ok to feel fear. It's completely ok to feel fear. We've been brought up to believe that it's not ok to feel fear and we've based the whole society on it not being ok to feel fear – insurance policies, alarms, windows that lock, doors that lock, guns, wars and all the rest of it is all about trying to avoid feeling fear, doing everything possible to make it as safe as can be so there won't be any fear. And as you know that's impossible. So you remind yourself that:

It's totally ok to feel fear. And then you ask yourself again, 'Could I let go of wanting to change this feeling?', and then you say, 'Yes, I could let go of wanting to change this feeling', because you could couldn't you, if you wanted to. Then you say to yourself, 'Would I let go of wanting to change this feeling?', and you say 'Yes, I would let go of wanting to change this feeling'. And just the simple act of doing that gives you the psychological distance from it instantly. It puts you in the position of the observer, the witness bearer, rather than the one who's actually feeling the fear.

Again, in that there's the implicit backward flowing manoeuvre of Taoism, whereby you flow backwards inside your skin, you draw your presence backwards into the rear part of you.

So everything rear of the side seams of your shirt, or dress is where you sit, still, silent and strong, just like the back is. And in there you accommodate the play that's occurring in the front. So there is fear in the solar plexus, survival fear essentially, and you observe yourself having that happening, you accommodate that, you embrace it, you preside over it, but you are not it, it is no longer you.

There is just this phenomenon called life, one aspect of which is fear, and you're feeling that in your belly, so that's fine. This question, '*Could I let go, would I let go*', is a device to help you to come into the back part of you, to be the witness bearer.

Then remind yourself that:

The intensity of the feeling that you have in your solar plexus is something you're generating. That sensation in the front is something you're generating. And the reason you're doing it is because it makes you feel alive. Now as soon as you say, 'This feeling I have in my belly is not bad, it's ok to have it, and I'm generating this fear, and all the frazzle that I've got attached to it is because this intensity is what makes me feel alive', and when you say it as if it's something positive, not stupid, not mad, not daft, not potty, not self-satisfying, merely this is what you do because it makes you feel alive, immediately the sensation starts decreasing. Just by that simple acknowledgement, the intensity of the fear running through the belly decreases. And again you say to that fear, 'I love you, I love you'.

And that's a discipline, to get into the habit of saying '*I love you, I love you*', rather than '*Go away, go away, go away*'.

Love the God in the void

And again, you say to the God in the void, the prime cause of everything, that you love it. You also have to acknowledge that it's loving you, that's what all this is. Your whole experience here, the pain, the pleasure, the dreams, the hopes, the fears, the coming, the going, the being born, the dying, all of it. All of this is God loving you, all of this is the Tao loving you. So now withdraw from the drama that's going on in the front of you into the stillness of your back. The real self, this is you, your real self, the immortal self, the one that has always been, and always will be, was never born and will never die, this is the Tao, this is the absolute, the void, right here inside of you. It has an instantly profound effect if you're feeling it right now, and with practice it grows exponentially stronger. The challenging part is remembering, simply because what goes on in front of you, or what your sense organs perceive as going on in front of you as they all face forward, is compelling. It's a fantastic illusion this external world, or our perception of the external world, and our descriptions of the external world that we mistake for what we're seeing out there. It's very compelling and it magnetises us forwards to meet it. This is similar to when a crowd gathers. There's an instinct to move forwards to see what's going on. Or why people congregate. Whatever's going on, people want to go and see what it is, even if nothing is going on. And you're drawn forwards in a similar way into the front of your body.

Dropping back

Remembering that you have this option of dropping back into the back. And knowing that as you do this, everything becomes much more still, much bigger, more beautiful, more expansive. Being alive feels much more gorgeous in every possible way. The sense is that there is nothing lacking in this moment. That the process of destiny is occurring, and that it is benign, and that you are going to die, and that's totally ok because it happens to everybody and it's the natural way, the natural order of things. And there's nothing to fear. The fear you do feel is just a primal instinct, the primal energy, not something to be pushed away, something to be loved. You can accommodate it all when you're in your back. When you're in the front you can't accommodate anything. All you can do is run about in a self-conflicted way, causing varying degrees of interference on your own peace and the peace of everyone around you. When you're in the back of you, you emanate peace. You emanate the qualities of the back, which are still and strong and silent. And with the heart open in the front and your chest relaxed, as if you're exposing the precious jewel of your soul, you emanate that which is the beautiful, loving, calm stillness for yourself and for the benefit of others. And that helps to attenuate general fear levels in the air as well. So you're doing a good service.

Compounding this is breathing as if directly in and out through the kidneys. So, as you know, they sit in your mid lower back area either side of the spine. If you can imagine that you're actually breathing in and out through them in the back there for a moment, you'll notice that it kind of activates an ancient energy. You're activating this ancestral energy that the kidneys store. So it's very, very powerful. And the act of focussing like that draws you into your back. Now:

Breathe in to your kidneys, and then breathe out from the kidneys into your spleen, which sits under the ribs on the left. And what you're breathing out into the spleen, through the spleen, is warmth. So you're breathing into the kidneys, which warms them up, and you send that heat on the out breath into the spleen. Simultaneously, the cooling aspect of the kidneys, the cooler energy, as the heat goes into the spleen, the cool energy goes directly into the liver on the right and helps cool it down. The liver always needs cooling, the spleen always needs warming. So you're breathing in to your kidneys and sending the fire aspect into your spleen, and you're sending the water aspect, the cooling

And this will have a positive effect on your physiology and on your mental state. It takes about twenty four hours. It needs to go through the whole cycle of a day and night for the body to get the message to fully process and simulate it. Therefore, the practice of doing things every day is so important. So from this place of being in the back, you've activated all the relevant energy, you've accommodated the fear, rather than pushed it away, and you've acknowledged that the anxiety you've been succumbing to previously was merely a concoction and that there is no obligation any more to indulge that addiction.

The game

The next thing is to create your intention. And I don't want to put ideas in your mind, but in

this instance, or respect, your intention would be something like to perform optimally in every tiny action, and to perform optimally in every huge action, and all the actions in between. And that the result of every single action, no matter how tiny or huge will be magnificent, and exponentially increasingly magnificent as time goes by. Something along those lines. So once you've come back into yourself, you've reclaimed the territory so to speak, you've made friends with the fear, you love the fear because it's life, you love the Tao at the root of all of this experience, however much fear there may be, you then create this intention, which is the opposite of the horror movies in the head. You can't just do this like an antidote, for example like positive thinking, where somebody might say in reply to your saying you're having anxieties and are convinced you're going to fail, 'Oh you've got to think positively here'. So you say *'I don't fail, I win, I'm a winner, I see myself win'*. That's frantic, it doesn't work. It maybe does momentarily and is certainly better than doing nothing, but it's bullshit. It's superficial. Genuine positive thinking, so to speak, can only come from your deep true self, where there is no preference for success over failure because as far as you're concerned when you're in the back you are successful because you're here. That's the game, being here for as long as you are.

Loving it, each and every moment for as long as you're here. That is success. And you know that when something horrible happens and you appear to fail, that you'll learn and you'll grow from it. You know that when in external terms you've got success going on, it's going to go the other way, because there's yin and there's yang. This is inescapable. When you're in the back you transcend the preferences to the yin or yang, to the dark or the light. You remain equanimous about everything. You maintain equipoise in the back, because that's the quality of the back. It's not involved in the drama. It's just observing. It's just delighted to be here.

Approval

So you create your intention to perform optimally at every single thing you do without having to make an effort about it, without worrying about people judging you. You simply do it for the joy of an optimal performance. Most days when I'm practising my martial arts of a morning, I go through the qigong routine, then I reward myself for that discipline by doing one to four different martial arts that I practice. And many days I know I'm doing a beautiful performance, which had it been filmed could have made a lovely piece of art. But I'm not doing it for other people, I'm not being judged. It's irrelevant. Performance for the sake of performance is what we're talking about here. For your own self if you like. Because ultimately what difference does it make what other people think? It doesn't. All that really counts is that you approve of yourself and your performance.

So that's the intention, you approve of yourself and your performance. So that you will do a beautiful performance in every single thing you do, whether it's washing dishes, or creating a piece of art, whatever it is. And also that the result of every single action, of every performance that you do, no matter what it is, will be hugely magnificent for you and for everyone around you. The thing is that when caring what other people think about you grows out of proportion, and in fact when fear left unaddressed festers to an extreme extent for any reason, it can cause symptoms that are going to completely delete your life's joy and value. For example, Obsessive Compulsive Disorder, hearing voices in your head that are telling

you horrible things constantly; panic attacks, when you completely lose command of your whole body's psycho-physiology; and paranoia, where the fear has festered to such an extent that it poisons the mind into believing the horror moves are actually happening around you and you can't differentiate between fantasy and fact. And we're going to be looking at that in the next chapter.

Chapter 8

Obsessive Compulsive Disorder (OCD), Paranoia and panic attacks

So this chapter is about what is termed OCD (Obsessive Compulsive Disorder), paranoia, and panic attacks. We're going to be looking at all the subtle rituals that we develop in childhood and then enact on a daily basis to try and make sense of life. We're going to be looking at those often pernicious, punishing voices in your head, doing you down at every turn. We're going to be looking at those instances where you've experienced paranoia, imagining all the sort of bizarre things that weren't actually true. And we're going to be looking at the time you've experienced blind panic, that you've suffered breathlessness, racing heart beat and all the symptoms of a full blown blind panic.

Such descriptions of the human condition such as OCD is a description, but it's a clumsy one and it's a crude one and it doesn't fit everybody. It might be a way of describing a snapshot of a person's state enough to prescribe various drugs to push it away or mask it, or whatever, but the way I was trained by R.D. Laing and the way that I've operated for more than forty years working with people, is to completely override that whole crude level of reducing human experience to an acronym. Rather than to try and make something go away like that, instead to honor it, and work with it, and by doing so, if it's become too loud, it will normalise. Implicit in this is that it's not something that some people have and others don't. It's just that for some people some of the time its effect will be much louder than it will be for others. Everybody has a series of rituals that they develop. It's exactly the same with paranoia. It's not something that people suffer from as a disease. Yes, it's a description of an extreme state, and I have worked with people in this state often, diagnosed as paranoid schizophrenic in fact. But to honor the crude description as being something sacrosanct is not a helpful way to actually go about treating the person, because what you're doing then is treating the disease, which doesn't actually exist, it's a set up with the person. When you treat the person instead it totally shifts the emphasis. Panic attacks likewise and the state of panic in general.

Panic

Panic incidentally is an interesting word, because its derivation is from the nature god Pan, whence also comes pandemonium, which means a state of demonic possession by the id as Freud called it, that swirl of primal conflicting urges that goes on at an unconscious level and which actually drives us, rather than the rational mind, which we mistakenly believe drives us. And occasionally, through various factors, which include suppression of the primal self

at some level, panic would erupt from a state of low grade panic and turn into a full blown panic attack so called.

But I'm doing this on the basis that we're not looking at people who are somewhere else. We're looking at ourselves here. All of us have these mechanisms, or the propensity towards these mechanisms. Talking of mechanisms, we've seen how the fear mechanism works in the previous chapters. There is fear, fear is essential for survival. But we've reached the stage, relatively extremely recently in our evolution where we've managed collectively, ingeniously, to outsource our survival functions so that we now have supermarkets, ambulances, police and road systems, and all the rest of it, in other words we've outsourced our moment by moment survival needs. We therefore don't have such an immediate need for the same quota of this essential survival fear as our ancestors did, for most of the time humans have been on the planet bear in mind. Yet we've not actually evolved beyond that stage. In other words, we've not actually evolved much beyond where our cave-dwelling ancestors were in terms of how we process, or how our internal ecosphere functions work. We are evolving, but in our terms we're evolving very slowly. So we don't acknowledge this essential aspect of being human, the fear, and breathe with it, be with it and therefore let it utilize itself into pure raw chi, into raw energy, as we might do if we were living in a more primal way. So for example if you felt the fear you might yell, or run, or chase an animal, or breathe heavily say. So we'd breathe it, and we'd feel it and it all calmed down and turned into energy. But because we've outsourced all that level of reality we go into denial about it because it doesn't really fit with being the organised, neat and tidy human being in the modern world, hence it will move underground. This amount of fear that's being process, this survival fear, which is really crucial, we all have to have it, when left unacknowledged, when we're in denial about it, it moves underground, it goes unconscious in other words. Now, again, as I've said before, but this can't be said enough to penetrate our psyche:

This is not a real fear, it's a toxic attenuated fear, the processing of which strains the kidneys because it's the kidneys that deal with your fear, that's where it's processed. And when the kidneys are weak there is mostly fear. When the kidneys are strong there is mostly energy, vitality, the will to do and to be. So the ratio changes according to how weak or strong the kidney energy is at any one moment, from energy to fear. When the kidneys strain for having to process this toxic, attenuated fear, this then produces an anxious, nervous, fearful state inside

Then the thinking mind, and again this is something that has evolved relatively recently, the evaluating, descriptive mind, that aspect of the mind that is centered around the frontal aspect, the front of the brain, that part of the mind whose job it is to analyse and evaluate feelings and give some sort of rationale to what you're feeling, doesn't know what make of this fear because there's nothing to put it onto. So it obliges you by:

creating a horror movie instead, completely in the imagination, that it believes somehow fits the feeling that you're feeling and then it makes you believe that you're actually afraid of that. And it does this so well, and so fast that we don't even notice it happening. And the resulting images that it concocts are so convincing that we mistake them for reality itself.

And then we've looked at the antidote, which is first:

You notice the fear. This means that you have to remain cognitive and vigilant, what we call today, mindful. You have to be aware of what's going on inside. And then when fear arises, which it will as it's there all the time, to notice that there is fear in the belly, usually centered in the solar plexus. Then you acknowledge the fear, you honor it, rather than go into denial about it. And you honor and acknowledge its very real importance of keeping you alive. Next, you see that whatever you think the fear is, whether it's a failing of yourself in the eyes of others, performing badly in some way, you see that underneath this fear is the fear of dying. Beyond that even, is the fear of what comes after you die, the great void. And then beyond even that, whatever it is that has made this whole phenomenon be here, the void and the non-void, i.e. God, Tao, and hence where we get the expression god-fearing people. And then as the antidote, or the way of processing it in a healthy way, rather than push it away, try and change it, think it's wrong to have it, you love the fear. You love the God in the void. You allow yourself to envisage your eventual death, your eventual moment of dying, passing into the void whatever that looks like, presumably nothing. And visualise, somehow get a sense of, the presence that informs that, this power that informs the whole universe. And then rather than push it away, you love it.

And then we use a variety of devices, and this would apply to not just fear, but any uncomfortable feeling you've got, rather than trying to change it, or go into denial about it, or mask it, you ask yourself:

'Could I let go of wanting to change this fear? Yes, I could let go of wanting to change this fear'. 'Would I want to let go of trying to change this? Yes, I would let go of trying to change this fear. And it's perfectly ok for me to feel afraid, it's perfectly ok for me to feel fear. It's good for me to feel fear, rather than bad'.

We're so busy trying to change uncomfortable feelings, mask them, or go into denial about them, distract ourselves from them, which is really what a lot of our society is based on, trying to avoid feeling uncomfortable feelings. It doesn't work, all it does is push them underground, and they come back worse in some other way. In a societal descent, collectively speaking they'll come back as terrorists, or as a financial collapse, or viruses and all the rest of it. When we can accommodate the uncomfortable feelings and don't waste loads of energy,

money, resources distracting ourselves from uncomfortable feelings, but when we can actually just accommodate them, they won't need to go underground and come back at us in some horrible way later. But we're not looking at a macro vision. So, if this is not attended to, if you don't cognitively embrace the fear that is an essential part of you, low grade chronic anxiety occurs. The result is it puts a strain on the adrenal glands, the little sacs that sit on top of the kidneys and on the fight and flight mechanism that the adrenal glands offer and provide. In Taoist medical schema, the adrenal glands are known as the fire of the kidneys. The subsequent result is that the whole system is just one level of discomfort. It turns into this low grade chronic anxiety that causes people to rush every single movement they make, and causes people to worry about everything. And even if they're not aware they're doing it, it's kind of their default position and it creates a terrible strain on the kidneys. And because the kidneys are what produce your vitality, this will affect your whole system, which then strains every organ and every level of your psycho-physical system. And that again creates a level of discomfort. Let's call that a base level if you like. Beyond that is a state of what I would call chronic panic. So rather than it just be an anxiety which you can either accommodate, or distract yourself from, it actually turns into a state where you're always instantly defaulting to assuming and dreading the worst in every situation and getting in a proper flap about everything. So much so that you can't think straight, which in fact is actually giving yourself a really good reason for being in a panic, because you're now becoming increasingly incapable of attending to all the various functions that ensure your survival in the first place.

Chronic panic

So it's a self-fulfilling prophesy. With the number of people I've talked to over the years who start telling me their story, you would be amazed how many people are living in a state of chronic panic. And amazingly it seems you can live with this state for years because of your psycho-physical system's innate ability to normalise itself to what is, and therefore you don't even realise cognitively that you're in a state of panic, it becomes the norm. In which case you'd probably get physical symptoms associated with the drain on your kidney chi, for example asthma attacks, lower back pain, stiff neck, headaches, irritable bowel syndrome and so on. But you'd be able nonetheless to maintain that cognitive dissonance, the not knowing, not realising that you're panicking about everything underneath, until something happens to trigger you off into a full blown panic attack. And energetically this is when the water of the kidneys, the aspect of the kidneys that serves as a coolant, is insufficient in its flow and volume to temper the so called fire of the heart, the passions of the heart.

The heart

The energy of the heart is like fire. And so the heart fire rages out of control and you become short of breath, the pulse starts racing and there is an intermittent heart beat and so on. According to the Taoist schema, the heart energy provides you with consciousness. If there was no heart energy there would be no sense of self, there would be no long term memory,

there would be no context in which to place yourself. So when the heart energy drops you find it very difficult to contextualise yourself, you really feel like you don't belong anywhere, or can add anything. It's a feeling of being incongruent with every aspect of existence. The tendency to panic would have likely begun as an infant, a toddler, or very likely way before, as a new born baby, or maybe even in the womb when discerning the panic of the mother at various points along the way, which generally happens at least once along the way. Mothers, or whoever the child spends most of their time with, the main carer, are human and being human, they're flawed inevitably, to varying ways, in varying degrees, at different times. Say a year old toddler has his molar teeth coming through and is all topsy turvy, as was a child I was hanging out with a few days ago. And the mother is busy turning off a stove say, and talking on the phone, and the toddler suddenly loses balance and falls over, and is all at once overwhelmed with information overload, the pain in the body from falling, why did my balance go, where am I, why isn't my mother holding me and so on. There will be a deep antipathy to being in that body in that moment.

The frustration of not being able physically to function as the baby would like to function, overcome by a rush of conflicting emotions, feeling abandoned in that moment, the baby cries and cries and gets into a state he, or she cannot climb out of. While the mother is frazzled, tired, multi-tasking, overworked, not sleeping because the baby's been awake a lot in the night, and feeling completely overwhelmed herself, says 'shut up' to the baby instead of displaying the full compassion of human suffering required at this moment. The child therefore finds no light at the end of its tunnel, is completely wrapped up in this horror and it reaches a fever pitch before the mother can find the appropriate magic trick to calm it, usually feeding it, or else maybe the baby would cry itself to sleep. These things happen. The baby will have forgotten it at the next turn, but the panic trigger has been discovered, that option is there, it's been noted.

Association

The collapsing universe has been experienced, the chaos in the void, the chaos of the id, and the awful, terrible, magnificent, glorious power of the omniscient ultimate entity that's informing it all. The baby without having words for this experiences it. You will have experienced it, I will have experienced it, we will all have experienced it. And that experience will lodge as a mode, as an option, which will be triggered with varying frequency and to various degrees whenever circumstances present enough matches via the unconscious and irrational association to make it be so. For example, if at the moment the child had gone into that state, shall we call it, rather than calling it a panic attack, which is what it actually was, say the mother had been wearing a particular shade of red, and there was a smell of burning berries, or something because the stove hadn't been turned off in time. It could be as simple as all the conditions being so, the smell of burning berries is there in the room for whatever reason, and somebody is wearing, or has something, that has that particular shade of red. Consciously it won't make any associations, but the unconscious, which is the realm of the id, the irrational chaos and swirl of conflicting passions and drive will. It will trigger exactly that same response, that same reaction that same set of conditions as the panic attack. It's a reaction, learned as a toddler, when essentially when it comes to the ways of the world and the

optimum methods and approaches of managing the ride, as a child you know nothing, you don't know how to do all that yet. Yet that program from when you didn't know what to do with anything particularly, it doesn't mean you didn't have universal wisdom, but your skill, even just walking across the room, let alone negotiate communications with other people, they just weren't developed. Yet the program will run you for the rest of your life. In other words you'll be operating from the level of a year old toddler who's had a panic attack, unless, or until you address it, as we are here. And the main key to this and in dealing with any and every state imaginable in fact, comes back to dropping into the back, this method of occupying the rear sector of your body.

The back

I'm going to indulge this again for a moment as it cannot be highlighted enough:

If you're wearing a dress, or a shirt, you have side seams. Everywhere rear of the side- seams is the rear sector of the body, the back. Everywhere forwards of the side-seams is the front sector of the body, the front. The front part of you is the noisy part. It's where the physical noise of the breathing, the heartbeat, the peristaltic motion, the digestion and so on goes on. And it's also where the emotional noise of the conflicts of the different drives which constantly collide in your solar plexus area go on, the noise of the evaluating mind trying to make sense of everything and creating horror movies and discussing whether they're true, or not true, this all happens in the front of the brain and body.

The front of the body is a relatively weak, noisy vulnerable place compared to the back. And because your sense organs face forwards you discern, or perceive life as occurring in front of you. Life as you perceive it, although you are perceiving it through a complex of filters comprised of your descriptions that you have concocted, and therefore, while maybe bearing a resemblance to what's occurring, will certainly not be exactly what's going on. This is a very compelling phenomenon. All the movement, the swirls, the mystery, the big mystery of life going on in front of you is compelling. And therefore it draws your presence into the front of you, it magnetises you. Anything compelling will do that. It will magnetise another agent towards it. And therefore you, the presence of you, take on the qualities of that front part of your body. You become noisy, you become conflicted, you become weak, you become vulnerable. And therefore you guard yourself, you defend yourself, what Freud called the ego defences, with loads of lies, and obfuscations, self- deceptions, and delusions.

When you consider our awful, terrible, incredible, powerful skill at deceiving ourselves with everything it starts to make more sense. More of that in a minute. Training yourself to flow into your back and remain there more of the time, rather than in the front, radically alters your relationship with the experience of being alive. The fears that you feel, the panic that goes on, and as we're going to discuss in a minute, the paranoia, the rituals that you enact,

and the destructive voices you might hear in your head, the drama of all that occurs in the front of the body and the front of the brain. That's where it goes on, that's where the

When you're in the front of your body you are the drama, you become that, you become the voices in your head, you become the panic, you become the paranoia. That's what gives it such validity, that's what makes it feel so real when it's happening. When you sit in the back, you become, you merge with, you are in any case, the witness bearer, that's the deepest aspect of you. The part that was never born, will never die, that was here watching you grow in the womb, that was here watching you being born and going through everything in your life till now, without preference, without prejudice. It knows instinctively because it is one with the great universal wisdom, that all manifest phenomena are subject to the cycle of yin contraction and yang contraction, on every level, in every frequency, in every tempo, on every plane, in every dimension, everything manifest is obliged to conform to this cyclic movement of the contraction and the expansion.

experience is happening.

The deepest witness bearing aspect of you knows this instinctively, and therefore doesn't prefer one thing over another, doesn't say 'I want this, I've got to have that', to all external objects of desire because it knows that whatever you get will have a downside to it, whatever life does that you like, it will make something else occur that you won't like. Nothing external is ever going to give you lasting fulfilment. It will fleetingly give you a buzz and that's the best it can do. It can make you physically more comfortable, it can change your scenery for you externally, change the clothes that you're wearing, the kind of people you may hang out with, the kind of activities you may indulge in, all of that, but it will not give you anything that your soul is craving to steady you, stabilize you and make you feel fulfilled, to give you the true joy of being here. Nothing outside can possibly do that. Only inside can do that. And the way it's achieved is by coming into the back.

Oscillation

You have to train yourself to do this, and it does take time. One of the hardest things is remembering to do it in the first place. Also it's difficult because you're constantly pulled forward by the riveting nature of the external reality, hence there is an oscillating that occurs, tipping forwards and backwards, and forwards and backwards, and the idea is to gradually train yourself to remain in the back more than in the front, just to remember more of the time. And then mysteriously and miraculously that becomes the default position. Then you feel that you're operating with the depth of the entire universe and are able to accommodate whatever fear, whatever quirk of the personality, or behaviour or thoughts occur, you can accommodate it, without judgement, without it disturbing your equilibrium. It's just as if you're watching a piece of living theatre, which is exactly what you're doing, and not going 'Oh I preferred that scene, I liked Act 2 better than Act 3, I don't want Act 3 anymore'. It doesn't do that. It just enjoys being part of this immersive theatre. So this is crucial and fundamental to and at the root of all self-adjustment. Without operating from the back, there isn't really much

you can do with fear or any other state that will have any lasting value.

However when in the back, you can completely shift your relationship to things you feel, the way you react, and so on. David Cassell, a fellow Tai Chi practitioner, and a friend of mine, an absolutely lovely man, reminded me of a tai chi expression 'Pull up the back'. He said that that helped him do this because he was finding it difficult to feel the sensation of sinking backwards, of dropping into his own back, which many people do find difficult. And he found that what helped was the idea of pulling up the back, because this is what you do in tai chi. You do the pelvic lock, which is not really a lock, it's like moving irrigation gates by tilting the pelvis slightly, locking the pelvic floor very subtly, which supports the lower back, and then you pull up the back as it were. In other words you're doing something active with the back and doing something with the back helps you feel where it is.

Throne

Another way of putting it, which has helped many people, is to see your shoulder blades and the front of your spine and the rear pelvic bones, and sacrum as comprising the back of a very comfortable chair, or throne. And the throne room is always at the rear of the palace. There are always a lot of guards and anti-chambers and a lot of other stuff between the throne room and the outside world. The monarch, the sovereign sits on a dais on the throne. Notice that they don't lean forward. And the spine needs to be perpendicular to the ground to serve as a transmitter, or an aerial, to receive the divine power, the divine right. And that's one of the reasons the monarch will always be sitting perfectly upright, another word for which is actually dignified, which means upright. The sovereigns have dignity the way they sit. It's also a matter of maintaining their position of power in front of others who are obliged to be lower down and to do the courtesy, bow, or kneeling, or whatever it is. But they don't lean forwards towards the subject. The subject is obliged to lean towards them, thereby they maintain their position of power, their divine right. So you can then picture yourself as being the sovereign, which you are, the king or the queen of your own realm, your own inner realm. Lean back fully into your throne, so you're sitting back into it. You're leaning into your shoulder blades, the front of your spine, pelvic bones, and sacrum. And you're also allowing your weight to sink down into the seat of the throne, into your sit bones in other words.

Triangulation

Another way to feel it is to visualize breathing in and out directly through the back. You could for example breathe in and out through the kidneys, or breathe into the kidneys and out through the shoulder blades, or you could breathe in and out through the whole back. In other words there's sort of a triangulation, as with most things in Taoism. You have first the idea of going into the back, secondly the idea of visualizing it, and the third one is doing something like breathing, or pulling the back up or whatever. There's always a triangulation to make these things come real for you. By and by if you do it each day you'll gradually find yourself in your back pretty much all of the time. The relevance of this, aside from dealing with panicking - which is really the underlying cause of paranoia and ocd and voices in the head, being in a state of chronic panic - is that this is something I've used for people diagnosed as dangerous psychotics for example, people who other people are scared to talk

to. And I've actually taught people who are in an extreme mental state to sit right back. This is really important. Without being in the back none of the techniques will work very well. Again, from the back if you say, *'Could I let go of wanting to change this feeling of anxiety?'* and so on - when you do that from the back, that's when it has power. When it's done in the front, it's really just part of the general swirl of local noise, some of which is useful, but will just be washed away with the rest of the noise. So it's very important to be in the silent stillness and the strength of the back, from whence you then eschew your commands to yourself and submit to the flow of the Tao to instigate changes, which is essentially the essence of wu wei.

Chronic panic

Now, consider the incredible, terrible skill that we all have of self-deception. The way we can believe that the horror movies in our imagination are real, to the extent that we live in total reaction to them, until we address it. If you then combine that with being in a state of chronic panic, chronic anxiety, hence with all the vital organs and all the functions of your body/mind systems under strain with this incredible terrible power of the imagination and the capacity of self-delusion, it's really clear to see how paranoia develops. For example, say you arrange to visit a friend. You text ten minutes beforehand and you get a confirmation from them that they're expecting you. You then get there at the agreed time and buzz the door, or the apartment intercom, but they don't answer. You double check you're pressing the right buzzer, or whatever, even though you may have been there ten times before and know you don't have to do that, but maybe you've forgotten. You then buzz again, you call their cell phone, their mobile and it's turned off. This is within ten minutes. Your mind then goes into a variety of imaginary reasons as to why this is so. Maybe they don't like you and didn't really want you to come round, but didn't know how to say it. Or maybe they discovered something about you in the preceding ten minutes that made them not want to see you, so pretend not to be in. Maybe they've been kidnapped, or maybe they've gone insane, or maybe they've had a total attack of amnesia and they forgot you were coming in that ten minutes. Then you check that you've got the right number, maybe you're the one with amnesia, but you know you've got the right number, so it can't be that. And then you check that you weren't imagining the whole thing, maybe you were, maybe you weren't meant to be visiting them, maybe it's a conspiracy, a vast conspiracy of many people who are trying to confuse you. And why, well maybe they know something about you, or think they know something about you. Maybe they're trying to drive you insane. But who are they? Maybe it's the government, or a foreign government. Maybe your friend is an undercover agent, and this is a setup, an ambush. Does this sound familiar, at all?

Power of the mind

Remember the mind's power in deceiving you is almost total. You may not have been watching your mind when things like this have happened, but it does imagine the most bizarre things. Not for a moment would it consider that they suddenly had to rush out to get something, didn't have time to phone you, forgot to take their phone, or their battery died as they were going, got that thing and were going to be back ten minutes later, but didn't know how to get in touch with you. It's very rare that your mind will think of something like that. Even if it's only a split second before your mind starts to think rationally, it will generally first

go through all the most weird, ridiculous ideas as to why that person isn't there. This is exactly the sort of spiral a young man I treated many years ago would go into. He was a bright, lovable guy. And he was sent to me by an older friend. He been sectioned many times, and had been diagnosed with paranoid schizophrenia. And as I said, I don't honor such crude, lazy definitions of a person's condition and then see them as a paranoid schizophrenic. I honor people, and I honoured him and not his so called condition. He'd managed to take his state of chronic panic, which he'd learnt as a small baby, to such a level that it had grown into a full blown adventure, disaster movie, with him as the hunted animal. And he believed it, just like you believe your own horror movie. He really believed that the CIA, the FBI, MI5, MI6, the French secret service were all after him. He really believed it and was living in reaction to it. He used to walk looking over his shoulder. He was in a state of panic because of this imaginary idea that these people were after him. So we take away the label paranoid and paranoid schizophrenia. There's a young guy whose imagination has run away with itself, who's very, very good at convincing himself, as we all are, and has believed a horror story that he's made up completely in his imagination and he believes it's real to such an extent that he's living life in reaction to it. This is no different from everybody else.

When you get anxious about something, not having any money for example that you're going to be a complete failure, and die in the street from starvation, you would start acting in reaction to that. You start to move your body, adjust your breathing and develop tensions in the body in reaction to an imaginary picture. At some level, to some degree, you believe that picture is true. This is no different to what he was doing. What we discovered however was that when I placed my palm on his breastbone, in such a way as to transmit the message for him to sink into his own back, which you can do. You can put your hand on someone's body, the chest is the easiest place, and angle the pressure, the direction and very subtle pressure of your hand very subtly towards their back, and this gives them the sensation of being gently nudged backwards inside until they sit in the back of themselves.

You can also encourage them to breathe slowly. You don't have to say it. With people in very intense situations you don't do too much talking if you can help it because it just adds to the noise. The best talking is done through the hand, for me anyway. So I could get him to be in his back and breathe slowly by putting my hand on his chest. And when I did this the horror movies stopped for him and all the baddies went away. In that instant they were all gone. It was like the toddler in him that had had the original panic attack had finally been picked up and had stopped crying out of control. And the game was then to train him to remember to choose that option. Once he'd learnt it and it took a while, around a couple of years, although maybe not quite that long, his so-called paranoid schizophrenia dissolved into thin air. So when he was in his back and occupying himself properly, he was his own inner background presence, and was able to breathe. It was clear to him that the horror movies he was generating were an option, they weren't obligatory, nor were they sacrosanct, nor did they have any ultimate reality. It was only when he was in the front of his body, which was what took a good couple of years to train him out of being, that he would succumb instantly to the paranoid schizophrenic condition, as it's called, again. When he was in his back there was none of that. He was totally lucid. In his back he was able to observe his front self going through the motion of creating and believing in this horror movie, but was no longer the person doing it. It was just a phenomenon that was going on in the front. And he, the

background person version of him, was free to drop it at will.

Now if you combine chronic panic, along with the occasional full blown panic attack state, with this paranoia, believing in these twisted products of the imagination, you will be weakening both the kidneys and the heart energy. And then as before:

The sense of self becomes very confused, this is a product of the heart. The chronic panic weakens the kidneys, so both will be weak. The liver is normally cooled and steadied by the kidney chi. The kidney chi anchors the liver energy and keeps it cool, so it functions properly.

The liver is also in turn normally responsible for feeding the heart with its energy.

And because the liver is forced to expend far more of itself to support the uncontrolled chaotic heart chi, even as it's being depleted by a deficit of kidney chi going to it, it reduces the liver's normal ability to detoxify the system, which includes the

So you have your heart, the emperor, or empress of the body, beating away and giving rise to consciousness and the sense of self in the world. But what gives the heart its chi, what makes it go 'Come on', is the liver energy. That's why it's called the liver because it's what makes you live.

Toxic chi

And this toxic, poisoned chi that results is what gives rise to the poisoned voices in the imagination. Voices that sound like they belong to demons. In fact these voices are just the voices, or voice of your own poor soul screaming in the background, in the distance for the panic to stop, so that life can feel beautiful as it's meant to. But you're so invested in your own panic and paranoia that it can only attract your attention by shouting nasty things at you. Now once these voices have been heard, it's very hard to unhear them because they're so distinctive, they're so nasty, they're so loud, they're so insistent. They were concocted by you as a small child. Remember the facility you had as a child to have imaginary friends, many of whom I'm sure were not actually imaginary, but were probably entities. The child has this facility. But the voices were concocted by the small child in mimicry of an angry parent, or a teacher, or a sibling, or a somebody, at the times they were shouting at you instead of nurturing you. It happens. All parents will lose their patience at times, even the best, and the worst a lot of the time. That's what you're mimicking, you're mimicking those nasty horrible voices that you've heard somewhere out there. And you start obeying them. And in each and every moment you're rushing, you're driven, you're stressing to keep up with their increasingly vehement and irrational demands.

This is not a disease. This is nothing abnormal. Everyone does it. Everyone is rushing more than they have to, keeping up with some imaginary thing they think they have to keep up with. Internally there's a slave driver saying 'Come on, you can do more, you've not done

enough, you're a skiver, come on, keep up, what's the matter with you', the nasty voices that talk to us inside. It's happening to everybody until we train ourselves to stop it. When the system is overloaded, as I've just described the effect is extreme and it becomes too loud to ignore. One way the small child learns to make a facsimile of order out of this existential chaos, this turbulence, as Freud called the id, the swirl of conflicting, irrational drives in the unconscious, is to enact rituals. These are performed as a sort of an offering. If done without any paranoia the offering will be to the benign creative force, God, or however you describe it. A child wouldn't necessarily describe it as anything, but every child does this. Every child does a ritual as a form of an offering to honor the great presence, whether they're aware they're doing this or not.

But if paranoia has a grip these rituals are performed to assuage the demons instead. These demons don't really exist, no matter what tradition you believe in. These demons are thought balls that we generate by us ourselves. And they're just imaginary demons that we're performing these rituals to. And hence, there'll be a growing series of sequences, of trivial actions, that will be devised and acted out obsessively and compulsively, as if you have no option in other words. And the obsession will be, 'Have I done it right, did I forget to do it, I need to do it again' etc. You lose all trust in yourself in other words. This is what is known as Obsessive Compulsive Disorder if you want to call it that. However OCD symptoms are actually no different to a Japanese tea ceremony for example, or indeed any religious litany. Seeing it as a disease is really merely a cultural construct. And the way to heal this is through the back drop, by sinking into the back, and hence knowing that you are not he or she who is forced to act out the rituals. This is not who you are. It's just a phenomenon occurring as a result of some bizarre play that's being acted out in the front of you, but you, the one observing the play are not the one who is forced to act the rituals out.

And then you honor, rather than avoid the fear that is at the root of it all primarily by being in the body, rather than being in the imagination. So when you're in the back of you, you're in your body, you're not in the imagination and you observe yourself acting out your rituals. You don't punish yourself for them, you don't judge yourself for them, if anything you're bemused by them, but mostly amused by them, 'Ah, there I am doing that silly ritual again'. As a matter of fact many of these rituals are quite sensible. I know somebody who uses a cloth, or a tissue to turn a light switch on and off when in a public place. It's actually quite sensible because so many fingers have touched that light switch and that's how germs transmit, for example.

Equanimous state

When in the body, when in the back, when breathing, therefore in an equanimous state, observing the front self going through its conniptions, through its rituals, through its dramas, through its imaginary paranoid scenarios, there's psychological, psycho-emotional distance from it. Therefore it's no longer compulsive, or compulsory, you're no longer obliged to do it. You have an option. And all you need to know is that there is an option to start undoing any pattern, no matter how strong it is. But it's not quick. It takes time to unravel and dismantle a mechanism that's been in place all your life. But it does work. Calling conditions names, e.g. panic, panic attack, paranoia, OCD, schizophrenia, hearing voices and so on, which actually

means mind split in two, phrenia is the mind and schitzo is a split into two, and neither side is recognising the other, or communicating with the other. But it is actually an illusion. These names for the diseases are an illusion. It makes us believe that some people suffer from these so called illnesses, but not us. The fact is that everyone is suffering, at least with a tendency to panic, to varying degrees pretty much with each and every breath. Everyone at some level has paranoid thoughts. So if someone hasn't answered your email, the thought will go paranoid, it will go something like, 'Don't they like me, aren't I important enough, oh I must be unpopular now'. The fact is they probably haven't opened your email, or the email has got lost, or they didn't have time, or they haven't been online and so on. Histrionically you take it personally, rather than empathise with the other and realise that there are many possibilities and not to jump to conclusions, which in general will be those paranoid ones.

Rituals

Everyone hears voices, everyone. Everyone hears voices in their head. And everyone has a horrible voice in their head. Everyone has that nasty voice, that bullying, self-deprecating voice that's there criticising you, doing you down at every turn, even the most remarkable people. A friend of mine, a genius, was there working, and said to himself the other day, 'Oh you're such an idiot' for not doing some little thing. I said to him 'Don't talk to yourself like that, you're not an idiot, you're a genius. It's a little slip up, it's no big deal. It's really important to correct that. But everyone hears them. It's not something freakish. It's just that sometimes they get very, very loud. And everyone enacts rituals, all day long, every day of their lives in a bid, mostly unconsciously, to order the perceived chaos all around them. Just think about the order in which you do your toiletries, the order in which you put on your make up. The little kind of superstitions you develop, not to walk under a ladder for example, not to put shoes, or keys on the table, not to wear a friends shoes, there are millions of them out there. We've all got our little thing, everybody. The most rationale person will admit to one little superstitious thing. In other words every person has their strange ritual that they do or don't do on a daily basis. It's just a matter of the volume and being able to turn the volume down when it gets too loud. And this, as I say, is achieved by withdrawing your presence into your back, so you merge with the witness bearer, the background presence, the Tao, the God in the void. And then in processing the fear that's causing all of this in the first place, rather than letting it fester, by loving the fear, really imbibing the fear, not being frightened of the fear, and welcoming the fear. And fear's the reason everyone has all these mechanisms occurring, consciously, or unconsciously. Hence, why we've got to be with the fear and ride it, rather than push it away and then these mechanisms have no fuel with which to keep them going.

Chapter 9

Recap and Intention

Here we're going to review the above and recap. We tend to think we've got it, but it's a beautiful subject and worthy of recapping. It can be forgotten easily. We're retraining ourselves out of a lifetime habit of not processing fear in a healthy way. And we will default to that until we've gradually trained ourselves differently. After the review, we'll end with looking at intention, which is the jewel, the reward for learning to manage your fear in a healthy way.

So, the fear that we feel as a constant, is just one way of describing the life force, the chi that makes us stay alive, that gives us our heart, our vitality, our strength. It's exactly the same power that causes entire galaxies to move against the background radiation waves at a million miles an hour, of whatever it is. In other words the creative power of the universe is such a ferocious power, albeit being an all loving, generative force of existence itself. And the ferocity of it, incidentally the word ferocity derives from exactly the same root as fear, is precisely what we experience as this fear in our own bellies. And this fear, this life force, is not our enemy. It may be ferocious, but it's our friend. It keeps us alive.

To take life back to when we were living in caves, you get to really understand how we're actually running on primal fear. The primal life force, which comprises fear is sanitized by our modern world. And that's the reason we have made it like it is. It's to allay all the reasons for that fear - to make it feel safe and seeped with wall to wall comfort. But if you want to understand the origins of the fear impulse at a personal level you have to look at the conception of your own being, the subsequent time in the womb, your first days and weeks as a baby, and then the other significant transitions, such as engaging with the school system, because these are all huge transitions relative to where you are at the time. Competition anxiety for example originates in the racing for the egg, abandonment anxiety originates in the volatile first weeks in utero when you could be ejected from the womb at any moment, performance anxiety originates say in your mother rewarding you for something, and so on.

The true fears, the true primal fear behind all the forms of anxiety that we're prone to are really the fear of being physically hurt, either by another person, or by a wild animal if you go back to the primeval days, or by say the ground erupting under your feet during an earthquake, or falling into a crack in the earth's crust, or the mountain ledge you're walking on breaking off and you falling into the void. And the other authentic fear is the fear of loud noise. Loud noise is a major trigger. And it's in fact been shown that much of modern heart disease is caused by incessant high levels of street noise, engine noise and so on. Noise depletes your health. Crucially, if you go back to the cave days, loud noise would generally prelude an attack of some sort. Back in those days a wild animal might roar at you for example, or it could be the war cry of an opposing tribe, or it could be the sound of an eruption, or the sound of a tidal wave coming. Sudden loud noise generally is a prelude to some form danger. So we're programmed to be afraid of loud noise. Then if you take this to a slightly deeper level, you can see that all these fears of falling off a height and so on, that

underneath them all lies the fear of death. The fear that underlies all the other fears, the fear of fears, is the fear of death. We're afraid of death. It's wired into us. It's what keeps us awake.

Fear of the unknown

Then go one further and you see that this fear of death really arises from the fear of the unknown. We're afraid of what we don't know. Then go one further than that and you see that what we're afraid of about death and this mystery of death, when you strip all the mythology out of it, for example, hell, or being born into an evil life etc. may all be true, but whatever model you subscribe to it is all conjecture. Whichever model you subscribe to, when you remove all that static from it, what we're afraid of about death is the fear of oblivion, the fear of the void. And that's why we fill our lives with all the opposites of the void, television, carpets, lights, noise, people, sound, anything that is a distraction, anything except the void.

You go deeper still and you see that what it is that we all know intuitively informs the void, what Taoists call Tao, some call it God, is actually what we're ultimately afraid of. The Taoist say the Tao can't be defined in words, it is simply too huge and imponderable, albeit that it can be found in the tiniest sub-particle. The whole idea, or notion of something that can go from absolute nothingness, no existence, no life, just nothingness, what the Taoists call wu chi, can spontaneously burst into an entire universe that goes on forever in time and space, that is quite an inspiring force, or presence. And whether you call it God, or Tao doesn't really matter. It's this pre-generative spark of everything that commands and informs and creates if you like, this void, just as it informs all manifest matter, is beyond anything that we can actually conceive of with our intellect. And there is naturally a fundamental fear, the fear of all fears I'd say, the fear of Tao, or God. Hence why in the old days they used to refer to people who were really with it, cosmologists and so on, god-fearing. It didn't mean that they were cowards, or had done something wrong and were afraid of divine retribution, it meant that they were so awake to the fundamental, ferocious and magnificent basis of reality, that they were in a state of fear, or dread of the divine, of the great mystery. Fear of the divine expresses itself in a far more stepped down version on a day to day level for all of us, although most of us wouldn't admit it.

Superstition

It's the fear of divine retribution which gives rise to superstition. Hence why you probably wouldn't walk under a ladder. With all my training I will probably not walk under a ladder, or some people avoid stepping on cracks in paving stones - all those sort of what you might call mildly obsessive compulsive rituals that we all subscribe to, to some extent because we are afraid that at one point or other this invisible divine realm will punish us for not being perfect, which of course none of us can be anyway. We live in an imperfect reality. Necessarily everything manifest is subject to the power of yin and yang, the contraction and the expansion, the broken and the repaired. There is always the opposite of everything. It cannot be ideal, it cannot be perfect. We have our derivation from the cosmology, that the bible clumsily put forward that describes the divine as a vengeful brutal old man in the sky who would smite you at a moment's notice just because he felt like it, or because you didn't say the right word, or whatever. Obviously this was a kind of control device devised by the

priests to maintain their own position and to maintain their stability. That as it may be, it's deeply inculcated into our personal schema from such a young age when we weren't old enough to evaluate and decide for ourselves and hence runs us, no matter how much our rational minds might not be able to reconcile it and say twaddle, this fear of the divine, God, or Tao, or whatever you want to call it, still runs us until we've learnt cognitive intervention, which is what we're training to do and getting into the habit of doing here.

Death

Feel now into your version of death, however that appears to you. Envisage your eventual demise, that moment you will take your last breath inevitably and make that last exhalation. And after that there is no knowing what comes next. Despite all the theories and all the conjecture of all the most learned, spiritually enlightened people throughout history, nobody actually knows. And that's as it's meant to be. Feel the fear of that unknowing, not knowing as it occurs to you right now. Feel the imprint of this fear of the unknown in your circuitry. Don't be afraid of feeling the fear, just allow yourself to feel that fear, because it is primal. Allow yourself to contemplate oblivion, nothingness. Let yourself feel into the void. You might find it a very restful feeling and become aware that what fills that void is not actually empty and it's pleasant. The Taoists view is that the void is not empty. You might feel the power of the sub-atomic background presence if you like, the Tao. And the awful terrible, magnificent, glorious power of that, the Tao, which is powerful enough to explode into an entire multiverse, is inevitably is going to inspire our fear.

And if we stop sitting in judgement of that fear and stop considering it as negative, you realise that that fear is nothing. Allow yourself to feel into the fear. Contact it fully, be with it. Allow it to cause you to tremble, to quake in your boots if that's what you feel like doing. And as you do, start to notice your instinctual resistance to it. Beneath the fear there is an urge to love, there is an urge to be vulnerable, to dismantle your defences and all your prejudices, your opinions, your beliefs, and just love it. As it says in the bible, 'you shall love the lord your god with all your soul, all your heart, and all your mind', with the idea that the antidote if you like to being inhibited in any way and restricted by fear is to love the very sword of that fear, which is god - to love it with all your heart, all your soul and all your mind. And of course to accept it loving you. In fact to make a pact that you will experience everything that happens in this life as an expression of its absolute love for you, no matter what. This will instantaneously antidote any unpleasant associations you have with fear. It takes courage to do this. When you do you'll notice the complex sensations in your belly, of tension, of conflict, have transformed to one more of excitement. So when people say love is the antidote to fear, this is one example of a pragmatic use of this idea. Love the thing it is that you're actually afraid of, feel the love for it and the fear does actually dissolve. So it means you love the Tao, the God that informs the void. And loving it with all of yourself, by surrendering to it with your belly, your chest, your brain, your heart, your soul and your mind, all of you, you antidote the negative associations and the sensations that come with that.

Fear response

This response to life threatening danger, or potential danger, this fear response, has actually

been active in us for as long as we've been here in for, i.e. at least four million years. And it's only this relatively very short period, a tiny fraction of that, that has seen us organise ourselves into different cultures and societies and so on, and most recently evolved into this society we are now, which was developed and continues to be, run in an orderly way, so we don't really have to deal with, or face those same reasons for being afraid in the same way. We've got supermarkets, which replace the need for hunting for example. The triggers for the fears that we experience today, most of the time, they're not real fears. The situation at the moment is growing increasingly dangerous. Still, as things stand right now, the chances of being whacked on the head by someone passing by, or certainly the chance of being set upon by a raging animal, or the ground falling away beneath our feet, we could say are pretty minimal and certainly that most of the time this actual fear is not generally present.

But that level of fear that we were programmed with all those years ago, and rightly so as it kept us alive, is still running at the same level in our circuit boards all of the time. And there's no real reason for it most of the time now. So what do we do with it? We create horror movies, as I call them, in our heads, specifically in the pre-frontal lobes. And when I say horror movies it can be anything from a big no holds barred adventure, a full apocalyptic horror story, all the way down to small witch hunt horror movies which have a '*What if this happens, or what if that happens*', somehow always expecting the worst, kind of theme. And then what happens is, we make ourselves afraid of what we've seen and manufactured in our own heads and this is not actually first hand real fear, its second-hand confected fear. It's similar to how you might take coca leaves and transform them through a chemical procedure to produce cocaine, which has a terribly destructive effect, whereas the original before it's tampered with doesn't. It's exactly the same.

Pure fear is powerful, you learn to value it and ride it. It keeps you alive. But the confected, manufactured fear, which is really anxiety, is toxic. It makes us think we're actually afraid of something real, but it really is just something we've imagined. If, when we have a horror movie running along in the front of the brain, that for example, you haven't got the money to pay the bills, so you'll become destitute and die on the street all alone, and so on. When it's running like that in your forebrain, that fear seems and feels so real. If someone says you're imagining it, you'll say you're not because it's so real that you really invest in the drama of it. Even though it's purely internal, it is actually perceived as being an external

phenomenon, an actual objective fear. And this apparently external object, of going destitute for example, appears to trigger the fear. You think that it's this apparent external objective fear that has triggered the feeling internally, but in fact it's the entire opposite of that. It's a slight of hand. The mind is very clever. We perceive the world upside down, or we're seeing it the other way round, and how we think we're seeing colors, when in fact our mind is interpreting various energy frequencies. This whole world, this show, is the world of appearances. The Taoists called it the world of the ten thousand things, a vast hall of mirrors, pure illusion. It's an interpretation. To recap in this recap: what happens is:

It's like a car being revved while it's stationary, all the way up to its limit. It strains the engine, it

The kidneys, which are augmentively processing your natural healthy fear quota, because that's where fear is processed, as I've said earlier, in the kidneys, have to keep processing that fear, even though there's nothing to be afraid of. The mind then feels the kidneys processing the fear and doesn't really know how to make any sense of it because there's no real reason to feel afraid. So it obliges by projecting scary images into the brain, convincingly enough for you to be fooled into thinking it's really happening and then you become afraid of that. Yet you are not really afraid of the object at all. It's an illusory fear. You just are afraid because the kidneys are straining.

causes pollution in the air. It's not the optimal way to run machinery. And further:

It's the kidneys that share the healthy energy that arises through the body and all the organs at an energetic level.

We all have that fear quota, originating four million years ago at least, and we no longer have a need for it. So again, as before:

We turn that fear into an attenuated, drawn out, toxic anxiety. And this makes the kidneys work harder and more constantly than they would like to, and this makes them tired. When the kidneys get tired the surrounding region contracts and this causes a squeeze on the adrenal glands, which sit on top of the kidneys. And they produce adrenalin, one aspect of which is cortisol, the stress hormone, which has its place in moments of genuine fear, the fight, or flight reaction. But this squeeze on the kidneys caused by this low grade chronic anxiety causes that cortisol to be released into the body fairly constantly, which makes you more fearful, and so your mind has to keep having to find objects of fear to justify its position, its faulty description and evaluation of reality. So it looks like you're afraid of not having any money for example, when in fact you're just afraid. You have created anxiety as a result because your kidneys have contracted and your mind has very quickly found an object of fear, which seems appropriate to project to, your imagination projects onto it and it does it so quickly, so deftly, like a magician does a trick that you don't even notice. So you believe it's the fact of going broke that is causing you to feel afraid, when in fact it wasn't external, it wasn't real in the first place, it was purely imaginary. If the kidney energy wasn't contracting, if you weren't using all this kidney energy, and weakening it, you could face going bankrupt without any fear at all, but when the kidney energy is weak you imagine all sorts of things and become afraid of nothing.

It's radical what we're talking about here, and once fully trained, is absolutely liberating. Because anxiety, which comes from us believing this concocted fear, constricts us and prevents us flowing with the magic of the Tao that will bring us all the things we want, instead of walking round crippled with the fear and not moving one way or the other, not enjoying being here and wasting the time being miserable. You can check this. If you were worried about going broke for example, and then the money came through, within moments you would find something else to switch that anxiety onto. It wouldn't even take seconds. And the reason for this is because the addiction is to the worrying. And the reason for this is that the cortisol in the adrenals manufactured when anxious, is addictive. It gives you a rubbish feeling, just like crack, or cocaine for example, but it's addictive. This is the same for cortisol. It doesn't feel good, but you keep wanting to pump it round your body compulsively anyway. This also causes you to hold your breath, which pushes the energy up into the upper part of the body. This stimulates fearful thoughts even more. This weakens the kidneys even more.

Willpower

Eventually, because the kidneys provide you your willpower, you lose your will. When the kidneys are strong, you have the will to live, to take life by the horns and live it and love it for all its worth. When the kidneys are weak, you lose the will to stay alive, you'll find you have thoughts of suicide, feeling you can't cope anymore. This is what happens when the kidneys are weak. When they are strong this all goes. So really this whole syndrome that we've all become habituated to in society is completely counter-productive. Now we have to come back to the place where we acknowledge, accept and embrace the fact that life comprises fear, it's

meant to comprise fear, it's healthy. Hence, in the anxious state, which is ubiquitous throughout most of society, and why the lion's share of our global resources are devoted to allaying these global anxiety and spreading the sources of fear out so we don't have to face them, we actually grow afraid of fear itself. And ironically, by us having put all our bits and pieces into masking away the spinning wheel of fear, we're actually using up all the global resources at an unsustainable rate, which is really actually a genuine cause for fear. In other words our trying to avoid it could actually be the thing that gives us a real reason to be afraid.

Optimize the adventure

The key is being fully juiced up with chi to optimize this adventure of being alive. And that's the point of the game. To be able to stare into the face of fear, the fear of our own oblivion, to stand in the fear of extinction, and say '*So what, I'm not going to let that spoil my enjoyment, for a moment*'. So not to let it intimidate your spirit. The key to being able to do that is to acknowledge, accept, embrace and then harness the true fear, rather than mask it. In other words, you have to love the fear. This is another example of how love actively antidotes fear. You have to love it, rather than be afraid of it. The root of this is to differentiate between the real fear, which is healthy and not to be avoided and this anxiety that we concoct, which is toxic and to be avoided, to distinguish between genuine fear and manufactured fear. Just by doing that act of discernment, you immediately instantly gain a degree of psycho-emotional state/ distance enough to be able to then process the fear sensibly and transmute it by your intention and your focus back into pure chi, to experience it as pure chi, and to take advantage of it as pure chi, fully. If you don't do this the anxiety will compound itself and by doing that it produces the effect of a loop of anxiety in the front of the brain, so that you'll worry about the fear you've concocted over and over again and drive yourself nuts with it. Again:

The fear you're manufacturing, that you're concocting, this anxiety, which you project as horror movies in the front of the brain and the thought loops that support the movie, 'What if this happens, what if that happens', become smaller and tighter, allowing less and less room to see the bigger picture and then becoming more and more compelling as a result. And this spiralling out of control exerts more and more drain on the kidneys. And this in turn drains the liver energy. The liver relies on the kidneys to keep it cool and keep it functioning properly. When the liver loses its chi, it produces higher levels of toxicity in both your mind and your body and these anxiety thought loops get poisoned even more and that's how paranoia arises, toxicity introduced into these ever decreasing anxiety thought loops.

Misconceptions

This gives the anxiety thought, the effect of the misconceptions and false assumptions arising from the toxicity, of the failing of the chi, some of which have the appearance of being real, that may coincidentally tally with reality, but only by a fluke, not because you've had some kind of premonition about the future. That's one instance of paranoia, it makes you feel that what you're imagining is psychic awareness. But when any thought comes about through toxic liver chi it's not premonition.

When the liver chi falls, this affects the heart chi. The heart chi relies on the liver chi to keep the muscle working nice and strongly, to keep it resilient and regulated. The heart chi governs your sense of self, who you are in the world, your whole relationship with life, your memories, your life story. Your version of reality is provided to you by the energy of the heart. If there's a lack of heart chi you lose your sense of being in the world.

And people do experience this. It's a horrible feeling of alienation and disconnection if the heart chi is in deficit. Anxiety tinged by this paranoid tone will then give rise to what we call panic attacks where it's hard to breathe and the heart pounds.

When the heart weakens, the spleen weakens too because it relies on the heart also for its heat. The spleen is like your earth. It's what holds your practical relationship with material reality. If it's cold and soggy there's not much you can do with it. And if it's dry and brittle there's not much you can do with it. The earth needs to be compacted and solid and warm enough to be useful, but not overheated and so on. When the spleen energy weakens, so your ground of being weakens and becomes soggy because it hasn't got enough heat in it, the mind becomes obsessed with trying to order the apparently senseless chaos, the swirl

Points of repair

And it will do so by setting up what actors call 'points of repair', this is what performers use when improvising in case they dry up - a little set piece to return to, to then continue from, a point of repair. And these contain various rituals to enact to somehow try to make some order of life. And it happens to everyone without exception to varying degrees at some point in time. The spleen energy is responsible for the aspect of mind that deal with all practicalities, with keeping things in order, with making sense of them, with staying alive in a practical sense - the skills you need to have, your short term memory being clear, organising yourself, getting things done in order and taking care of all the details and so on. And it will try and do this for you with even the most disorderly set of conditions. But when fuelled by anxiety, paranoia and loss of sense of who you are, it will do so in a more unreasonable, broken, unrealistic way. You'll be worrying constantly. You could take any religious service as an example of a series of rituals designed to make some kind of sense of the cosmos. Or you could look at all the superstitious moves I've mentioned before - putting your right foot first when walking into a room, saluting a single magpie, that kind of thing. You could look at the Japanese tea ceremony, a most revered ceremony is a perfect example of a ritual in action. It is a very elaborate intense series of rituals. You could say the same for the way you apply

your make up on, how you shower, which bit of you you wash first, the order you do everything and so on. These are all rituals. But a lot of it is just practical stuff, protocols that you've devised that seem to work best for you, some of it is actually a little bit superstitious.

When the spleen energy weakens, the lung energy weakens too. The lungs rely on their earth, material aspect of their chi from the spleen chi. The lungs connect you to the world of spirit so to speak, hence why we call it respiration, breathing the spirit in. and whence we derive our inspiration, we draw the spirit

You might think if you don't do it a certain way something might go wrong. And:

Spirit

So the lungs need the spleen to help them to make the spirit if you like. Healthy lung energy, good breathing practice, the breath in and out being equal, keeps you in the here and now, which is really the only place you can be sane, because it's the only place and moment where everything's happening – what's been has gone, what hasn't come hasn't come. None of that is there, it's all imaginary, in the mind. The only place where there's any actual personal power available to plug into, where there's any absolute sanity available is the here and now. And it's a healthy lung chi that keeps you here. Well literally of course because if you don't breathe you die, but keeping the lungs healthy, breathing properly, supported by good spleen energy keep you here in the here and now. When the lung chi weakens it draws you back to all the unresolved childhood glitches and traumas for which you would have developed the rituals that you would have enacted on a daily basis in the first place. And the compulsion to enact these rituals becomes more intense, as with what we call OCD, or Obsessive Compulsive Disorder.

Degrees

But there are degrees of it in all of us. And at some point even anxiety, the second hand fear, has value. It does lead you to realise that beneath it is its big brother, the genuine fear, which is the source of your energy. So if for example, you have any anxiety about becoming a slob, if you've any sense you'll use that anxiety to fuel you on a daily basis to train yourself, to prevent yourself becoming a slob and exercise, and so on. In other words, you will take the message that the anxiety has for you, if any. It may not have any message, it might be complete nonsense. But you'll take what anxiety is telling you, if it's telling you anything, make a note of it, agree that you're going to do something about it, and then drop it, because if the anxiety persists beyond that point it becomes a pathology. But how do you drop it? What happens psycho-spatially speaking when you have an anxiety thought? You have a thought, in response to which your muscles tense up in your solar plexus, and they contract.

This encourages your breathing to stall, you'll hold your breath, you won't be aware of it, but you won't be breathing properly, you'll be breathing shallowly, intermittently and unevenly. And as a result of this your chest, your thoracic cavity, will contract because it won't be being expanded properly from within. This causes the whole of your front to contract – your groin will contract, your shoulders will raise and contract, your neck will contract, your throat

will contract, your face will contract and this pulls your head forward and as a result of all that, the pulling forward strains the back, which causes the kidneys to contract even more. Then with the front of your body rigid and the front of your brain filling up with more heat that intensifies the fearful thoughts in the head and gives it more energy.

Cycle

So this is the cycle that we want to break. To recap what I've said above, first, we want to differentiate between real fear and confected anxiety. To be able to identify which anxiety it is you're confecting, you say, what kind of anxiety is it I'm feeling? This is the act of noticing, being mindful enough to identify which anxiety it is.

So first we looked at separation anxiety, which can start when you're a tiny kid and how this has informed your life all the way through, and that how by acknowledging the separation anxiety from someone, or something breaks the spell, that brings you back to mindfulness again, or rather you have the mindfulness to do it.

Next we looked at competition anxiety, which is ubiquitous and is in all of us. Along with this is feeling you're stupid, you're going to fail, lose your status, comparing yourself with others all the time and not sure you have any worth.

Then we looked at survival anxiety, which comprises being afraid of losing money, feeling insecure about your place in the world, worried you're going to lose your freedom, worrying about being dependent on others, worrying about the whole world being annihilated, worrying about your health, worrying about dying and so on. Survival anxiety, or this fear is very healthy and stems from when we lived in caves. The fear is real, but the anxiety over it is toxic.

Next was deprivation anxiety, the fear of missing out, which makes you uneasy and never content, being deprived of your familiar references and the cliché of losing your comfort zone. The anxiety that you're going to somehow limit yourself with your choices and somehow deprive yourself of the true joy of being alive.

Next was abandonment anxiety, which we include being alone, feeling unworthy and that we're going to be rejected and thus abandoned. With this comes cosmetic anxiety, how we look.

Then we looked at performance anxiety. Again, this is programmed into everybody. You feel this every moment, and that if you don't perform right, you'll be humiliated, rejected, and you'll be abandoned from the group. Each and every movement you make is a performance, it's not just what you do on a stage. You're going to perform each and every moment of your life, and so have the fear that goes along with this, the fear of embarrassment, the fear of being imperfect – it's impossible to be perfect, we know that, the fear of being disapproved of, the fear of not being able to live up to our responsibilities, the fear of losing your cool and bursting into tears and everything around that, the fear of confrontation. Then we looked at the results of taking all the above too far, leading into a state of ongoing panic, leading to paranoia, OCD and all the rest of it.

Mindful

So the first, primary thing is noticing, being alert, cognitive, and taking note of what is occurring within. It's what in modern marketing terms, they call mindfulness, when in fact the Buddhists we're doing this 10,000 years earlier. The way we do this, in the Taoist practice, is:

By drawing ourselves backwards, behind the side-seams into the rear part of our body to merge with the witness part, rather than be caught up in the front where all the noise is going on and all the anxiety and stress is occurring. If you want to take command you can't do it in the midst of it, you have to drop back behind all the noise and then you acquire the properties of the back, the stillness, the equipoise and all the silence to take command of what is occurring. Next would be gleaning any hints that the anxiety may be alerting you to, noting it with the intention to act on, or remedy them when the time comes, and then be willing to drop the anxiety. And this is how you do it. You acknowledge any healthy fear that leads to the anxiety. You desist from compulsively trying to change it, to obliterate it, or distract yourself from it because you know that this will only cause you to manufacture the false anxiety by creating horror movies. Instead of that you say, 'Hello fear, I honor you'. You then remind yourself that this fear is essentially the fear of death, which leads to the fear of oblivion and being lost in the void forever, and beyond that the God that makes the void in the first place.

And it's healthy to do this. And the repetition of this is healthy because you become more and more used to contemplating it and it stops being something you're freaking out about, but being conscious of instead and therefore you have power in the relationship. You remind yourself that it really is ok to feel afraid and you don't need to be afraid of feeling afraid. It's ok to feel afraid. And it's ok to feel the feeling afraid, it's your energy. Don't be afraid of it. And the way you do this is again, by saying:

'Could I let go of wanting to change this fear?', and you reply, 'Yes I could let go of wanting to change this fear. Would I let go of wanting to change this fear? Yes I would let go of wanting to change this fear'. And then that enables you to take yourself into the midst of the fear fully, rather than running away from it, feeling it slowly viscerally and fully as you go. And that's being a warrior, not running away from it, but moving into it fully.

And already, as you do this you realise that it's not a big deal, it's a lot easier than running away from it in fact, a lot less time consuming, a lot less energy draining, and a lot less time wasted being fearful of the imaginary pictures in the head. In fact this is the way, to go into it, to love it, love it.

Underlying state

Finally the next thing we need to attend to in this little process is the underlying state, the

deficit energy in the kidneys by breathing as it were directly in and out of the kidneys. You can place on your lower back to get your mind there. You can make the Taoist kidney healing sound fuiii for example, which is to warm the kidneys. But essentially the real tool is getting your consciousness there. Breathing in and out through the kidneys is a device that will do this. And just becoming aware of them helps, talking with them almost, inviting them to relax saying it's ok to relax, and that it's all fine. Honor them and let them spring back into their full glory. None of this is an instant remedy of course. It's a training, You're training yourself. And it takes time. It's the habits of a lifetime being required to shift.

Intention

Then we come on to the prize, the reward for all this courageous activity, and that's intention. That's the final stage in the process of managing fear – future focus if you like. So what we're doing now is looking at developing intention for the outcomes you want, rather than wasting energy fearing outcomes you don't want, because what you think about with energy, with emotion, with investment, you're actually praying for. So, rather than invest your energy in these horror movies, which is wishing for them, Freud will tell you that, you're unconsciously wishing for the horrible things you don't want, this on account of the death urge as he called it, the tendency for all things manifest to succumb eventually to entropy, that expresses itself to the death urge. So rather than doing that, invest energy in developing an intention for the outcome you actually want. You have to actually do it, but there's far less stress and strain once you get into the habit of it, rather than going down the other route where you doubt it and it turns into a chronic anxiety.

The challenge with this is that in trying to discern your intention you will probably be no doubt immediately confronted with an entire mess of apparently conflicting desires going on in the front of you. For example, *'I want to live on my own up a mountain, and I want to be hanging out with great company'*. You'll probably have a million examples, but this is the sort of thing that will go on in the forebrain. So, in dealing with this mess, to discern what your true intention is, you come out of the front where all that mess is, and sink into the back. And there you're able to deduce the state of being you wish the fulfilment of all the desires, or anything external, to bring you. For example if your front is desiring meeting a suitable cohort for a loving relationship, the witness bearing part in the back will deduce the underlying state you need this external desire to bring you, e.g. that you want to feel loved, be seen, cherished, adored, honoured, celebrated, made to feel safe etc. These are all qualities of a state you can produce yourself. And in the back is the only place you can sort it because if you're not in a state of sorting it from within, you're not really going to be able to receive it from the other anyway and the other won't be able to give it to you. Similarly, if you're not drawing these qualities from your relationship with the Tao inside of you, you will, by the law of attraction, draw somebody to you who's also not doing this and then what you'll actually end up in, is a kind of co-dependent relationship, in which you're both trying to depend on the other for your deficit. And so you're not really coming together to share love, you're coming together to avoid your fears. You can source all these feelings from your relationship with your own big self, from the Tao. The Tao loves you, the Tao sees you, the Tao cherishes you, the Tao honors you, the Tao celebrates you, the Tao adores you, it keeps

you safe and so on.

Manifesting the internal state

So, you've manifested this state within. And manifesting a state within is a lot easier than manifesting fifty grand externally for example. It's a lot less to do and a lot less resistance. Internally it's a command you give yourself and there it is, it's done instantaneously. You'll then attract to you the optimal coalescent set of conditions from the external plane to attract the right candidate for that job anyway. This is what the Taoists call wu wei. You adjust the internal to the state you want, the one you think you'll have by getting something external and then that gives you the right resonance that will actually draw and enable the set of conditions that gets you what you want externally anyway. But you'll only get that because you're not dependent on it any more. This comes when you're in a state of you loving yourself, or the Tao loving you and you loving the Tao.

Command your subconscious

It's exactly the same process as processing the fear. The front self is what experiences the anxiety. The rear self understands that it is really a confected version of healthy fear in disguise and by embracing the fear, attains its goal in dispelling the anxiety. This applies to any desire, you sink back, you look to the state you imagine fulfilling that desire will produce, then because your subconscious doesn't exist in the realm of energy, i.e. the notion of images, the imagination, but merely provides the binary coding, in fact it provides quantum coding, therefore you have to command it to clone a program it already knows that it will then adapt to the requirement. So to do this you command your subconscious to pretend you've already drawn all relevant requisite external factors to play to facilitate the intended state. So just command your subconscious right now, say to yourself *'I have already drawn all relevant requisite external factors into position, into play to facilitate my intended state'*. Because, while your subconscious doesn't see images it does recognise patterns behind similar previous experiences and how to clone and adapt these processes to the situation at hand.

This is something to do every day. I practice it every day, to great effect in terms of developing intention. As you wake up in the morning tell your subconscious to pretend that your day has been a howling success. This is quite confusing for the intellect at first because you're at the beginning of the day and you're telling your subconscious to pretend, not imagine, because it can't imagine stuff, it doesn't see things. That's the job of your conscious mind. You tell your subconscious to pretend the day has been a howling success. You can obviously apply this to any upcoming endeavour that you're trying to make happen. You just tell your subconscious to pretend that it's already happened most successfully. And then you say, rather than so be it, or any hocus pocus type of phrase, you just say, 'I accept it'. It's fairly crucial this. It creates a mature, calm collected response to the issue. So for example if you were drawing in more physical strength with your intention, you might say for example *'The Tao is now imbuing me with more strength'*. Then you say *'I accept it'*. It really is powerful.

Focus

Having accepted it, it commands your subconscious to trigger the appropriate images for

your conscious mind that will serve as a symbol for your front constructed self in the front to rally around, to give it focus. So this helps you operate as a unified force. These images however can only be seen effectively when your mind is slid back into the rear brain, as if it's leaning up against the rear wall of the skull. It can't see the screen in the front, it's too close to it. The screen is where the inside of the frontal bone is, the forehead. The amygdala, the two sacs that hang down behind the pineal gland, that pine shaped thing in the middle of your brain, become contracted and block the view from the back of the brain. They kind of bunch up so you can't see through, or around them. So they have to be relaxed. The projector, as I say, is in the pineal gland. The images are projected into the screen as it were, located on the inside of the wall of your forehead. So you have to sit right in the back of your head to be able to see the images.

This is something you have to develop and practice, sinking back inside your body, back behind the side seams and drawing your mind back into the rear of your skull. And you do not have to invest energy into seeing images. You just have to see them, note them, not believe them. They are merely the wrapping, the external symbol to assure you you're in the game. It makes it fun, it reminds you. Otherwise you wouldn't have reference points. What you do have to invest in however, is that command to the subconscious to do its pretending. And you invest willingness subsequently to sit steady amidst the inevitable mental confusion arising in your conscious mind, struggling from having its constructed mind diverted like this because it's quite difficult for your conscious mind to understand your subconscious pretending the state has already been achieved and everything that comes with it.

In terms of the intention itself, it's inevitably and invariably going to fall within certain parameters, in broad headlines so to speak. So these would be health, strength, stamina, vitality, wealth in all its forms, an abundance of all resources, comfort - you want to feel comfortable in your body, you want to feel comfortable in your surroundings, freedom - of expression and movement, security - in other words your feeling safe, being authentic so you're not pretending by being a people pleaser and constricting and limiting yourself by pretending - here I'm talking about acting a part that isn't you -, your personal power, self-respect, self-approval, self-confidence, self-esteem, self-love, equilibrium, equipoise, equanimity, fine company, or companionship at all times or whenever you want it, human warmth, love, a joyful tone of mind and emotion, wisdom, perspectives, proportion, and a feeling of relaxation at all times - the fluid, active relaxation, a feeling of being at peace with the natural process of life and death so you're not terrified of them, being at peace with the Tao. And the parameter most pertinent to what we're talking about, being at peace with this fear in your belly so that you can live life to the full, fulfilling your potential, loving every second, so that when you die you're leaving humanity richer than when you came here. The above are all examples obviously, you can make up your own intentions, but these are the sort of thing that I would imagine would encompass everything that would fit within the practical parameters that one could expect to intend as an outcome, a state of being, in this lifetime.

So once you've commanded the subconscious to pretend that all requisite external factors are already in place to facilitate the desired state and commanded it to show you the images alluding to this so you know what to watch out for, you just simply have to wait for it to do

so in its own time. This takes grace, it takes patience and trust. It may happen instantaneously for the images to show, it may happen over a period of days, or it may take longer. So you have to be alert, you have to be vigilant, mindful. And once they do arrive, note them and say, *'I accept it'*. You don't have to believe it, you don't have to make sense of it. You might see an image of a beautiful big white house on a hill for example. Just say *'I accept it'*. And then you forget about it all completely, until your next session of intention setting.

These sessions only need last a moment, but they must be done once a day. And more crucially they must be done every time you are cognitively addressing your fear. So at the end of each process of working with the fear, of turning it back into true, raw, pure chi, you then do a little process with your intention to clarify and set it. And it must be done with no strain, or effort, but with the spirit of a small child, fuelled with innocent curiosity and joyful anticipation, having fun, as if you're playing with a new toy, a new game, a new discovery.

Wu wei

When deploying the intention technique at the end of a fear processing session, the intended state would be one relating to whichever the anxiety was you were processing at that time. For example say you were processing one relating to performance anxiety, say in respect of not losing command of yourself during an anticipated confrontation and being able to successfully negotiate your point, you would discern how that would make you feel - for example that you came out of the confrontation feeling good about it. You might feel relieved, justified, proud of yourself, you might feel elated, and so on. And so you then command your subconscious to pretend you'd already attained your objective in the most enjoyable, effortless way imaginable. And then you command it to flash up the relevant images for you. You then note the images simply to engage your conscious mind, and then forget all about it. And your desired outcome will inevitably occur of itself without any effort, or strain. That's the art of wu wei, effortless manifesting. Ultimately what we're addressing here is our relationship with destiny itself and implicit in this is training ourselves to be progressively more willing to trust and accept destiny as our friend, rather than as our nemesis that we have to outwit.

Destiny

Because where destiny takes you at the end of this particular human adventure, is to the experience of dying. So implicit in this is also training yourself to be progressively willing to see death as a blissful coming home, rather than as the ultimate failure, or punishment. And to inspire this it really helps to contemplate your life story until this point, bearing in mind that no matter which way you do it, it will only be a version, because you light it differently, you film it differently so to speak every single time you go there. So just contemplate your life story from birth till now so far, and you give thanks to it, you say *'I accept it'*. You then become aware in a sort of slightly different dimension, of your ancestors standing behind you, well outside of the linear time construct, spurring you on and somehow selectively forging a guardian energy, an entity that is co-spatial with your physical form, yet existing in the next dimension, the bigger dimension, so far larger than the physical. And it's protecting you every step of the way.

Then holding that awareness, of the gratitude, the acceptance of your story so far, the sense of the energy coming to you from your ancestors forming a petition, a guardian entity around you, you contemplate that now coming at you from the front as it were, is destiny in all its power and glory. And I'm not talking about being fatalistic here because none of us can actually say for sure how destiny is produced. It may be it's all happened already in another dimension, that linear time doesn't actually exist and it's all happening now, that we make it up as we go along, or a version of all of that, nobody knows. Hence why I say in all its mysterious power and glory. Obviously it's not actually coming at you from the front, its coming at you from all around. But we perceive the future as coming at us from the front.

Then rather than defend yourself against it reflectively as you might have done till now, you do what you do with the fear, you invite it into you, and you feel it enter as sort of an unstoppable benign force. You feel it sit itself down inside you, position itself within you, as what the Taoists call the destiny angel, the angel of destiny, and its awaiting your direction. For this you press your tongue firmly against the roof of your mouth and sense the energy as a stream connecting the center point of your forehead with the thymus gland in the center of the upper chest. Whenever activated like this, this stream puts you in command of your own destiny, as the Taoists put it, it puts you in the flow with it. So once the destiny angel is settled within, it awaits your direction. The best way to approach this is to direct destiny to unfold with supreme elegance, with abundance, with ease, seamlessly, magnificently, and for the unfolding to feel beautiful every stage of the way. Because this will encompass anything and everything that you could possibly ever want. Work on this for yourself. Come clear on what the intention is, where you want to direct destiny in other words.

Well this brings us to the conclusion. It's been more than a pleasure, more than a privilege and more than an honor to facilitate this for you. It's been truly powerful for me to and I thank you from the bottom of my heart for partaking. My wish for you is that you do attain to this desired state of this absolute embracing of primal fear, so that it fuels you instantaneously without any delay, so that the result is that your life subsequently acquires the next level of depth and value, meaning and fulfilment and magnificence in every possible way as a result.

Also by Barefoot doctor

'Barefoot Doctor's Handbook for the Urban Warrior' (1998) *also published as 'Barefoot Doctor's Guide to the Tao' (1999)*

'Barefoot Doctor's Handbook for Heroes' (1999)

'Barefoot Doctor's Handbook For Modern Lovers' (2000)

'Return of The Urban Warrior' (2001) republished as 'Tao of Internal Alchemy' (2017)

'Liberation' (2002) republished as 'Liberation From Your Mind' (2017)

'Manifesto' (2005) republished as 'Tao of Manifestation' (2017) 'Invincibility Training' (2006)

'Pure' (2008) republished as 'Pure Taoism' (2017)

'The Man Who Drove With His Eyes Closed' (2009) *also published as 'Supercharged Taoist' (2010)* republished as 'Driving With Your Eyes Closed' (2017)

'Jewels of Enlightenment' Nightingale Conant (2009) (audio)

'The Message' (2012) republished as 'If Moses Had Been a Taoist' (2017) 'Awakening the Laughing Buddha within' (2013) with Joe Hoare

'Tao of Positive Noise' (2017) 'Superhealing' (2017)

'Affirm Your Way To A Life You Want (2018)

'Instant Enlightenment' (2004) republished as '108 Blessings' (2019)

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