

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.

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 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, it's 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 through 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 concocted 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 which ultimately creates a lot more anxiety.

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.

