

Give me your fear  
I'll give you hope in return

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## Here we are! (don't be afraid)



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## Who is Elroy?

- 16 years old
- unique way of making contact with each individual
- moderate intellectual disability
- social emotional development 6-18 months
- extreme fear and psychotic episodes

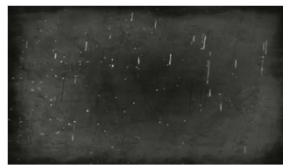
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## What are you afraid of?



- 5 minutes to think about you deepest fear



## Why talking about fear?



- our main obstacle as gentle teacher:
  - prevents the other to experience companionship with us
  - prevents us from teaching companionship

# What is fear?

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# What is fear?

- **anxious feeling:** caused by our anticipation of some (imagined) event or experience
- **standardized biological reaction:** same set of body signals, whether we're afraid of getting bitten by a dog, getting turned down for a date
- **information:** offers us knowledge and understanding of our psychobiological status

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# The feararchy (Karl Albrechts)

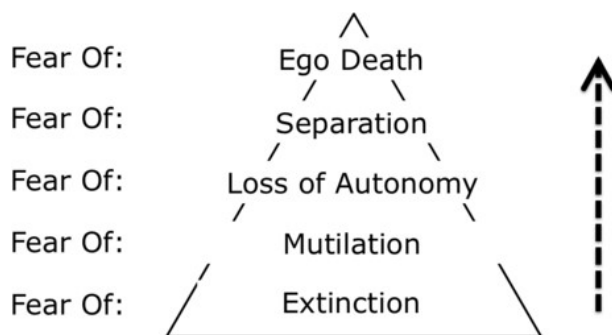
- five basic fears: foundation of all our other fears
- #1 being the most natural one and #5 more of a socially constructed idea



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# The feararchy



The "Feararchy"

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## The feararchy



- **extinction**—the fear of annihilation, of ceasing to exist
- the idea of no longer being arouses a primary existential anxiety in all humans
- panicky feeling you get when you look over the edge of a high building

## The feararchy



- **mutilation**—the fear of losing any part of our bodily structure
- having our body's boundaries invaded, losing body parts or natural function
- anxiety about animals (bugs, spiders, snakes) , other creepy things arises from fear of mutilation.

# The feararchy



- **loss of autonomy**—the fear of being paralyzed, restricted, overwhelmed, imprisoned or otherwise controlled by circumstances beyond our control
- physical form: claustrophobia
- extends to our social interactions and relationships.

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# The feararchy



- **separation**—the fear of abandonment, rejection, and loss of connectedness; of becoming a non-person—not wanted, respected, or valued by anyone else
- the "silent treatment," can have a devastating psychological effect

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## The feararchy



- **Ego-death**—the fear of humiliation, shame, or any other mechanism of profound self-disapproval
- threatens the loss of integrity of the Self
- the fear that your sense of lovability, capability, and worthiness is being shattered

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## Fear and Anger



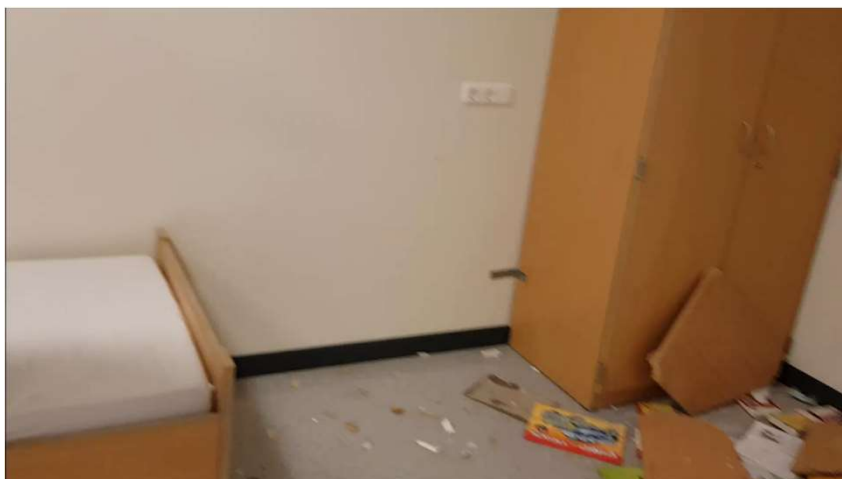
- Fear is often the base emotion on which **ANGER** floats
- Oppressed people rage against their oppressors because they experience loss of autonomy and even ego-death.
- Those who make us **FEARFULL** will also make us **ANGRY**

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## Anger floats on fear



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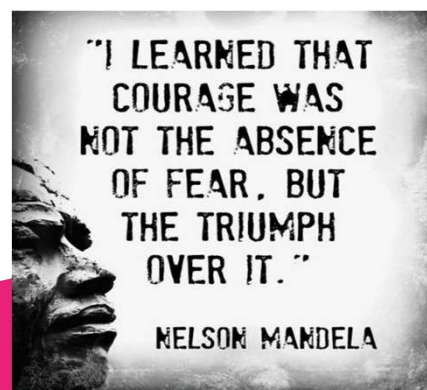
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## Unlearning fear

- Some of our fears have basic survival value
- Others are learned reflexes that can be weakened or re-learned

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## Unlearning fear



- when exposed to their fear but without the negative effect fear starts to get weaker and weaker
- separate the feared object from the root of its danger

## Teaching Companionship = Unlearning Fear



- Feeling Safe; the absence of fear
- Feeling loved and loving; I have no fear of being rejected, I am not afraid to show I care
- Engaged: I am not afraid to be lonely

## Our GT journey with Elroy



- Helping him to face the beast
- Reading his signs
- Helping caregivers to level with Elroy
- Use of video

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## Elroy's Feararchy



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## Elroy's feararchy

- ego death; I am a bad person, do bad things
- separation: I lose people I care about
- autonomy: I am not in control (caregiver/myself)



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## Elroy's feararchy

- mutilation: I am hurt
- extinction: without the other I can't survive



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# Leveling with Elroy



Intro Priscilla



Intro Patrick



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# Unlearning fear & teaching companionship



- **ego death:** teaching him that he is good, we will love him no matter what, that he can do good and have fun with others
- **separation:** teaching him that we will not leave him, we will be there for him

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## Unlearning fear & teaching companionship

- **autonomy:** teach him how to be in control, learn to make choices, that we don't overpower him but empower him
- **mutilation:** care for him when he is hurt, ease his pain
- **extinction:** all of the above : teach him that he is safe with us, we wil protect him against danger, teach him to take care of his needs

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## THANKS FOR YOUR ATTENTION



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