

How to Approach Fearful Situations with Confidence

Turning a Scary Tiger in a Paper Tiger

As you saw in my video, remember that a scary tiger can be turned into a paper tiger. Punch through that paper tiger and continue on with your life. You can do this! If you look back over the years, you have already faced and solved many fearful and difficult situations. You may have been confronted by people who you perceived were more powerful than you or you may have been surprised by unforeseen scenarios that came out of nowhere and hit you like a ton of bricks. No matter what happens going forward, always remember that you will eventually have to build a positive relationship with the person or persons who are responsible for putting you in these awkward situations.

Fear is a Mind Slayer

Fear keeps us small, invisible, cowardly, and meek. Never consider conflict resolution when your self-esteem is low. Here's how you can boost your self-confidence:

1. Take an inventory of your experiences. I'm sure that you've overcome many obstacles and achieved positive results in the past.
2. Recall a particularly positive outcome and write down the steps you took to reach an end result that was satisfactory to both parties.
3. Remember examples of when you were not able to achieve a satisfactory result. What would you do differently to resolve a similar situation now that you are at this point in your life?

Practice Empathy, Not Sympathy

Do you know the difference between the words sympathy and empathy? Sympathy is feeling sorrow or pity for what another person encounters, while empathy is putting yourself in the shoes of another person. With empathy, you feel what the person is feeling like inside so you can approach the situation from their perspective.

When you encounter a conflict with someone, do not approach it from your personal point-of-view. Instead, practice empathy and approach it from that person's frame of mind. What is he/she looking to accomplish? What would they consider to be a win? How can I broaden their perspective so that they can understand my point-of-view? Using this methodical approach increases your chances for resolving the conflict.

We're on the Same Team

When you see the other person as a valuable member of your team, the conversation automatically turns toward collaboration instead of confrontation. You will be amazed at your newfound ability to achieve your goals when you practice the art of "give and take." Team goals can be achieved more readily when each team member gives a little and takes a little instead of trying for an all-out win for themselves.

Pass the "Three Seconds" Test

Believe it or not, first impressions count. Often, in a matter of only three seconds. How you are initially perceived can often set the tone for whether an agreement will be reached. Pay attention to your personal grooming - from hair to make-up to appropriate attire. Work on projecting good body language and facial expressions that communicate openness. When you know you look your personal best from head to toe, your self-confidence will be at its highest. Oh, and don't forget to SMILE!

*Keiko Kay Hirai is an entrepreneur, artist and author who loves to share ideas about helping others live their best life. Her most recent book, **Sheer Determination**, chronicles her story of creating a successful salon from nothing, overcoming the obstacles along the way and thriving even during difficult times.*