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Twelve Ways of Overcoming Fear

1. Awareness. Before you can begin overcoming fear, you have to be aware that your fears are causing havoc in your life. It's easy to get so attached to your thoughts and feelings that you think they are all that exist, which couldn't be further from the truth. You are not your fears. You are the awareness that experiences it.

2. Identify. Get specific about what exactly you're afraid of. Pay attention to the pictures you have in your head about the situation. What is happening in them? What are you really scared of? Become an observer of your inner space.

3. Curiosity. While curiosity may have killed the cat, it certainly won't do you any harm when investigating your fears. Get curious about what thoughts generate your fear. Where do you feel the fear? How do you react to it? What colour does it have? Be an observer of what is going on.

4. The Now. What are you lacking right now? When you centre yourself in the now, you realize that everything is how it is. You naturally accept what is. Tapping into the now can be as simple as feeling your body and breath.

5. EFT. EFT is short for Emotional Freedom Techniques. It is also sometimes referred to as tapping. You use your fingertips to tap meridian points on your body while thinking of a fear you have, and it can alleviate and sometimes get rid of the fear altogether.

6. Gratitude. Whenever you feel fear, switch it over to what you are grateful for instead. If you're afraid of public speaking, be grateful for the opportunity to communicate with so many people, and that they are there to genuinely listen to what you have to say. If you are outgrowing your friends, be grateful for what's to come.

7. Journaling. Getting your fears down on paper is important, because trying to think them through doesn't work. You get caught up in endless loops of negativity that only lead you further down the rabbit hole, and make your life miserable.

8. Talk. No-brainer advice, but how often do we hold the negative in because we are afraid of how others might react, or because of some other reason? Talking helps, but avoid drowning in self-pity, and choose the right person to talk to. If you have no one to talk to, try journaling or find a therapist).

9. Therapy. If you can find a good therapist, therapy can be highly beneficial, even life changing. Finding the right therapist for you can be hard. Listen to your heart and

choose someone who resonates with you, such as an ACT (Acceptance and Commitment Therapy) therapist.

10. NLP. NLP is short for Neuro-Linguistic Programming. You learn how your mind works. NLP has helped thousands in eliminating phobias, fears, and other emotional problems, so it has its place, but only if it feels magnetic to you.

11. Life Coach. Do you have a fear of success, or a fear of failure? A good coach can help you examine what you truly want from life, and where your fears come from. I've spoken to a few in my life and while it can be uncomfortable, it's very helpful in getting clear about what you want and what's stopping you.

12. Read. Reading a good book on your specific fear can open new doors on how you can get rid of it. I like to read a lot of motivational and inspirational work on and around the topic I'm dealing with. And if your life is falling apart, pay attention to what books come into your life. Notice which ones call out to you.

Growing Up with Childhood Emotional Neglect

When, as a child, you are frequently receiving the message—even if it is never stated outright—that the most deeply personal, biological part of who you are—your emotions—don't matter or are unacceptable, you naturally push your feelings down and away, essentially walling them off so that they won't be visible or bother anyone, including yourself.

Walling off your feelings is an automatic and adaptive defensive move that may help you deal with the demands of your childhood home. But, as an adult, you need to have full awareness of and access to your emotions.

As an adult, you will likely have no memory of having pushed your feelings away, or that your emotional needs went unmet in childhood. Yet you will suffer the effects and those effects are substantial.

The effects occur in three primary areas of your adult life. It is vital to be aware of them, mainly because once you see them, you can heal them.

Yes, it is true. Childhood emotional neglect can be healed.

The 3 Areas of Your Adult Life Most Affected By Childhood Emotional Neglect

Area 1: Emotional Skills and Knowledge

- When you grow up with parents who are not tuned in to your emotions enough, you don't get enough opportunity to learn about how to identify, express, or manage your own feelings or the feelings of others.
- It can then be hard to make sense of relationships or understand your own behaviour and the behaviour of other people.
- You may be mystified about why you do certain things or find some important relationships confusing, both in your personal life and at work.

Area 2: Self-Care

- The message, "Your feelings don't matter," comes across to the child as, "You don't matter."
- So now, as an adult, you are at risk of putting other people's needs, wants, and feelings before your own.
- You may find it difficult to say "no."
- It may be hard to depend on others or to ask other people for help.
- You may have compassion for others, but very little for yourself.
- You may feel like an island upon which others can rely, but who is not allowed to have any needs of your own.

Area 3: Self-Blame, Shame, and Self-Directed Anger

- Because the emotional neglect that's at the heart of what's wrong in your life is invisible and unmemorable, you have no explanation for the disconnection, confusion, and aloneness that you live with.
- You feel deeply, secretly flawed, and you assume it must be all your fault.
- So, you feel ashamed that you're not happier and blame yourself for feeling empty.
- You are hard on yourself, often feel ashamed, and tend to direct your anger inward instead of the people and events that deserve it.
- You find yourself wondering, "What is wrong with me?"

The Good News

I know all of this sounds painful and negative, but there is some good news too. If you are living with the effects of childhood emotional neglect, you are not flawed or disordered, or ill. Your childhood emotional neglect is not a defect or a disease.

It's just something that failed to happen for you as a child (emotional validation, awareness, compassion, and care). These are all things you can provide yourself as an adult. It's entirely possible, with some hard work and

dedication, to heal from the effects of your childhood emotional neglect.

3 Steps to Do Now to Get the Healing Started

1. **Become a student of emotions.** Pay more attention to your own feelings and see if you can determine what other people in your life are feeling. Learn some new emotion words to label your feelings. Take note of the variety of emotions that pass through you every day.
2. **Accept that you matter.** Free yourself up to put more consideration, effort, and care into your own happiness and health. Those old, false messages from childhood cannot control you any longer.
3. **Know that this is not your fault.** When you accept that your struggle is not your choice or a result of some major flaw, you can begin to treat yourself more kindly, stop the self-blaming and shaming, and free yourself up to heal.

7 Common False Beliefs About Relationships

1. Sharing your feelings with others will make you look weak.
2. It's best not to fight if you want to have a good relationship.
3. Sharing your feelings or troubles with another person burdens them.
4. Talking about a problem isn't helpful. Only action solves a problem.
5. Sharing your feelings or troubles with another person will chase them away.
6. Letting others see your weaknesses puts you at a disadvantage.
7. If you let other people see how you feel, they will use it against you.

As you read the list of beliefs above, did any jump out at you? Was there one, or two, or more, that you thought, "Hey, that one's not false!"?

If so, you are not alone. Many, many people go through their lives following some or all of these guidelines. And many, many people are held back by them. These beliefs have the power to keep you at an emotional distance from others, damage your friendships and marriage, and leave you feeling alone in the world.

The beliefs are typically rooted in your childhood. They are often messages passed down from one generation to another. They take root in your mind and live there, sometimes outside of your awareness.

How Childhood Emotional Neglect Teaches You the False Beliefs

These ideas tend to thrive in any family that struggles with emotions, either by over or under-expressing it. They're so common among folks who grew up with Childhood Emotional Neglect (CEN) All of the beliefs are based on false notions of how emotions work.

If you grew up in a family that didn't understand how to manage, express or talk about emotion, you probably didn't learn how and when to share or be vulnerable. You may have learned that it's actually wrong to communicate about these things.

And chances are some of the 7 beliefs were communicated to you, either directly or indirectly.

The 7 False Beliefs Made True

1. Letting people see your feelings usually makes them like you more. It also fosters intimacy.
2. The hallmark of a strong, healthy relationship or friendship is the ability to have a conflict, process it together, and work through it

together. In fact, fighting is often a sign of closeness.

3. Sharing your feelings or troubles with the right person at the right time does not burden them. It increases warmth and caring from the other person.
4. Talking about a problem with a well-chosen person can help you get perspective, feel less burdened, sort out your feelings and thoughts, and sometimes even provide solutions
5. Sharing your feelings or troubles with the right person will make him/her feel closer to you.
6. Letting another person see your weakness does not put you at a disadvantage unless the other person is the type of person to take advantage of you. Be aware of who you're letting in. The huge majority of people will not take advantage.
7. If you let someone see how you feel, they will know and understand you better, and that's a good thing. The only exception to this is if they are actively trying to hurt you. Generally, if there are people like this in your life, you know who they are. Do not share with them.

How To Change *Your* Beliefs From False to True

- **Choose your people carefully.** Take care who you choose to open your heart to, as either a friend or lover. Focus on integrity, trust, and care. Pay attention to the other person's

intentions. None of the True Beliefs apply if the person is not trustworthy.

- **Timing is everything.** We all underestimate the importance of timing. Choose your moment, taking into account the other person's mood, needs, and situation. The same message can have a very different impact given at the wrong time vs. the right one.
- **Take chances.** There is no intimacy without vulnerability. To change these beliefs, you will have to put yourself in uncomfortable situations.
- **The Costanza Experiment** Remember the Seinfeld episode when George decided to go through an entire week doing the opposite of what he would normally do? (If you're under 40, you may not have seen this, but the concept will still work for you.) For you, this would mean doing the opposite of what you would normally do when it comes to sharing your feelings. Tell your friend about your work worries instead of keeping them to yourself; share your financial stress with your brother instead of pretending everything's fine; fight it out with your husband and wife instead of avoiding conflict.

Take a chance and see what happens. The False Beliefs will start to melt away as you begin to experience the value of trust, openness, and closeness. Your relationships will thrive, and a whole new world will open up to you.

Maastricht Interview Training for Hearing Voices & Problematic Thought Beliefs & Paranoia Is available online and face to face from the National Paranoia Network. Other training available Working through Paranoia, Making Sense of Hearing Voices & Working with Childhood Trauma It can be delivered across the world for more information and costings Email enquiries@nationalparanoianetwork.org

Online Hearing Voices & Paranoia Support Groups Join our online Hearing Voices & Paranoia Support Group Meetings on ZOOM

Thursday 3pm -4.30pm with Paul Meeting ID 88460268952 Password 375878

Sundays: HVN USA on ZOOM 6:30p - 8:00p USA Time with Cindee 11.30pm – 1.00 am UK Time Meeting ID 827 5463 8654 No Password Needed

Saturdays Texas USA HVN Meeting on ZOOM 10am-11.30 USA Time with Paul 4pm-5.30pm UK Time Meeting ID 83079149464 No Password Needed

Monday Sheffield Hearing Voices & Paranoia Support Group with Emma & Lyn on ZOOM 11am-12pm UK Time Meeting ID: 558 685 8263 Password 6DyVca

**Online Hearing Voices Group in Ireland Facilitated by
Michael Ryan**

Hearing Voices Group Ireland

A group for people who hear voices or experience
paranoia and unusual beliefs, on Zoom

Facilitated by Michael Ryan

Every Sunday @ 4pm

Zoom Link <https://us02web.zoom.web/j/89201253186>

Email: vhmichael9345@gmail.com

With enquiries

Families/friends can contact

families@usahearingvoices.org

For support groups