

God's Answer to the Fears That Perpetually Hold You Back

According to statistics, 15-20 percent of Americans deal with a specific phobia—an extreme fear. Roughly 75 percent of us are afraid to speak in public, which thankfully does not come up all that often for many. But while you may not have to get up and speak to a crowd of thousands tomorrow, right now you may be experiencing fear of another kind.

Is the answer more therapy? Silently struggling with your fears while you feel the rest of the world goes on unaware?

I don't think so. I believe the answer is courage. So what is courage?

There are different types of courage, ranging from physical strength and endurance to mental stamina and innovation. Courage can be defined in many ways, but to me it's taking risks without knowing the outcome and doing things even when you're afraid.

Courage is something most of us want. It's an attribute that encourages us to venture outside our comfort zone and embrace the possibilities. It gives us the ability to be brave, to conquer fear and despair so we can take on necessary challenges and make necessary changes.

I recently saw this message on a church marquee: "What you tolerate, children emulate." When I was growing up, it was the boys who were taught to be strong, fearless and courageous—not the girls. This was especially true in my house. If you're afraid today, it's time to look back at what was tolerated in your home growing up. What was demonstrated to you?

That fears you experience can stop today, with you. Intentionally looking for courage and utilizing tools to make better choices is, in itself, a courageous act. It's an act I wish I had taken long before I reached the place where my lack of courage threatened virtually everything I held dear to my heart.

Kudos to you for reaching this place in your life now! In my book, *Courage for Life*, I take a detailed look at the journey of letting go of fear and instead choosing to be courageous. If you're tired of your fears and don't want to pass them on to your own children, it's time to take a stand for courage. Let's do it together! {eoa}

Ann White is the founder of *Courage for Life Ministries*, which is particularly focused on teaching the Bible to at-risk women. Find out more at: .