



WHEN FEAR IS IN CHARGE

AN EXCERPT FROM *EMBRACING FEAR* (HARPER COLLINS)

Thom Rutledge

Who we are, individually and collectively, is ultimately determined by one thing: how we relate to fear.

Fear cannot occupy the space in which you stand.

Fear will not allow honesty, fear despises spontaneity & fear refuses to believe in you.

Fear is bold but insists that you be timid.

Don't wait for fear to subside before you act with courage.

With fear in charge, you can never fully relax, let your guard down, be your true self. You cannot open up because you are afraid of how people will respond if they were to meet the real you. When fear is in charge, you simply cannot take that chance. Fear will not allow honesty, fear despises spontaneity, and fear refuses to believe in you. Fear may mean well but ruins everything by over-protecting you, insisting that you stay hidden, promising that your time is coming ... sometime later. Fear is bold but insists that you be timid. Take a chance, and there will be hell to pay: fear will call on its dear friend, shame, to meet you on the other side of your risk-taking. Fear will trip you, tackle you, smother you, do whatever it takes to cause you to hesitate, to stop you. In this way, fear is fearless. Fear will remain in charge for as long as you let it. It will never volunteer to step down, to relinquish its authority.

Your assignment is to live a life that is not ruled by fear. To do this, you must be able and willing to listen carefully to exactly what fear is telling you, what it is threatening you with – and must be prepared to disobey its instructions. Never wait for fear to subside before you choose to act with courage.

Every morning when you awake, make a conscious decision to remain in charge of your own life. Fear will never be far away, but it cannot occupy the same space in which you stand. Let your personal motto be, “I am in charge, fear is not.” Say those powerful words as you put your feet on the floor, as you look into the mirror, as you walk out the door. Ask yourself each morning, and all through the day, “What will being in charge of my own life mean for me today?”

Ask yourself the question and be sure to listen carefully for the answer.

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