

Embrace Being Fearful!: Erica Griffiths

I once read the motto 'feel the fear, and do it anyway' and regard it as a great way to live one's life. Fear usually keeps us in our comfort zone whereas taking the plunge into the unknown can often expand our horizons and lead the way to new adventures. We feel good when we take the risk and it works out, and if not, there's the comfort of knowing we tried!

I'm not advocating walking into dangerous situations but just take a moment to ask yourself what it is you fear. Being alone, being ridiculed, feeling foolish, making a wrong decision, worrying what others think? While we hesitate and procrastinate, often the moment passes and the opportunity for change in our daily lives is lost. The path not taken will remain a mystery and perhaps even become a lifelong regret.

Overcoming what we fear increases our resilience, preventing us from becoming rigid and fixed in our ways and views. Inevitably, the world is going to change and we may as well move with it or get left behind, often an isolating feeling. One example is to embrace new technology and at least make the effort to understand it before deciding it's not for you. Ask when you don't know something instead of being fearful to show ignorance - there is always something new to learn!

Many people fear doing something alone. Why miss out on a chance to see a good movie or attend a great concert because you can't find a buddy to go with you? Go anyway and chat to a stranger beside you. Feel content and confident in your own skin. It's not so difficult.

As a solo female traveller, I am frequently asked if I'm afraid of travelling on my own rather than the person showing interest in my experience in a new place. Never 'how was Mali or were the icebergs in Antarctica mind-blowing?' It baffles me. Friendly helpful strangers approach me when I'm alone yet they probably wouldn't if I had a companion. The random encounter often leads me off in an unplanned direction which is so liberating. If you don't speak the language, having a go at sign language and making strange faces can be great fun – spoiled now by Google Translate!

So, what is there to lose – go for it and embrace the fear!