

10 Tips for Conquering your Fears!

Have you ever had a fear that kept you from living life fully? Perhaps this fear has stopped you from having MORE fun or experiencing GREATER success. Yes? You're not alone. I have too.

The fear I conquered in the story below may not be my biggest fear but with a little reflection I saw how it really stopped me from enjoying my family and life to the fullest. It also taught me a valuable lesson of how taking steps to overcome my fear resulted in increased self confidence.

At the end of my story, I'll give you tips for conquering your own fears.

A few weekends ago my husband and I took our daughter Kasie, and my nephew Zach, to a water park. We all love the water and were having a blast until my hubby and the kids took off for --- the water slides.

As they enthusiastically ran to the slides I slowed wayyyy down. In fact, I stopped, found a chair and proceeded to organize our belongings. As I settled into a lawn chair I saw Kasie and Zach whoosh down their side-by-side slides and plunge, feet first, into the cool water. They quickly resurfaced, spluttering and laughing and ready for more.

As Zach jumped out of the pool to run back up the stairs he looked at me laughing and said, "Cari's being a wimp." He was right. I was.

You see, even though I love the water I've always been afraid of --- water slides.

On this particular day however, the kid pressure was too great. I decided it was the time and place to conquer my old fear. As I hurried to the steps my chest tightened and my breathing became very shallow. Each step I took to reach the top of the slide made me feel anxious, awkward and scared to death.

I focused my attention on the cute and fearless little girl in front of me. I motivated myself by repeating the mantra, "if she can do it, I can do it". As we reached the top of the slide, I watched in amazement as she sprang from the last step to a lying down, torpedo style position in one fell swoop. As soon as the little girl shot out of sight it was my turn.

The time had come -- it was now or never. Copying the little girl before me, I laid down on the slide feet first torpedo style and as I did I heard the words: Don't fight it, just let yourself go.

As I whooshed down the slide I reminded myself I was OK, to keep breathing and to relax. As I let my body go it seemed to understand what was expected of it. It conformed to the twists and turns of the slide and only seemed to tighten in response to my fearful thoughts. Soon, I could see the end of the ride was near and as I flew off the end of the slide into the waiting water, I knew I conquered my fear!

WOW! I did it! I went down a water slide. It was a blast!

My husband told me later, as I was coming down, he could hear me screaming and laughing. All I could remember was feeling gripped by fear, exhilaration and pure joy as my body whirled down the watery, slippery path.

Now, I felt ready for more. Once wasn't enough. The second time up the stairs was much easier and I took my position at the top of the slide with much more confidence. The ride down the second time was even more fun because now I knew the curves and the bumps. I navigated the challenge with a bit more grace. I felt proud of myself for taking action and for doing something I thought I would never do.

What's your "water slide?"

I bet you have one, or many. We all do. What fear, if you conquered it, would allow you to have a bit more fun, experience greater success, or live life more fully?

Some fears feel bigger to conquer than others. My water slide fear may not seem like the biggest fear one could have, but having it caused me to isolate myself from the rest of my family and kept me from having MORE fun, joy and exhilaration in my life.

Conquering your fears, one by one, builds confidence and increases your quality of life. Don't let your fears hold you back from living the life you wish you were living.

10 Tips For Conquering Your Fears...

1. Recognize a fear is present
2. Declare you are going to conquer the fear
3. Expect to feel anxious, awkward and scared
4. Consider copying a style you like until you find your own style
5. Focus your attention
6. Motivate yourself with affirmations
7. Step into the fear with abandon
8. Let go and have fun! Remind yourself to keep breathing
9. Pat yourself on the back when it's over
10. Notice how much easier it gets

When you have time, take a personal inventory of the fears keeping you from living the life you want. Then make a commitment and challenge yourself to face and conquer one them that's been holding you back. Use the tips above to guide your way. To get started, see if any common fears from the list below fit you:

Admitting mistakes or wrong-doings. Adventure. Being inadequate/not good enough. Doing something you've never done before. Expressing yourself. Failure. Healing emotional wounds. Health concerns. Money/finances. Never having enough. Public speaking. Promoting yourself. Saying "NO". Sharing your feelings. Taking a risk, such as starting a business or changing careers. Traveling.

And once you've figured out what your fears are, have some fun CONQUERING them!