

Conquering Fear

Are you ruled by fear? Many people that you know are and it has a negative effect on their lives. Fear takes a variety of forms in our everyday lives. Fear can be as simple as not liking ladders, but it can also take other, more devious faces. Fear can be the thing that stops us from trying something new. Fear can be what stops us from asking a question and learning more. Fear can be the consternation regarding what others will say, the fear of rejection, correction, or criticism. While some fears are fine and can help to keep us out of danger, it is very important that we do not allow our lives to become consumed by fear! We have fears and so do our children. It is vital that we teach our children about fear: how to manage fear, and how to conquer it. Managing anxiety is not something that our children will be taught in school, but learning to conquer fear is something that will greatly benefit their academic careers and personal lives. Fear can be the thing that holds us back and defines us, but with the right tools it's something we can all overcome.

Apprehension, anxiety, and uneasiness halt us in our tracks and keep us from living our best lives everyday. How many things have you not started because of fear of rejection, criticism, or failure? Have you ever seen this trait in your children? Each one of us wants our kids to be better off physically, mentally, and spiritually than we were. We want them to do better than us in school, with their friends, and in all their activities. Ultimately if we want them to exceed our success, we must make sure our kids have the right tools for life; including tools to help cope with fear. It is vital that children learn strategies for coping with and mediating the effect of fear on their lives. Don't let your child's life be managed by their fears!

While it is normal to be concerned, letting one's life be controlled by fear is a detriment. Have you ever missed out on something because of your fears that you later regretted? The simple solution is to 'be brave,' but that's not always as easy in practice as it sounds and taking the first step may seem impossible. Some people may tell you that they don't have fears. These people may tell you that they are fearless. They may tell you that nothing holds them back because they 'just do it.' Really, what these people have done is developed a skill set that allows them to confidently overpower their fears. Black belts develop this skill set during their martial arts classes and take it with them throughout the other aspects of their lives. With a black belt skillset nothing is impossible!

How do black belts deal with fear? Black belts are no different than anyone else: they get nervous starting new things, meeting new people, and undertaking new tasks. So what is the difference? By the time a student becomes a black belt, they have overcome challenges on the mat day in and day out! If success is a practise, then a black belt is well-versed! A black belt, through the time they have spent learning new techniques and practising old ones, builds a Portfolio of Success. But unlike a educational or financial portfolio made of sheets of paper, this portfolio is built from experience and goes with a student every day. Each new challenge is a new entry into the Portfolio of Success. With each martial arts class, the portfolio becomes thicker and a student's confidence grows. Confidence helps to subdue the fears that a young person feels. A martial arts student's growing confidence is a weight that presses down on fear

and makes it more manageable. As the martial arts students Portfolio of Success grows new undertakings become easier and easier for the student. Are black belts immune to fear? No, no one is. However, the daily practice of challenging oneself strengthens the soul (not unlike lifting weights strengthens one's muscles) and makes a martial arts student better at overcoming fear.

Everything that happens on the mat is designed to build confidence in young martial art students; each martial arts class adds another page to their Portfolio of Success. Learning a new kick or takedown is making the martial arts student's Portfolio of Success one entry thicker and better at weighing down fear. Hitting pads isn't just developing the muscles in the arms. Kicking a bag isn't just establishing hand-eye coordination. Drilling techniques aren't just for learning vital self defence strategies. These activities and successes in martial arts class are designed to build a young person's resolve and develop their self confidence. This confidence that martial arts students learn from successes on the mat becomes their weapon against fear. Anywhere the student goes, their Portfolio of Success and confidence goes with them. The martial arts student carries this confidence through school into college, from college into professional life and eventually is able to pass on their black belt skill set to their own children. The development of confidence in a young person shapes them (for the rest of their lives) into the best person that they can be.

Your child will have daily hills to climb throughout their lives. They will have their own challenges everyday. Help them learn strategies now that will help to cope with fear as children and as adults. While a certain amount of fear can be healthy since it keeps us away from dangerous situations, giving into fear on a daily basis can take away the feeling of agency in our own lives. Don't give into fear and don't let your children develop poor coping strategies for dealing with fear! Getting them involved with martial arts is a great way to start building their Portfolio of Success that will stay with them their entire lives.

Don't be afraid of something new! Take the first step in developing your child's Portfolio of Success and self confidence. Give them the skills they need to overcome fear and live their best lives! Call today to schedule a consultation with one of our professional martial arts instructors!