

Can facing your fears lead to a richer life?

When the topic of 'facing your fears' was discussed at my regular Saturday morning meditation group, it sparked a very distinct memory that I thought would be helpful to share with those who are struggling with their mental health, or if someone close to them is.

To give you a little more context, the discussion was about facing the things we are afraid of so that we can process them and integrate the learnings into our lives to become more resilient and ultimately, lead a richer life. **But, as humans, we don't really like facing our fears.** We prefer to fight them or run away from them. Sometimes, we become like a deer in the headlights, paralysed and unable to move.

This cast me back to a time when I didn't want to face fear. In fact, I did everything to push it away, numb it down, resist it and keep it in a box. As a result, it caused real problems. I became stressed and depressed.

I had severe anxiety, tension headaches, IBS and was starting to suffer from panic attacks. However, I held onto the pattern of how I was leading my life for absolute fear that, if I faced up to the fear, a tidal wave of emotion would wash me away. I felt that if I opened Pandora's box, I'd never be able to close it again.

But what is the challenge? Well, it will be impossible to move forward, and things will invariably get worse.

Which for me, they did. The structure I had been maintaining in my life collapsed. The tidal wave of emotion did roll over me. I became mentally and physically broken, I had to let go. But ultimately, it was the only way for me to heal and move forward. It was, ultimately, the worst and the best of times, as it sent me on the path, I'm on today.



Sometimes to move forward, you must let go

My body ultimately forced me to face my fears, as it could no longer hold things together. Today, I also know that when you stop resisting and let go, you can come out the other side, especially if you seek the right support.

Here are 5 mental health support mechanisms that helped me face my fears and start leading again in my life which I hope are helpful for you or you can use to support your team:

1. Get professional help – I spoke to a counselor through EAP (most companies have an employee assistance scheme that provides independent help and support reach out to your HR lead to find out more) or speak to your doctor to access the mental health support plan run through Medicare.

2. Find a good friend you can walk and talk with – Back then, people didn't always talk about challenges with their mental health (thank goodness it's a bit different now!). I was walking with a friend and found the courage to tell him what had happened.

He was supportive, shared that he too had struggled at points, and just listened and offered me support. After that, we walked together every week.

3. Detox and stop drinking for a few months – I found that these 'numbing agents' were making things worse. I had to start being present in my thoughts and emotions to work things through.



5 mental health support mechanisms

4. Get reconnected with your body and get out of your monkey mind – Try yoga, meditation, tai chi, or anything that can get you reconnected to a sense of yourself and your body so you can start building back your trust and confidence in yourself.

5. Get the right support crew around you – That could just be a counselor, but for me, it was also my coach, mentor, and a great bunch of friends who have been on the journey with me.

As you can tell, I'm as passionate as they are about supporting mental health in the workplace, so if you want to speak to me further about running a program for your team to move them out of surviving and into thriving, you can [book a call today](#).

