

BREATHE

A spiritual care resource created by Kaseman's Spiritual Care Department

Facing Fear

(Adapted by Chaplain Donnel from: (1) *Mordo & the Ancient One* from *Dr. Strange* film, and (2) a story by Pema Chödrön,

When Things Fall Apart: Heart Advice for Difficult Times (Shambhala; Anniversary Edition, 2000) page 46.)

Once there was a young warrior. She said to her teacher: "I want the power to defeat my enemies. I want to learn to defeat my demons."

Her teacher said: "Well then, to do that you need to do battle with Fear."

She didn't want to do that. Fear seemed too aggressive; it seemed too big, scary and unfriendly. But the master said that the young warrior had to see fear face to face in order to defeat it. The master gave the young student instructions for the battle.

And so the day arrived, and the master instructed the young student warrior to stand on one side, right across where Fear stood. The young warrior was feeling very small, and Fear was looking big and wrathful. The young warrior roused herself, gathered all the courage she could muster within herself, and went toward Fear, and then bowed to fear. The warrior then asked Fear, "May I have permission to go into battle with you?"

Fear replied, "Thank you for showing me so much respect, and thank you for asking permission."

Then the young warrior said, "So How can I defeat you?"

Fear replied, "My weapons are that I talk fast, and I get very close to your face so I can be loud. Then you get completely unnerved, and you end up doing whatever I say. However, if you don't do what I tell you, I have no power. You can listen to me, and you can have respect for me. You can even be convinced by me. But if you don't do what I say, I have no power."



With this knowledge the student warrior learned how to defeat and disarm Fear. Before she departed, she bowed to Fear once more to show respect.

After that interaction, the student went to her teacher and said: "Thank you for giving me the power to eradicate my enemy Fear. Thank you for showing me how to make Fear disappear."

The master said: "My dear young student, I'm so sorry if I misled you. But I want you to understand that while we might be able to disempower Fear, we cannot make them vanish or disappear. We only learn to live above them."

REFLECTION: Reflect on the wondering questions below with a friend by taking turns in answering each question.




WONDERING QUESTIONS with a conversation partner:

- Which part of the story did you find most important? What resonated with you?
- Which part of the story is about you? Where are you in the story?
- Notice moments in your journey when you resisted "flow" by damming your river.
- Notice moments in your journey when you allowed "flow" to happen.

Remember, keep on sharing your stories. Keep on listening to each other's stories.

WHICH PART(S) OF THE STORY IS ABOUT YOU?

MOMENTS FACING FEAR **THE GUIDE** **WHEN YOU OVERCAME FEAR** **ASSES YOUR TOOLS**

<p>Notice moments in your life when you faced overwhelming fear?</p> 	<p>Who are your guides when fear overwhelms you?</p> <p>Were there moments in your life when you served as the guide for someone who is facing fear?</p> 	<p>What experiences have you had wherein you successfully overcame fear?</p> 	<p>List tools below that are helpful.</p>
			<p>List behaviors/actions that did <u>not</u> help.</p>