

Week 49 Practice

As you begin to regularly live the things you are passionate about, you will experience fear. It goes along with the vulnerability. It goes along with doing new things and taking risks. And it is important to listen to it.

For a moment.

However, if as you listen, you realize your fear is telling you not to do the thing you've decided you want to do after this long and careful process of recognizing who you are, revealing yourself, and now resurrecting your passions, then your fear is not helpful. It's not protective. It's harmful. If this is the case, it is important to return again to a different kind of listening.

It's time, once again, to listen for the voice of grace.

During the months of listening, we listened for the voice of shame, before we could listen for the voice of grace. Here, we will listen to our fear before we listen for the voice of grace. The voice of fear within you is the voice of your self-protection. It evaluates all of the hard work you've done during these months of living—all the wisdom you've accumulated about who you are and how you want to live most fully alive—and it makes predictions about how it will all turn out. It looks into the future and describes the catastrophes it sees there.

So, first, bring to mind the steps you've already taken toward practicing your passions and visualize the steps you will take in the near future. Now listen to your fear critique and describe the worst possible outcomes. What might happen when the eye drop of your passion lands inside the eyelid of your life? List all of the potentially painful consequences of pursuing your passion. Be thorough. Keep writing them down until the fear begins to quiet down.

Now listen for the voice of grace.

It will sound something like this: "You don't practice your passion so it will turn out perfectly or successfully, you practice your passion because if you don't do it, you can't come fully back to life. It may indeed be uncomfortable, even painful, but you can handle it. You can endure it for the sake of feeling fully alive."

This is what you want to listen for: the voice that says you can handle it, whatever the outcome. It emanates from a solid, steady, eternal place inside of you. Your true self knows you can handle far more than your fear says you can. The fragment of God within you is small but a plenty big enough foundation upon which to build a passionate, meaningful life. Find the still-quiet place inside of you.

Where fear no longer decides.