

**Misunderstood...criticized...ridiculed? Do you have a persistent, irrational fear that just won't go away? It's excessive, out of proportion to the actual degree of threat, and it's affecting every area of your life—curtailing activities and suffocating joy. People in this ditch are deathly afraid, huddled in a corner, fearful that no matter how high the ditch walls, they won't escape the threat. Whether it's a formidable fear of elevators, spiders, or something else, one thing is certain: God wants to empower you to move from the pandemonium of panic to peace.**

*“Do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you; I will uphold you with my righteous right hand” -Isa 41:10*

**What Are Some Examples of Phobias? Specific Phobias (Simple Phobias) -the Fear of a Specific Object or Situation.**

**This type of phobia is a persistent excessive fear when in the presence of, or in the anticipated presence of, a specific object or situation. Examples of feared objects: elevators, spiders, knives, snakes, cats, fire, insects**

- **Zoophobia is the fear of animals characterized by a sense of danger even in the presence of nonthreatening animals.**

---
- **Acrophobia is the fear of heights characterized by feelings of extreme insecurity/ of falling even when there is no danger of doing so.**
  - **Examples of situations: flying, heights, darkness, driving over bridges or through tunnels**

---
- **Claustrophobia is the fear of closed spaces characterized by a sense of being smothered in a confined environment.**

---
- **Social Phobias (Social Anxiety Disorder)—a Fear of Embarrassment**
  - **This type of phobia is characterized by the paralyzing fear of appearing stupid or being judged as shameful in a social situation.**
  - **Examples: A persistent fear of initiating / maintaining a conversation, eating in public, attending a party; also, a persistent fear of performance situations such as stage fright and fear of public speaking.**

---
- **Agoraphobia—Fear of Open Spaces, Fear of Fear. This phobia is the fear of having a panic attack in a place where escape could be difficult or embarrassing.**
  - **It comes as a result of repeated panic attacks and is the fear of having yet another panic attack. Therefore, any situation that could cause a sense of panic is avoided.**

---
- **Example: Being so afraid of having a panic attack in a public place or in a strange place that a person becomes homebound or even room bound.**

*“I so feared the crowd and so dreaded the contempt of the clans that I kept silent and would not go outside” (Job 31:34)*

---

**Misunderstood...criticized...ridiculed? Do you have a persistent, irrational fear that just won't go away? It's excessive, out of proportion to the actual degree of threat, and it's affecting every area of your life—curtailing activities and suffocating joy. People in this ditch are deathly afraid, huddled in a corner, fearful that no matter how high the ditch walls, they won't escape the threat. Whether it's a formidable fear of elevators, spiders, or something else, one thing is certain: God wants to empower you to move from the pandemonium of panic to peace.**

*“Do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you; I will uphold you with my righteous right hand” -Isa 41:10*

#### **What Are Key Contributors to Irrational Fear?**

**Phobias do not appear in a vacuum. Something set you up to be controlled by fear, and something serves to trigger that fear. The setup occurred in the past...while the trigger occurs in the present. Here are the Key Contributors to F-E-A-R:**

- **(F)ormer Experiences Are Typically...**

- **Traumatic Experiences:**

Childhood Sexual Abuse or Rape, Car Accident, or Death of a Loved One

---

- **Scare Tactics Used on You by Others:**

Threats of Violence by a Parent, Sibling Or Others, Fear-Producing Pranks, Movies

---

- **Caused by an Underdeveloped Sense of Self-Worth:**

Neglect, Criticism, Ridicule, Poor School Performance

---

- **Parents or Family Members Displaying Excessive Fear:**

A Father Who was a Constant Worrier a Mother Who Was Fearful/ Overprotective

---

**Analyze the Reason for Your Fear...Then Tell Yourself the Truth about the Past/ Present.**

*“Surely you desire truth in the inner parts; you teach me wisdom in the inmost place” -Psa 51:6*

- **(E)motional Overload**

- **Denying Feelings:**

*“I must **not** show my pain.” “I must **not** have any anger.”*

---

- **People-Pleaser Mentality:** *“I must **keep** everyone happy/ **prevent** anger”*

---

- **Internalizing Stress:** *“I have a lot of **hidden** anxiety/ no **outlet** for venting emotions”*

---

- **Strict or Perfectionist Authority Figures:** *“I **never** pleased my parents.” “It seemed I was **always** receiving harsh punishments.”*

---

**Analyze the Reason for Your Fear- Let the Lord Help You Heal from Your Hurts.**

*“Humble yourselves, therefore, under God's mighty hand, that he may lift you up in **due time**. Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you” -1 Pet 5:6-7*

**Misunderstood...criticized...ridiculed? Do you have a persistent, irrational fear that just won't go away? It's excessive, out of proportion to the actual degree of threat, and it's affecting every area of your life—curtailing activities and suffocating joy. People in this ditch are deathly afraid, huddled in a corner, fearful that no matter how high the ditch walls, they won't escape the threat. Whether it's a formidable fear of elevators, spiders, or something else, one thing is certain: God wants to empower you to move from the pandemonium of panic to peace.**

*"Do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you; I will uphold you with my righteous right hand" -Isa 41:10*

### **What Are Key Contributors to Irrational Fear?**

**Phobias do not appear in a vacuum. Something set you up to be controlled by fear, and something serves to trigger that fear. The setup occurred in the past...while the trigger occurs in the present. Here are the Key Contributors to F-E-A-R:**

- **(F)ormer Experiences Are Typically Traumatic Experiences:**
  - **Analyze the Reason for Your Fear...Then Tell Yourself the Truth about the Past/ Present.**  
*"Surely you desire truth in the inner parts; you teach me wisdom in the inmost place" -Psa 51:6*
- **(E)motional Overload**
  - **Denying Feelings:** *"I must **not** show my pain." "I must **not** have any anger."*
  - **People-Pleaser Mentality:** *"I must **keep** everyone happy/ **prevent** anger"*
  - **Internalizing Stress:** *"I have a lot of **hidden** anxiety/ no **outlet** for venting emotions"*
  - **Strict or Perfectionist Authority Figures:** *"I **never** pleased my parents." "It seemed I was **always** receiving harsh punishments."*
  - **Analyze the Reason for Your Fear- Let the Lord Help You Heal from Your Hurts.**  
*"Humble yourselves, therefore, under God's mighty hand, that he may lift you up in **due time**. Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you" -1 Pet 5:6-7*
- **(A)voidance of Threatening Situations**
  - **Refusing to Face Fears:** *"I think it will go away in time- I can avoid fearful situations."*
  - **Giving No Opportunity for Change:** *"I don't seek help or talk to anyone or ask why fearful."*
  - **Continuing to Reinforce Fears:** *"Everything I do is contingent on my fearfulness."*
  - **Reinforcing Negative Thought Patterns:** *"Fear dominates all my decisions- filter of fear."*

**Analyze the Reason for Your Fear/ Let the Lord Help You Face Your Fears.** *"I am the LORD, your God, who takes hold of your right hand and says to you, Do not fear; I will help you" -Isa 41:13*

- **(R)unaway Imagination**
  - **Expecting Life to be Threatening:** *"I always expect resistance and roadblocks, disaster."*
  - **Anticipating the Worst Will Happen:** *"I expect rejection / ridicule, hurt/ heartache."*
  - **Believing You Can Never Change:** *"I think I will always be controlled by fear forever."*
  - **Thinking You Have No Control Over the Situation:** *"I feel overwhelmed/ powerless"*

**Analyze the Reason for Your Fear/ Change Your Thought Life.** *"Whatever is true ...noble ...right ...pure...lovely... admirable... excellent...praiseworthy—think about such things" - Phil 4:8*

**Memorize Isaiah 41:10:** *"Do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you; I will uphold you with my righteous right hand."*

---

---

---

**HOW CAN YOU DECREASE PHOBIC FEAR WITH “DESENSITIZATION”?<sup>3</sup> If you are overly sensitive to an object or situation, “desensitization” can be the key that opens the door to freedom. Systematically repeat each of the following steps one at a time. Repeat the same step day after day for a week or two, or until you no longer have a strong emotional reaction, then move on to the next step. Anxiety should be expected when moving to the next step, but it will dissipate as the step is done with increased repetition.**

**Do you have a persistent, irrational fear that just won't go away? It's excessive, out of proportion to the actual degree of threat, and it's affecting every area of your life—curtailing activities and suffocating joy. God wants to empower you to move from the pandemonium of panic to peace.**

*“Do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you; I will uphold you with my righteous right hand” -Isa 41:10*

## **Exchange Panic for Peace—Focus On Psalm 23**

The Lord **wants** to **lead you** out of **fear** and into **faith, trusting** in His **strong, protective hand** rather than the **flimsy** refuge of your **fear-lined ditch walls**. The **path** to recovery **begins** with **focusing** on the **Lord** rather than the **object** of your **fear**. Then **peace**, not **panic**, will **rule** your **life**.

**Verse 1:** *“The LORD is my shepherd, I shall not be in want.”*

- **Imagine a grassy pasture** in which the **Lord is** with you.
  - **Slowly say** five times, *“The Lord is my Shepherd.”*
  - **Each time you say that**, emphasize a different word:
- ✓ **The Lord is my Shepherd. The Lord, The Lord is, The Lord is my The Lord is my Shepherd.**

**Verse 2:** *“He makes me lie down in green pastures, he leads me beside quiet waters.”*

- **Imagine yourself lying down** beside a **calm pool** of water.

**Verse 3:** *“He restores my soul. He guides me in paths of righteousness for his name's sake.”*

- **Take several deep breaths and slowly say five times**, *“My Shepherd restores my soul.”*
  - **Each time you say that**, emphasize a different word:
- ✓ **My Shepherd restores my soul. My Shepherd, My Shepherd restores, My Shepherd restores my, My Shepherd restores my soul.**

**Verse 4:** *“Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me.”*

- **Realize that you are not trapped.**
  - **Slowly say**, *“I will fear no evil...the Lord is with me.”*

**Verse 5:** *“You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies. You anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows.”*

- **Repeat five times, a different word:**
- ✓ **The Lord is my Protector. The Lord, The Lord is, The Lord is my, The Lord is my Protector.**

**Verse 6:** *“Surely goodness and love will follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the LORD forever.”*

- **Thank the Lord** for the way He will **use** each fearful **situation** for **good** in your **life**.

### **My Prayer for Peace**

**Dear God, I thank You that You are my Shepherd. You guide me, You protect me, and You give me Your peace. You are the One who restores my soul. You know my weaknesses and the times I've caved in to fear. Now, in my weakness, I will choose to rely on Your strength. You are my Shepherd. I am choosing to rely on Your power to move from fear to faith. As I turn my fear over to You, use it for good in my life to remind me of my continual need for You. In Your Holy Name I pray. Amen.**

**If you Focus on your Fear, your Panic will Increase...Focus on your Faith, your Heart will be at Peace.**

---

---

**Note: For serious phobic reactions, the process of desensitization is almost always used in combination with medical help.**