

***What are you afraid of?***

We all have fears, right? I mean, let’s be honest…Whether it’s being afraid of snake’s, nuclear war, not being liked, our kids’ future, our own financial future, etc., etc…We all have fears. There are other fears if I peel another layer:

* *I’m afraid you won’t like me if I tell you what’s really on my mind.* (If I “confront” you.)
* *I’m afraid if you really knew me, you wouldn’t want to be my friend.*
* *I’m afraid if I say that to my spouse, we’ll get in a big fight.*

Add your own to my list.

Now, let’s be clear there is such a thing as “healthy fear.” We were in Yellowstone a couple of months ago and we saw a bear. Having a healthy fear of getting too close (read, feeding the bears..) is a “smart fear.” There are healthy fears of loved ones taking “unnecessary risks” (read Lyn fearing whether I might get hurt again biking or skiing). Then, there are irrational fears. We can all fabricate things in our mind that will, in all likelihood, never happen. It’s this kind of fear I want to address. You’ve probably all heard/read it – some of you even from me. F.E.A.R. (False Evidence Appearing Real).

There’s a lyric in a song by Zach Williams,

***Fear, it is a liar.***

So true! And, fear is powerful. Unchecked it can control us. And, what do we do when we are controlled by fear? A friend, Jamie Winship, puts it this way. We:

* ***Self-protect***

and/or we:

* ***Self-promote.***

***Fear is contagious.***

If affects (INFECTS) those around us. Often those closest to us. A corollary to self-protection is running scared. Now if you are a leader and you run scared and those you lead see, sense and feel your fear, what happens? You unintentionally create a culture of fear in your organization.

***No one sets out to create a culture of fear.***

Not much good happens in a culture of fear. Certainly, people don’t operate at their best.

***Rarely will you see a culture***

***or the individuals in that culture***

***FLOURISH***

***if a culture of fear exists.***

So, what to do if you find yourself running scared? If we acknowledge the above-mentioned lyric, *Fear, it is a liar*, what counters a lie? Truth! And somewhere, Someone once said,

***You will know the truth***

***and the truth will set you free.***

You may not always get to choose what “pops into your head,” but you do get to choose what stays there. What is true? About you? About your teammates? About those closest to you? Fear can lead to inappropriate control. Choose instead, to

***control your fear***

by replacing it with something that is true – about you…about your teammates…about those closest to you.

Try replacing lies with truth. Watch what happens. You’ll be glad you did!