

Fear and the Map of Emotion – Week 2

Oh, how we love fear.

I like to think of **fear** as a four-letter acronym.

Sometimes it's *False Evidence Appearing Real*.

Other times, it's *F** Everything And Run*.*

Both give us insight into how fear moves through us — sometimes it **paralyzes**, sometimes it **propels**.

Did you know that **anger** is often the *bodyguard* of fear? It protects the vulnerable spaces underneath.

Remember our last session — the *Power of Emotions* — where we touched on this protective mechanism?

The Three Root Emotions

For today's teaching, we'll begin to map where three **primary emotions** live within us.

Understanding their zones gives us a foundation — a way to work *with* emotion instead of being ruled *by* it.

One of my teachers, **Arun Deva**, describes these three roots as:

- **Fear**
- **Anger**
- **Grief**

Each of these roots has a **zone** within the body — and these zones correspond to **elemental qualities**.

Let's simplify:

- **White Zone – Air / Mind** → *Fear*
- **Red Zone – Fire / Belly** → *Anger*
- **Blue Zone – Earth / Heart & Lungs** → *Grief*

Now, yes — there are more than three elements in yoga and Ayurveda, but for today, we're keeping it elegantly simple. These zones align loosely with the **doshas**:

Vata (air), Pitta (fire), and Kapha (earth/water).

This simplicity is not a limitation — it's an *art*. Even in the deep ocean of yoga philosophy, sometimes clarity begins with three simple ripples.

From Fear to Freedom

So, let's remix our acronym.

Instead of *False Evidence Appearing Real* or *F** Everything And Run**, let's evolve it into:

F – Face

E – Everything

A – And

R – Respond

This simple shift transforms fear from *reaction* into *response*.

It invites us to feel what the emotion is saying, and allow the body to find its natural ease again.

Because life, as we know, can often pull us far from ease. But our practice — the temple work — is about finding that **sweet spot of radical okayness**. The moment we can say, "I'm here. This too belongs."

The Practice of Discernment (Viveka)

One of my teachers once offered me a practice that changed everything.

He said:

"If you can pause long enough to see the story your mind is telling, ask two questions:

1. Is this **real** or **imagined**?
2. What is my body feeling right now?"

If it's **real**, it comes with a built-in path to action.

If it's **imagined**, it has no solution — because it doesn't actually exist.

That insight blew my mind.

Let's use an example. Suppose you have a long drive ahead, and anxiety starts whispering, "What if I get a flat tire?"

Then the story unfolds —

What if it's on the freeway?

What if it's dark?

What if I don't have a spare?

And suddenly, fear spins a *fiction*.

Your body reacts, your mind races, and your nervous system tightens.

But if you pause and ask, *Is this real?* you realize — *my tires are fine*. The fear was imagined.

And if it were real — say, you *did* have a flat — there's a clear response: call for help, change the tire, or use your tools.

That's how we begin to **trust our instincts again** — by letting the body guide the mind back to truth.

Daily Awareness Practice

To soften fear's hold, we bring our senses online each day.
Because fear lives in imagination, and imagination lives in the head.
The antidote? **Sensation**.

Try this:

1. Pause.
2. Notice five things you can **see**.
3. Four things you can **touch**.
4. Three things you can **hear**.
5. Two things you can **smell**.
6. One thing you can **taste**.

Then ask: *Is what I'm feeling real or imagined?*
That single question can re-map fear into freedom.

Closing Reflection

When we **Face Everything And Respond**, fear becomes a messenger instead of a master.
It points us toward the very places that want to heal.
And from that awareness, we start to live in harmony with our own emotional ecosystem — the great map of the mind, belly, and heart.

So today, as you breathe and move, remember:

Fear isn't here to stop you.
It's here to remind you that you're alive — and aware.