

Week of April 11 - April 18, 2020

Devotion

I now return to looking at four steps in confronting our fear by using an acronym of the word 'Fear' from Adam Hamilton's book, *Unafraid, Living with Courage and Hope in Uncertain Times*. My intention is to offer some specific, practical ideas for addressing our anxiety and uncertainty during these difficult times. These can also be helpful tools in your tool belt whenever you face times of fear and worry.

We began with **Step 1: Facing Our Fears with Faith**, which means starting with a bias of hope. We saw this is not only faith in God but also to have faith in modern science's ability to find solutions to the Coronavirus, faith in our fellow human beings to protect themselves and us by following local and national mandates, faith in our institutions to lead us through this crisis. Like others who have gone before us, the primary place we turn to find relief from fear is our faith in God and the spiritual practices that help us to sense God's presence. But we also can look around us and place some faith in the people, institutions and mechanisms that are working tirelessly to find solutions on our behalf in this crisis.

Next, we looked at **Step 2: Examining Our Assumptions** (that are frightening us) **In Light of the Facts**, meaning that so often, in this politically polarized society, those of us both on the left and the right will hear of possible threats that align with our biases, and we immediately accept it as a fact. We examine our assumptions by digging deeper and looking to the subject-matter experts and not fear-mongers.

Today, we look at **Step 3: Attack Your Anxieties with Action**, meaning doing what we can to address our fears and to be a part of the solution and not the problem.

Now, this is a step I can get into. I like action. I'm good with action. It gives me the feeling that I have some measure of control and as a result, it reduces some of those feelings of hopelessness and worry when they rise. You may feel the same way.

Let me ask you, what are you feeling anxious about today? What actions can you take to address those? It may be as simple as gaining the most accurate information about the virus, or best practices for physical safety, or mental/emotional wellbeing. It may be a simple phone call to someone you've been worrying about and letting them know you're praying for them. Gathering information helps us feel more in control and then offers us options to act upon. With God's presence and power, we can attack our anxieties with action.

Yours in the journey,

Pastor Kristen