

## The Young Buffalo – A Story About Facing Your Fears



One day, on the plains of Africa, a young buffalo named Walter approached his dad and asked him if there was anything that he should be afraid of.

“Only lions my son,” his dad responded.

“Oh yes, I’ve heard about lions. If I ever see one, I’ll turn and run as fast as I can,” said Walter.

“No, that’s the worst thing you can do,” said the large male.

“Why? They are scary and will try to kill me.”

The dad smiled and explained, “Walter, if you run away, the lions will chase you and catch you. And when they do, they will jump on your unprotected back and bring you down.”

“So what should I do?” asked Walter.

“If you ever see a lion, stand your ground to show him that you’re not afraid. If he doesn’t move away, show him your sharp horns and stomp the ground with your hooves. If that doesn’t work, move slowly towards him. If that doesn’t work, charge him and hit him with everything you’ve got!”

“That’s crazy, I’ll be too scared to do that. What if he attacks me back?” said the startled young buffalo.

“Look around, Walter. What do you see?” Walter looked around at the rest of his herd. There were about 200 massive beasts all armed with sharp horns and huge shoulders.

“If ever you’re afraid, know that we are here. If you panic and run from your fears, we can’t save you, but if you charge towards them, we’ll be right behind you.”

The young buffalo breathed deeply and nodded. “Thanks dad, I understand.”

### We all have lions in our worlds.

There are aspects of life that scare us and make us want to run, but if we do, they will chase us down and take over our lives. Our thoughts will become dominated by the things that we are afraid of and our actions will become timid and cautious, not allowing us to reach our full potential.

James 4:7 says, *“Resist the devil and he will flee from you.”*

So face your fears. Show them that you’re not afraid. Show them how powerful you really are. And run towards them with courage and boldness, knowing that God is supporting you and cheering you on.

### What fears do you need to face at the moment?

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Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid or terrified ... for the Lord your God goes with you; he will never leave you nor forsake you.—*Deuteronomy 31:6 NIV*

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Facing your fears robs them of their power.

—Mark Burnett (b. 1960)

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Inaction breeds doubt and fear. Action breeds confidence and courage. If you want to conquer fear, do not sit home and think about it. Go out and get busy.—Dale Carnegie (1888–1955)

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You gain strength, courage and confidence by every experience in which you really stop and look fear in the face. ... You must do the thing you think you cannot do.—Eleanor Roosevelt

Do the thing you fear and keep on doing it ... that is the quickest and surest way ever yet discovered to conquer fear.—Dale Carnegie

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Each of us must confront our own fears, must come face to face with them. How we handle our fears will determine where we go with the rest of our lives. To experience adventure or to be limited by the fear of it.—Judy Blume

### **DOPE ON A ROPE**



***There once was this criminal who had committed a crime. (Because, hey, that's what criminals do.***

***That's their job!) Anyway, he was sent to the king for his punishment. The king told him he had a choice of two punishments. He could be hung by a rope or take what's behind the big, dark, scary, iron door. The criminal quickly decided on the rope. As the noose was being slipped on him, he turned to the king and asked. "By the way, out of curiosity, what's behind that door?" The king laughed and said: "You know, it's funny, I offer everyone the same choice, and nearly everyone picks the rope." "So," said the criminal, "Tell me. What's behind the door? I mean, obviously, I won't tell anyone," he said, pointing to the noose around his neck. The king paused then answered, "Freedom, but it seems most people are so afraid of the unknown that they immediately take the rope."***

I love the message in this story. It's a powerful reminder about how so many of us cling to the familiar. Yes, unfortunately, too many of us live our lives choosing the familiarity of our rope (aka: familiar pain, familiar struggle, familiar patterns), fearful of going for the unknown alternative – which can lead to freedom and ultimate happiness.

The result? We're a planet full of folks walking around with metaphysical ropes around our necks, wondering why we feel a bit emotionally/ spiritually dead to the world around us.

Today decide to have the courage to push past your fears! Today decide to finally take off those ropes that bind you – and blind you! Start bravely opening up those doors which lead to the unfamiliar – knowing that you are also headed towards freedom, growth, and greater joy. You'll see.

"Courage is not the absence of fear, but the triumph over it." – Nelson Mandela, Former President of South Africa. –

**Too many of us are not living our dreams because we are living our fears.** Less Brown

Isaiah 41:13: For I am the LORD your God who takes hold of your right hand and says to you, Do not fear; I will help you. NIV