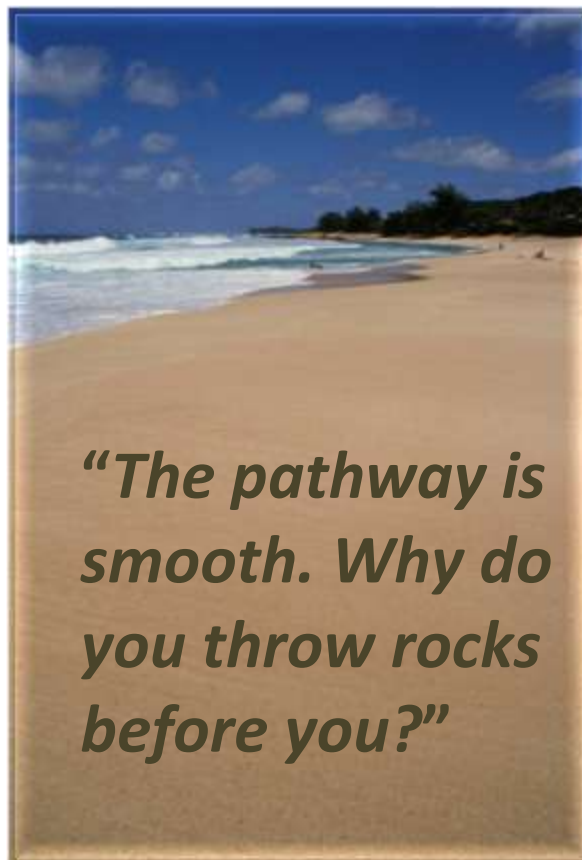


Getting Clear with Your Fear

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“The pathway is smooth. Why do you throw rocks before you?”

Beth Buelow, CPC

About Beth Buelow



As a Personal Coach, Speaker and Writer, Beth's purpose is to partner with people who aspire to live a more intentional life. Her passion is supporting individuals as they move from scarcity and fear to prosperity and choice.

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Each of us has a path on which we're walking. How smooth is the road under your feet? Based on current headlines and media chatter, your road to success may be littered with rocks and obstacles, each one with a different FUD label: **Unemployment. Bankruptcy. Struggle.**

Scarcity. There may be some FUDs over which you have no control. However, when I look down my road, I clearly see that many of the FUDs in my way are rocks I've tossed there myself.

What's a FUD, you ask?

FUD stands for Fear, Uncertainty and Doubt. The term FUD is credited to Gene Amdahl, who worked for IBM during the 1980s. He developed a marketing strategy that trained the sales force to instill fear, uncertainty and doubt in the minds of its customers with regard to switching products. "Stick with IBM. We're big, we're safe, you know what you're getting. If you go with another company, anything could happen, and you might not like it." The technique was subsequently employed by Microsoft and has reared its ugly head in the political arena.

FUDs turn up not only in marketing and politics; they show up in everyday life. If we get real with ourselves, we can admit that underneath the positive talk and confident face, there are at least a few FUDs that we stumble over.

Do any of these FUD rocks sound familiar?

- *No one has any money to spend.*
- *I'll never be able to afford to send my kids to college.*
- *If I market too much, people will get annoyed with me.*
- *I could lose my job without warning.*
- *There just aren't any new clients out there.*
- *I'm doing everything right and nothing's happening.*
- *It's going to be years before things get better.*
- *I'll never find a new job.*
- *I have enough customers today, but what about tomorrow?*
- *If I don't get more clients now, my business will fail.*
- *I'm not sure I can handle this.*



Some FUDs are pebbles, some are boulders. **Even courageous, “fearless” people have to dodge FUD rocks on the road to success.** What separates them from those who become tripped up by the rocks in their way? They recognize that where they feel fear, there is energy. There is something that wants attention. So, they bring that energy – that feeling of fear – into conscious awareness. The line between fear and excitement is very thin; the same adrenaline pumps through our bodies when we're afraid as when we're excited. The difference lies in how we choose to view the situation. You can make the choice to channel that energy into action.

Shifting our view is not as easy as making a U-turn from Scarcity Street and ending up on Prosperity Path. It's important to do some heavy lifting and invest intentional time and energy into moving the rocks out of your way.

Part of the reason it's hard to move the FUDs is because we try to dismiss them. We believe we can positive-think our way out of them. Just turn that frown upside down!

No wonder Pollyanna gets such a bad rap!

Through my work with coaching clients, I've experienced the power and clarity that comes when we're able to pull the FUDs out of the darkness and into the light, where they rarely stand up to scrutiny. The truth about your FUDs? They want to be heard; they want your attention. They think they are keeping you safe from failure! Giving them a voice is not about focusing on fear and negativity; it's about putting FUDs in their proper place so you can focus on building your strengths.

"Fear grows in darkness; if you think there's a bogeyman around, turn on the light."

~ Dorothy Thompson

If your FUDs are speed bumps on your journey and draining your energy, consider taking yourself through this four-step process that helps convert the energy of fear into action:

- I. **Draw the Scarcity Box** – This is the place of feeling like there's not enough. If she wins, I lose. It's better to isolate, to keep ideas close to the vest. Small is safe. Hunker down, weather the storm.

Action: Write down the FUDs that are in your way in any area of your personal or professional life; this may include finances, relationships, networking, an important decision, or your next big leap. List every FUD, no matter how large, trivial, scary or petty they feel. Suspend judgment of yourself and your FUDs. Draw a box around the final list. Release the FUDs to the paper and don't think about them. Put the list away for the rest of the day.

My personal FUDs...

2. **Perform a Reality Check** – Now that you’ve gotten some distance from the Scarcity Box, you can approach it with a more objective eye.

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

~ Eleanor Roosevelt

Action: After a good night’s sleep, review your list and look for two things: **assumptions** and **limiting beliefs**. Many FUDs are assumptions: *It’s too hard to switch careers. No one is spending money.* Others are most likely limiting beliefs: *I’ve only been in business a year. The only way to get a job is to settle for whatever I can find.* Label each of your FUDs: assumptions that need evidence and limiting beliefs that weigh you down. What if you look at one and think “But that one’s true!”? Look deeper. Is it true? What evidence do you have? And if it really is a true and objective fact, is your fear about the truth itself, or is it about your ability to handle or respond to that truth?

3. **Realize You Have Choices** – When FUDs are identified as assumptions or limiting beliefs, you’re able to see more clearly that choices exist.

Action: Decide how you’re going to respond to each of your FUDs. Assumptions can be proven or disproven through honest self-reflection and evidence gathering. Once you have obtained evidence, you can make an informed choice based on reality. Limiting beliefs require more soul searching. One way to clear them is by challenging them with the question “is that true?” Because the answer is usually “no, that’s not entirely true,” choices can emerge.



4. **Choose a Prosperity Perspective** – From this vantage point, there is more than enough. Choice has replaced fear. There is collaboration instead of isolation; opportunity instead of threat; big instead of small; and win/win instead of win/lose.

Action: Flip your FUDs to reflect an intentional choice that will erase the lines that form your Scarcity Box. **Shift your energy and choose excitement over fear.** Commit to a new perspective: “FUD, I hear you and know that you’re trying to protect me from risk and failure. My intention going forward is to place a high value on what I have to offer, show up with enthusiasm and get two interviews this month.” Write down your commitments and find a way to remind yourself of them on a daily basis (post them by your desk or on your refrigerator, make them your computer desktop wallpaper, etc).

If you are distressed by anything external, the pain is not due to the thing itself, but to your estimate of it; and this you have the power to revoke at any moment.

~ Marcus Aurelius

When you try this at home, it may not be as clear-cut as it appears here. And for the commitment to translate to results, you will need to develop an action plan. It's helpful to work through this process with your coach (you do have a coach, don't you?!). We're sometimes too close to the FUDs; the thought patterns are deep-rooted, and our emotions keep us from being objective enough to see where scarcity thinking is showing up and manifesting itself. I recommend you find someone you trust, with whom you feel completely safe, to support you through the process.

On my road to prosperity and intention, there will always be a few pebble FUDs, and maybe the occasional boulder. They show up because I'm human: sometimes I need to vent and have something to kick around or throw. At least now I recognize what's happening and have a process to help me shift my energy.

Will you join me in spending less time tripping along on Scarcity Street and more time strolling on Prosperity Path?

Courage is resistance to fear, mastery of fear – not absence of fear.

~ Mark Twain

*... without darkness
Nothing comes to birth,
As without light
Nothing flowers.*

~ May Sarton

*Ultimately we know deeply
that the other side of every
fear is a freedom.*

~ Marilyn Ferguson

*Many of our fears are tissue-paper-
thin, and a single courageous step
would carry us clear through them.*

~Brendan Francis

For Your Consideration

- How smooth is the road that my life travels on?
- What are the biggest FUD rocks in my way?
- What's going to cost me more: ignoring my FUDs or working through them?
- What or who will best support me in clearing the path?



For Further Reading

- *On Fear* by J. Krishnamurti
- *Feel the Fear... And Do It Anyway* by Susan Jeffers, PhD.
- *Loving What Is* by Byron Katie with Stephen Mitchell
- *Leadership & Self-Deception: Getting Out of the Box* by The Arvinger Institute

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