

IT'S REALLY NOT THE UNKNOWN THAT SCARES US

Steve Gilbert

“The oldest and strongest emotion of mankind is fear,
and the oldest and strongest kind of fear is fear of the unknown.”

H. P. Lovecraft

I always assumed that we feared the unknown. It's just one of those clichés that you hear so often that you just figure it is true.

And then last month I was talking to a wise friend of mine who opened my mind to a different possibility.

“It's not the unknown that scares us,” he said. “It's what we project into the unknown that causes anxiety. Because if something were truly unknown, we wouldn't know about it so there wouldn't be any fear of it.”

Whoa!

The more I thought about it the more sense it made to me. I'm not worried about the unknown when it comes to my future; I'm worried about what my mind projects into the blank space that is the unknown.

It seems like semantics, but at least for me it had a big impact. It helped me to realize that it's my thoughts about things that scare/worry/upset me rather than the things themselves.

Today, see if my friend's words ring true for you. Take a look at a time in your life when you thought you were worried about the unknown – starting a new job, being let go from a previous one, moving to a new place, etc. – and see if what you were really worried about is what you projected might happen rather than simply not knowing what would.

Win Your Day!
Steve Gilbert

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