

## A Sermon on Fear Management

Sermon by Rev. Minister Angela Smith of COPE for January 16th, 2022 (and beyond)

Before discussing how to manage fear, one must know whether the issue is actually trust rather than fear. A victim of crimes or torts who chooses not to report it to law enforcement nor sue within the statutes of limitation depending on jurisdiction (there are no statutes of limitation on criminal offenses in South Carolina) may state the reason for it is fear. But, fear is not the reason for not reporting if you live in fear whether you report it or not. Therefore, the issue must be trust. Do you trust yourself and know yourself to be trustworthy? Do you trust state regulators/law enforcement to enforce the law? Does this website <https://www.ussc.gov/research/data-reports/overview-federal-criminal-cases-fiscal-year-2020> help? How about this website <https://www.fbi.gov/investigate/violent-crime/human-trafficking> ? How about this video of the Missouri Attorney General here <https://youtu.be/6VbmmeCCfQc> ? Does this site at <https://hslic.utah.gov/notices-of-agency-action> help? It is my hope that seeing the evidence that various law enforcement and state regulatory bodies actually will accept reports in the proper format, investigate, and penalize offenders will help all who need it find enough trust in law enforcement and state regulators to give them the benefit of the doubt by reporting violations of the law in a timely fashion for best results with understanding regarding what beyond a reasonable doubt and by a preponderance of the evidence means in court. It is also my sincere hope that victims/survivors recognize that [www.beyondbusiness.net/youarenext.htm](http://www.beyondbusiness.net/youarenext.htm) is also evidence that the system works when everyone does their part which includes the victims/survivors pursuing justice through the justice system because that's why we have a justice system.

It is my understanding that the majority when hearing from a victim of a crime asks, "Did you report it?" And, that's the first question victims should be prepared to answer from the public if holding press conferences about violations of the law they've never reported properly. The follow up question where the answer is "no" to the first one is typically "Why not?" The answer to that may be knowledge of risk, which is one of the components of "fear". Would full context raise reasonable doubt or provide for defenses at law for the accused? Does the unwillingness to report it come from distrust of law enforcement and/or any branch of government or the government in entirety? If someone told you they were a victim of a crime and didn't report it because they don't trust law enforcement so would rather avoid a trial and cross-examination while still being recognized as a victim therefore decided to contact congress in hopes to completely eradicate due process and the right of the accused to a trial by jury and defenses (Bill of Rights), would you support their efforts? If the belief is that law enforcement won't believe victims with checkered pasts, does this report at <https://www.justice.gov/usao-wdwa/pr/former-seattle-police-officer-sentenced-six-years-prison-role-marijuana-smuggling> help? How about this one here <https://www.desmoinesregister.com/story/news/crime-and-courts/2021/12/16/former-iowa-police-corrections-officer-sentenced-child-sex-abuse/8931476002/> ? Or, this one here <https://www.cbsnews.com/news/seth-fletcher-ohio-prison-abuse-case-paralyzed-settlement/> ? The point of that is to show that even when disgusting prisoners, like Seth Fletcher, are abused by prison guards, the courts will penalize the guards for it. If you are

not as disgusting as Seth Fletcher, that story alone should give you hope if you need to report someone you believe is considered an “authority” of some sort for violating the law. Even President Ulysses S. Grant was arrested in DC while president. See: <https://www.washingtonpost.com/history/2018/12/16/police-officer-who-arrested-president/> So, no one is above the law and we all have to report crimes we’re victims of to law enforcement so they can do their part after victims report properly with respect for system protocols and patience with the process. Seeking instant gratification by making unconstitutional suggestions for legislation to legislators goes beyond being a fool’s errand and is arguably truly idiotic in the eyes of the majority. So, after all that, are you using your time wisely? That’s a topic for another day. All I am saying is give law enforcement a chance and if you really don’t trust the government why the fuck are you contacting members of congress? See, inconsistencies in words and actions bring credibility into question. But, I recognize it as ignorance rather than deception particularly when dealing with victims who did not receive a proper education and upon reaching age of majority started pretending to be as savvy as the general public with a more “monkey see-monkey do” approach with minimal exposure to popular media rather than actual knowledge of available remedies at law with willingness to pursue it properly and no patience to do it the right way leading to disappointment and tantrums at times. So, hopefully that resolves any trust issues that have acted as barriers to reporting violations of the law to the appropriate law enforcement agency or body.

What is “fear”?

- a. uncertain/nervous anticipation (like reaching your hand into a hole in the floor or into a dark crawlspace or attic with no light feeling for something hoping to grab what you want and not touch anything snake/spider/rodent/etc-related)
- b. knowledge of risk (knowing if you walk up to someone yelling at a bar to ask them to keep it down that you are assuming the risk they will hit you even though in that hitting they now assume the risk of going to prison)
- c. Mother Nature's Personalized Alarm System (It's too quiet, eerily quiet. I feel a predator may be nearby. Like a Mountain Lion or something. That's pure instinct. Instinct with reason goes more like "That guy just bought a bunch of bullets ahead of me in line at the supermarket. I said "hi" to be sociable and he just gave me a mean look. I'm going to be quiet now." And, that actually happened to me at the supermarket where I was behind the bullet enthusiast. So many. I think he cleaned them out. I initially thought he was a hunter or maybe owned a shooting range where he needed that many. I didn't inquire further.)
- d. Ignorance in disguise (Everyone is evil and I've never met a nice person so I don't believe they exist and believe that is all just fiction. Fiction that apparently leaves me uninspired so I'll just be deimatic and help bring on dystopian apocalypse scenarios.)
- e. All of the Above (depending on the individual and the set of circumstances inspiring what some call "fear")

Call fear something else if it helps you manage it. It is my hope that the above multiple-choice question gives you some ways to define fear and even appreciate it as necessary for self-preservation and manageable with honest reason. For example, with answer "a", are you far from civilization without a first aid kit where if you get bit by a venomous spider you likely won't survive? In such a case, you might choose to use a flashlight or not to retrieve what you want in the first place. You might choose to let it go. But, if you live near civilization and know the risk is minimal because you've reached blindly into the same space multiple times with no issue, then even though the situation is the same, the circumstances are different so you may not have much if any nervous anticipation. Sometimes learning about the area you live (or the justice system or how government works) by reading books on it or doing similar research you can find out there are no known venomous spider species in your area therefore address the instinctual apprehension with factual knowledge. But, some people are destined to learn the hard way. Shikata Ga Nai!

For those interested in starting #TaoFu Self-Defense Exercises, please see <https://www.cope.church/taofu.htm> and begin at any time.

There are opportunities to send messages, receive mystery bonus blessings, and more with or without donating available now on our "Pass the Basket" page at <https://www.cope.church/basket.htm> . Thank You.

"And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." John 8:32 KJV Willful blindness is an abomination.

COPE accepts Feedback, critical and complimentary. Learn more at <https://www.cope.church/feedback.htm> . For the sake of keeping myself and others humble, a sense of humor is welcome on all sides.

For More About COPE and the HEAL Mission, see:

<https://www.cope.church> and <https://www.heal-online.org>