

## We Know Fear, and Yet

A community poem in seven parts, created by participants of the Spark of Brilliance program and The Writing Life workshop through Self Help & Peer Support, Canadian Mental Health Association Waterloo-Wellington.

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### I

We know fear,  
and yet

we try and fail

we try again and  
again  
because  
someday  
it just gets easier

we feel the fear but  
slowly  
do it anyway

we feel

vulnerable

exposed

uncertain

afraid

and yet

we take one step forward

one step is everything

take a deep breath and

step forward,

knowing

that our courage

is greater

than others see.

## II

We are in control

of our minds

therefore,

we can have control

over

our fears

we experience

fear

debilitating  
but  
with inspiration  
and  
tenacity  
we try  
to overcome

we sometimes run

from

fear

inside

to ride

and conquer

we must not hide

we face  
the darkness only  
to find  
the light that  
shines through

we are lost and afraid

we draw  
a deep line in  
the sand in  
the hopes that  
it is a

safe place  
to hold our  
tears.

### III

We fight  
today

we don't want to, but  
we show  
the fear  
we'll never lose, even if  
we never win

we don't need to fight  
fear,  
but rather

understand it,  
embrace it,  
and use it to our advantage

we stand  
at the door

trembling

fumbling

stumbling

we breathe in

calm  
breathe out  
anxiety  
and  
go forth

we breathe deeply and  
summon ourselves

strong in our values and beliefs.

#### **IV**

Yes,  
we are survivors  
we have conquered  
every hard thing  
life has thrown  
at us  
we grow  
learning not to be afraid

we hold fast to a love  
that never gives up

we kick  
the thought-squatters  
out  
of our brains

keep ourselves

focused

on uplifting thoughts

to quell the

fear-based

lies

in our heads

we shrink

at the idea

of not stepping up

when called upon

to help

our community

in community,

we share

monsters

in the dark

becoming smaller

and

slowly disappearing

forever

standing

together

in shared humanity, as

fear

only flourishes  
in feeling  
alone

we come to realize  
that  
to not speak truth  
to power  
we are complicit.

V

We let  
the rain  
wash away our  
fears  
and phobias and  
the sun  
lift our spirits

we rise  
from chaos' grasp

sanity's light

we clasp

through psychosis' storm

we pass

into calm

at last

we say

“hello”

to fear,

feel it,

and let it go

say “thank you”

instead of

simply

“no”

a million choices

sometimes

it is brave

to say “yes”

and other times

it is equally brave

to say “no”

only we

get to decide what

conquering

fear

looks like

we honour

that fear

exists

to keep us safe, and

while



fear  
can help guide us,  
it does not decide for us.

## VI

We can be friends,  
fear,  
neither of us need  
conquer  
the other

friend                      my fear                      my foe

take possession of my mind  
new experience

conquering fear  
in the certainty that  
Love,  
although sometimes  
hidden,  
is always  
here  
waiting patiently for  
us

conquering fear  
by being  
ourselves

and  
no matter what  
going out

and  
conquering

the world

becoming  
a better version  
of ourselves

when we face  
our fear

looking  
deep  
within  
ourselves

remembering how  
we felt  
and  
that we have been here  
before

we got through

because

we have the power.

## VII

Knowing  
today  
is hard

remembering  
we can get through  
this  
and wait  
for the crashing waves  
to turn into  
calm waters

we treat  
life  
as a game  
and  
remain  
willing to bet  
that this journey  
of ours  
is not over yet

fear

when you seek  
to protect us,  
we'll take your hand as

together  
trembling  
hopeful  
brave  
we go forward  
trusting  
that the ground  
beneath us  
will remain  
solid  
close our eyes  
and  
follow  
our heartbeat  
through  
the darkness.