Chapter 1

Fear: friend or foe
We all know what fear is but none of us know how to say it without using science and chemicals; sometimes the best explanations are not scientific but experience. I will do my best to explain fear as a normal person and not as a geek.

Fear is not a one size fits all kind of thing; it’s different for everyone no matter how similar. Fears are caused by experiences of pain and/or suffering in ourselves and/or others and although we may have similar experiences it is impossible to have the exact same past. For example you may have seen a news report on a bridge that collapsed and I didn’t. This may make you fear crossing bridges and to me it might seem like a weird fear. Fear is a survival technique to avoid physical or mental pain. This means that whether or not you know it your brain is protecting you because you don’t want to be caught on a collapsing bridge.

But too much of a good thing is bad. Fears can be overactive or irrational. These overactive irrational fears can take over and control a person’s life or even shut your body down. People spend their whole life hiding from their fears. This is bad because you can’t overcome fears unless you face them.

Fear in the brain triggers adrenaline glands to release adrenaline into the bloodstream causing an adrenaline attack. Adrenaline turns your body into a fighting machine by pumping blood into your muscles and heart.
increased heart rate and strength. Also blood is drawn from the brain and skin making it so if you get cut you don’t bleed so much but in return it makes it hard to think. If you receive an adrenaline attack just sit down and try to slow your heart rate then when you feel you are calm again carry on.

Anxiety is essentially the fear of fear. But wait isn’t fear just the unknown? Yes, so anxiety is fearing that you don’t know something. The rates of anxiety are going up because we are being forced to look to the future of our world instead of living in our own lives. The future is a vast unknown. This means fear and the future are the same thing, right? Not exactly, but the elements of the future cause fear in many people. 40 million people in the U.S. will experience an impairment because of an anxiety condition this year. This brings us back to the question of what is fear? Well we talk about fear of the unknown as if it’s a separate kind of fear, but isn’t that what fear is; the unknown? When you fear something there is that “what if?” question in the mix of things. What if I get hurt? What if They laugh? What if I mess up? These questions are what keep us alive but are slowly killing us.

A little fear can make