The Psychology of Fear

1. Define: To be in a state of fearfulness, a sense of vulnerability in the face of a threat. A set of physiological changes related to fight or flight. May be followed by defensive posturing, escape actions or even violence.
2. Individual Factors, which determine perception of fear provoking events, expressing and addressing those events.
3. Coping skills:
4. Emotion-focused to express fear
5. Problem-focused to address fears
6. Dream disturbances
   1. Insomnia-difficulty going to sleep.
   2. Narcolepsy-difficulty waking
   3. Nightmares-disturbing dreams
   4. Night terrors-talking during sleep.
   5. Somnambulism-sleep walking.
   6. Sleep paralysis-waking before mobility returns. Associated with legends of the hag, the incubus, the succubus and alien abduction.
7. Emotional Development-ability to identify, own and express one’s feelings.
8. Social skills
   1. Support-Ability to seek help
   2. Image maintenance-Keep appearance that protects social standing.
   3. Family-education, values and beliefs.
   4. Religion-safety through discipline
      * 1. Jews-Yom Kippur
        2. Christians-Lent
        3. Muslims-Ramadan
9. Cultural Factors
   1. Social Stratification-who is feared and who is fearful.
   2. Literature-Fear themes
      1. Ghost Stories-spiritual unknown, dealing with finitude (death).
         1. Poe-nightmarish images

b. Rice-lost souls

* + 1. Monsters-dangerous personas (Frankenstein by Mary Shelly
    2. Exorcist-Good vs Evil, alter egos.
    3. Witches-blame women.
    4. Wolf Man-men have a savage side
    5. Zombies-folks half alive (depressed, chemically dependent, repressed)
    6. Vampires-Foreign penetrators

(Bram Stoker’s Dracula)

* + 1. Holy books-GOD, as a concept.
  1. Holidays-Traditional time to express feelings and values.
     1. Easter-rebirth (Ostera)
     2. Christmas-birth (Yule)
     3. Thanksgiving and Eid-bounty, blessings and gratitude.
     4. Halloween-Fears and preparation
        1. Last Harvest-(Samhain)

1 Etruscan prayers for protection from vengeful dead.

2.Wiccans, Druids and Mummers- Prepare for winter scarcity (Samhain)

3. Celts- Bob for apples and beg with tricks or treats.

4. Anglos-Saxsons-The jack-o-lanterns and All Hallowed Eve

5. Venecians-Masks to fool spirits

6. American-Laughing at death.

d. Fear of death

1. Celts-Banche blamed for crib deaths and seniors lost in winter.

2. Teutonic (Germans)-root cellars and preparing for winter, threats. Dopplegangers suggest lost identity or sense of control.

3. America-fear driven media , diets, exercise and plastic surgery. Aging and death are the wages of sin.

4. Day of the Dead-remember dead loved ones and recognize death is part of life.

1. Fear-based Disorders
   1. Anxiety-Anguish about vulnerability.
   2. Depression-Feeling hopeless and helpless
   3. Narcissistic Rage-Furious one is not special or recognized as special.
   4. Nihilistic Tendencies-self destructiveness
   5. Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder-Trauma induced, conditioned defensive diligence.
   6. Aggressive tendencies-
   7. Addictions-Ritualistic escape from feared.
      * + 1. Substance abuse- self medicate
          2. Escapist pass times
          3. Sex and pornography
2. Treating Fear-based Disorders (Healing)

“See Schools of Theory”