**Facing the Situation**

**Tony Award-winner, Ellen Burstyn recalls a memorable acting lesson: One day on Broadway, I became aware of a stir in the audience. Suddenly, I saw it! A stray cat was nonchalantly crossing the stage. The cat stopped and turned toward the darkness of the audience and seemed startled to discover that the darkness was alive. She had presence, as though there were a thousand pairs of eyes out there, which, of course, there were. That realization stopped the cat dead in her tracks. Then she fled into the wings. I remember thinking, “I know just how she feels.” I’ve often told the story to young actors because I think it shows what the job of the actor is: to make contact with the kitty inside each of us that wants to turn and run when we feel those thousand pairs of eyes on us. And to find the way to quiet the kitty and just go on doing what we have to do. (*Broadway: Day & Night)***

**Instead of changing addresses, address the issue. *(Eric Allenbaugh, in Wake Up Calls)***

**If I have any advice to anyone it’s this. Look at the things you really want in life that you’re afraid of and move in that direction toward those desires. You’ll have the best time of your life. The bigger the fear the greater the fun! Good luck! *(Dean Tucker)***

**Give us the shattering jangle of the old-fashioned alarm clock any day and forget these versions that awaken you with soft music and gentle whispers. If there’s anything we can’t abide in the morning, it’s hypocrisy. *(Bits & Pieces)***

**History, despite its wrenching pain, cannot be unlived, but if faced with courage doesn’t need to be lived again. *(Maya Angelou)***

**The Aztec Indians began eating arsenic regularly as children, to build up their immunity to the poison. *(Barbara Seuling, in You Can’t Sneeze With Your Eyes Open, p. 72)***

**Bad week for: Modern conveniences, after researchers in Sweden found that children whose parents wash dishes by hand are more likely to be exposed to bacterial microbes, making them less likely to suffer from allergies than children who grow up with dishwashers*. (The Week magazine, March 6, 2015)***

**Not everything that is faced can be changed, but nothing can be changed until it is faced. *(James Baldwin, writer)***

**Your bathtub will empty faster if you’re in it. *(L. M. Boyd)***

**Birds generally take off into the wind, the same as airplanes do. *(Paul Stirling Hagerman, in It’s a Weird World, p. 21)***

**What had happened to those butterflies? Well, in truth, they were still there, but there were fewer of them. I had benefited, I discovered, from a process psychologists call “extinction.” If you put an individual in an anxiety-provoking situation often enough, he will eventually learn that there isn’t anything to be worried about. Which brings us to a corollary to my basic rule: “you’ll never eliminate anxiety by avoiding the things that caused it.” *(James Lincoln Collier, in Reader’s Digest)***

**Any idiot can face a crisis. It is the day-to-day living that wears you out. *(Anton Chekhov)***

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**If you don’t look facts in the face, they have a way of stabbing you in the back. *(Winston Churchill)***

**If you meet trouble promptly without flinching, you reduce the problem by half. *(Winston Churchill)***

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**Facing it – always facing it – that’s the way to get through. Face it! *(Joseph Conrad)***

**What this country needs is fewer fact-finding committees and more fact-facing committees. *(Bits & Pieces)***

**A coyote raised by other coyotes will be forever fearful of people, but if captured early enough can be domesticated. *(George Laycock, in Curious Creatures, p. 137)***

**Good week for: Honesty, after a Wisconsin woman called 911 to report a drunken driver, whom she identified as herself. Police said Mary Strey, 49, told the dispatcher, “I’ve been drinking all night long. I don’t want to hurt anybody.” *(The Week magazine, November 13, 2009)***

**The islands of Japan have visible earthquake shakings more than a thousand times each year. The Japanese, understandably, live in a constant state of anxiety regarding earthquakes. *(Barbara Seuling)***

**It's easy to say "face the facts" but in every direction I look there are different facts. *(Ashleigh Brilliant, in Pot-Shots)***

**Fetuses are startled when exposed to a series of loud buzzes, but some then turn an ear to listen. *(Henci Goer, in Reader’s Digest)***

**The best way out is always through. *(Robert Frost)***

**Gulls always fly into the wind. *(L. M. Boyd)***

**The strongest oak tree of the forest is not the one that is protected from the storm and hidden from the sun. It’s the one that stands in the open where it is compelled to struggle for its existence against the winds and rains and the scorching sun. *(Napoleon Hill)***

**When a resolute fellow steps up to that great bully, the world, and takes him boldly by the beard, he is often surprised to find that the beard comes off in his hand, that it was only tied on to scare away timid adventurers. *(Oliver Wendell Holmes, Sr.)***

**Human beings are the only animals that can blush. And as Mark Twain pointed out, we’re the only animals that need to. People also are the only animals that copulate face to face. History of the human race would seem to indicate we learned early it wasn’t safe to turn our backs on each other. *(Bernie Smith, in The Joy of Trivia, p. 4)***

**One does not become enlightened by imagining figures of light, but by making the darkness conscious. *(C. G. Jung)***

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**Keep your face to the sunshine and you cannot see the shadows. *(Helen Keller)***

**Never bend your head, always hold it high. Look the world straight in the face. *(Helen Keller)***

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**Look for a long time at what pleases you, and longer still at what pains you. *(Colette, French author)***

**Well into adulthood, country music superstar Reba McEntire was petrified of heights. To conquer her fear, McEntire and her husband and manager, Narvel Blackstock, agreed on a plan: she would be lowered from the ceiling of the Houston Astrodome to begin one of her shows. “I was terrified!” McEntire says. “But Narvel kept saying, ‘I know you can do this.’ He was right, and now my fear is behind me for good.” *(Sheryl Kahn, in McCall’s)***

**There are two ways of meeting difficulties. You alter the difficulties or you alter yourself to meet them. *(Phyllis Bottome)***

**You can close your eyes to reality but not to memories. *(Stanislaw J. Lec, author)*A mosquito on the hunt always flies into the wind. *(L. M. Boyd)***

**There is a beautiful and haunting line with which Dante begins the Divine Comedy: “In the middle of the journey of our life I came to myself in a dark wood.” In such a way, man, the eternal pilgrim, has recently encountered himself along the evolutionary road and been frightened by the blackness of his shadow. *(Loren Eiseley, in Reader’s Digest)***

**You’d think a person who survives a near-fatal accident would become even more afraid of death. But researchers say no, the experience usually diminishes that particular fear. *(L. M. Boyd)***

**Downtown Los Angeles is near four major faults – San Andreas, Newport-Inglewood, Sierra Madre, and Whittier. Not all experts think this heightens the danger. Some say it prompts little quakes, so prevents big ones. *(L. M. Boyd)***

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**You gain strength, courage, and confidence by every experience in which you really stop to look fear in the face. You are able to say to yourself, "I lived through this horror. I can take the next thing that comes along." You must do the thing you think you cannot do. *(Eleanor Roosevelt)***

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**My sabbatical has afforded me a tremendous opportunity to confront my own mind, beliefs, patterns, and relationships. When you clear away all distractions, you must face yourself. There is a scene in The Empire Strikes Back in which Yoda tells Luke Skywalker, “Weapons will do you no good in that cave -- all you will find is yourself.” *(Alan Cohen, Unity minister)***

**Because of the way seagulls are built -- heavy in the front and light in the back -- they experience less wind resistance when they face into the wind. That is what they are doing when you see them at the beach on a windy day all facing the same direction. They are facing into the wind to reduce wind resistance. *(Douglas B. Smith, in Ever Wonder Why?)***

**He who fears from near at hand often fears less. *(Seneca)***

**When Simpson needed an intervention: Jessica Simpson remembers when she hit rock bottom, said Liz McNeil in People. It was Halloween 2017, and she and her husband, former NFL tight end Eric Johnson, were driving their daughter to a school assembly. "It was 7:30 in the morning and I'd already had a drink," Simpson, 39, writes in her new memoir. Later that day, Johnson asked if she wanted to help her three kids put on their costumes, but Simpson says she was "zoned out" from booze and realized she wasn't up for it. "I was terrified of letting them see me in that shape," she says. She took an Ambien to fall asleep, then hid from her kids in the morning until they left and she could start drinking again. She summoned her friends for a self-imposed intervention. "I need to stop," she told them. She entered therapy, and "I started to go through all the depth of the pain that I was experiencing," much of which stemmed from being sexually abused as a child by a family friend. Simpson hasn't had a drink since. "There's no better gift I can give my kids," she says. "There's no better gift I can give my husband. More importantly, there's no better gift I can give myself." *(The Week magazine, February 7, 2020)***

**A rural Pennsylvania county is developing a brochure for prospective homeowners featuring a scratch-‘n’-sniff panel to acquaint them with the smell of manure. Lebanon County hopes to lower the volume of complaints it receives when farmers fertilize their fields. “This is to educate people that if they have a farmer for a neighbor, they might have manure smells,” said county official Angie Foltz. *(The Week magazine, July 15, 2005)***

**My television screen went black, so I turned to the trouble-shooting section of my owner’s manual. Under the heading, “No Picture Can Be Seen,” the first question was “Are you facing the television?” *(Dale Butterfield, in Reader’s Digest)***

**Experienced jungle hunters say the tiger always kills from behind. It won’t attack, if it sees you looking at it, and if you fall face up so you can look straight at it, it won’t eat you. I have not tested this. *(L. M. Boyd)  
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After being evacuated to England in 1961, the “primitive” people of the island of Tristan da Cunha voted two years later to return to their homes, though they would have only a remote chance of rescue if the 6,760-foot-high volcano on their island in the South Atlantic, about midway between South Africa and South America, erupted again. *(Isaac Asimov’s Book of Facts, p. 425)***

**Only two U.S. towns have an extinct volcano within their city limits: Portland and Bend, Oregon. (*Uncle John’s Bathroom Reader: Wise Up!, p. 242)*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*  
In the early 1700’s, the French physicist Rene de Reaumur discovered the concept of making paper from wood after watching wasps chewing wood, turning it to pulp with their saliva, and spreading it on their nests, where it dried into “paper” when exposed to air. But the idea was not put into practical use until 1852, when the first wood-grinding machine for pulverizing wet wood (invented by a German weaver, Frederic Keller) was employed in the production of the first newsprint. *(Isaac Asimov’s Book of Facts, p. 189)***

**Rene Antoine de Reaumur, the French scientist, discovered how to make paper from wood by watching wasps make paper-like nests by chewing up food. (Ripley's Believe It or Not!: Weird Inventions & Discoveries, p. 82)**

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**Ever notice how weekends are like rainbows? They always look great from a distance, but seem to disappear whenever you get up close. *(Jay Trachman, in One to One)***

**When everything is coming your way, you're in the wrong lane. *(Steven Wright, comedian)***

**You have to pick the places you don’t walk away from. *(Joan Didion)***

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