



*Syracuse Integrative Psychiatry*

Comprehensive care. Transformative outcomes.

ANXIETY DEEP DIVE SERIES • PART 2

# The Wisdom of Fear

## FEAR AS A GUIDE

### Fear is Information

In our modern world, we often view fear as a negative emotion to be avoided at all costs. However, from an evolutionary perspective, fear is vital information. It tells us what matters to us, what we want to protect, and where our boundaries lie.

Depth psychology suggests that every symptom has a telos—a purpose or goal. Your anxiety is not just random noise; it is trying to tell you something about your life, your relationships, or your soul's needs.

### What is Your Fear Protecting?

Anxiety often arises when something we value is at risk. If you didn't care, you wouldn't be anxious. In this way, anxiety is a shadow pointing toward your values.

- Fear of public speaking may point to a desire for connection or respect.
- Fear of illness may point to a deep love for life and vitality.
- Fear of rejection may point to a longing for belonging.

### Decoding the Message

Bring to mind a specific anxiety you are currently struggling with.

**1. The Fear:** What is the specific fear? (e.g., "I'm afraid I'll fail this project.")

**2. The Value:** If this fear is a protector, what is it trying to protect? What do you care about that makes this scary?

**3. The Wisdom:** If this anxiety had a voice and a wise message (not just a screaming alarm), what would it be saying to you?