



Introduction to the 2012 eBook edition of *Never Fear, Never Quit*

By:
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FEAR IS A REACTION, COURAGE IS A DECISION.

PERSEVERANCE IS MAKING THAT DECISION DAY AFTER DAY DESPITE THE OBSTACLES AND SETBACKS.

A lot has happened since this book was first published in 1996, much of it frightening. We get a tangible and visceral reminder of the war on terror every time we have to take our shoes off before entering an airport scanner. The political environment is toxically polarized, with candidates on both sides conjuring up horrifying images of catastrophe should their opponent be elected.

Millions of baby boomers are facing retirement with inadequate savings, and millions of young people are struggling to find meaningful work in a world where technology is making many old-line jobs obsolete. The dot-com boom busted, has boomed again, and (who knows?) might be setting up to bust again. The word “crisis” has been applied to the economy, the job market, banking, personal debt, fuel prices, the environment, healthcare, obesity, education, and a whole lot of other problems. Sometimes it feels like we are in the midst of a crisis of crises, doesn’t it?

We cannot change what’s happening in the world around us, but we can decide how we’ll respond to what happens. Fear is a reaction, and a very understandable reaction to much of what’s happening today. Courage is a decision—the determination to stand up to fear and do the things we need to do even in the face of our fears. More than that, courage and perseverance are skills that can be learned and practiced. In *Never Fear, Never Quit* Rafe teaches Paul Peterson to give fear a name and turn it into just a problem; he teaches him that fear is imagining many tomorrows while courage is concentrating on what needs to be done in this one today. The principles are timeless, but must be learned by each new generation.

Years ago I was sitting in an airport terminal waiting for a flight, and it turned out that the person sitting next to me had read *Never Fear, Never Quit*. “That was very clever,” he said, “the way you rearranged the letters in the word fear to come up with the name Rafe.”

I was stunned. It had never even occurred to me that the name of my character Rafe and the subject of this book—fear—were composed of the same letters. The name Rafe popped into my head one evening as I was thinking about the book. There was nothing clever about it.

But that is a pretty good metaphor for our era, which has been called “the age of anxiety.” We have this undertone of fear that is often below the level of conscious awareness, the way I was not aware that the name Rafe *Never Fear, Never Quit*

was composed of letters from the word fear. That is why the lessons of this book are so vitally important today. When we recognize fear for what it is—a cowardly thief that robs us of our freedom, success, and happiness—we are able to stand up to it, to confront it with courage, and do what must be done. The way Paul Peterson did.

The way I hope you will do.