

Fear vs. paranoia

[Business](#)



Although fear and paranoia are both emotions towards perceived threats, they have different levels of anxiety.

The definition of fear is a feeling of distress towards a perceived threat. It is connected to pain, death, emotional harm, and physical injury. It also is associated with any negative consequence to an object or deed. Most fears are irrational, but to the person experiencing the fear, it seems completely rational. Common fears include agoraphobia (fear of open spaces or crowds), insectophobia (fear of insects), mysophobia (fear of dirt and germs), and acrophobia (fear of heights).

Paranoia is a whole other level of fear. Paranoia is a “ thought process believed to be heavily influenced by anxiety or fear, often to the point of irrationality and delusion”, according to Dictionary. com. Sometimes, it can be classified as a psychological disorder, and can cause hallucinations. Paranoia can mean a loss of perspective and reality.

The word “ paranoia” actually comes from a Greek word meaning “ madness”. Stephen Griggs, Ph. D., says, “ What distinguishes paranoia is that no matter what is the fact ... thinking doesn’t change.” Paranoid people can also have psychosis, which makes them even more panicked. Fear and paranoia are similar because they are caused by the same thing: suppressed feelings.

The more a feeling is restrained, the more that paranoia emerges. Both fear and paranoia are a reaction to an outer force that the subject interprets as threatening. The main difference between the two is that paranoia is a higher level of anxiety that can eventually be detrimental to the subject. In

conclusion, everyone has fears. It could be a rational fear, like losing a job, or an irrational fear, like the fear of clowns.

Fears should not keep a person from living a normal life, at which point it becomes paranoia. An innocent fear could possibly blossom into paranoia if allowed to do so. Remember what John F. Kennedy said: " The only thing we have to fear is fear itself."