

Fear of threats associated with social circle size

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Humans' fear level toward threats is associated with the typical size of our social circles, according to a report published Apr. 11 in the open access journal *PLoS ONE*.

People fear threats that would kill 100 people more than those that would kill 10 people, but equally fear those that would kill either 100 or 1,000 people, the authors report. [Social groups](#) tend to be on the order of about 100 people. The researchers, Mirta Galesic of the Max Planck Institute for Human Development in Germany and Rocio Garcia-Retamero of the University of Granada in Spain, also determined that this effect was not due to lack of [differentiation](#) between 100 and 1,000.

The authors conclude that the work could have important implications for raising awareness about specific risks to the general public.

More information: Galesic M, Garcia-Retamero R (2012) The Risks We Dread: A Social Circle Account. *PLoS ONE* 7(4): e32837. [doi:10.1371/journal.pone.0032837](https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0032837)

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