

## 6 Steps to Deflate Self-Defeating Fears



**Have you ever justified your lack of success** towards a goal with the excuse that you lacked the experience? Or that you lacked the resources: money and time? Did you give up before you even tried?

Have you ever looked at a competition in your field and justified their success to something trivial like:

- She's successful, because she's got better computer skills.
- He's successful because he knows the right people.
- They are successful because they've been doing this for many years.
- John did it, because he's loaded, he has more money than I'll ever see.
- Maggie has always been luckier than me.

We've missed the real work behind the scene. We've *robbed* them of the real reason why they are successful. Plus, we have spent extra energy justifying our lack of success and missed real opportunities to learn from their excellence.

## **You are not alone...**

There are many of us along with you, struggling with similar experiences based on the same self-inflicted self-limiting thinking. This might sound harsh, but it is reality and in order to shine light on the matter, we must look at it with a critical eye and be honest with ... ourselves.

If you are feeling defensive by my above statements, bare with me, hear me out. I'm not labeling this as bad, but rather, something I am going through which I choose not to have in my life. I'm constantly working on my mindset and I wanted to share my experiences with you.

## **First, a personal story:**

I recently came up with an idea for a new advertising network which I was interested in pursuing. I had spent several hours today doing market research. As I went from site to site, I would click on the *about* section and read the bios of founders. I found myself scanning through the bios looking for keywords related to advertising or publishing. After doing this for about an hour, I finally caught on to what I was doing subconsciously. You see, I wasn't exactly researching for existing markets, but rather was looking for excuses why I would fail in this foreign market. "Wow... what an insight." I thought.

Can you believe it? I was actually looking up the backgrounds of founders, specifically looking for qualifications and related experiences for which I lacked. My mind was looking for *evidences* to justify why they've succeeded and why I will not succeed because I lacked these experiences. This realization *woke* me up and brought back memories from several years ago where I'd unconsciously allowed this self-limiting belief to stop me from living a full life, thus limiting my potential for happiness and fulfillment.

## So, what are you saying?

I genuinely believe that we often compromise our goals through a limiting, self-imposed, mindset and a fear of failure. Mindset is everything. We may not be able to control the thoughts our mind throws at us, but we can choose to remain conscious and observe these thoughts rather than instantly reacting to them.

It is so easy to get caught up in the artifacts of our own mind. Our mind's job is to keep us the same, and thus to instill fear in us to pursue goals outside our comfort zone. This is natural and instinctual. We all experience it. But for anyone who's achieved what they really wanted, they've learned to move beyond it. **To act in spite of the fear.**

*Here are 6 steps to overcome this voice in us that has the potential to stop us from pursuing and reaching our dreams:*

### Step 1: Hearing & Recognizing the Voice

Become aware of what excuses your mind is saying to delay or deceit action. Here are common ones I've picked up on:

- I don't have educational background, maybe I'll do it after I've gained X degrees.
- I don't have enough money to pursue this. I can't afford it.
- I just don't have any time.
- I don't have the right connections in this market.
- What the heck do I know about X? Nothing. It's never gonna work.
- I have not learned enough about this. I need to know everything first.

Watch your language when speaking to another person. Watch the phrases you use, are you making excuses? Are you justifying a situation with thoughts of lack and limitation?

## Step 2: Beware of 'Analysis Paralysis'

I've fallen into this trap many times before. *Analysis Paralysis* is the perception that you need to understand every single element of how to do something before actually taking any action towards a project (You may have a better definition, but you get my gist.).

Here's a scenario from my life to demonstrate this. Before pursuing a project, I would spend days and weeks on researching and *analyzing* the market. During this time, I've gathered enough reason why I will fail, thus after all this time invested, I would end up taking no action.

If I had spent this time doing minimal research and then dived straight into action, I would have gained valuable experiences than had I just sat there looking for reasons to failure. I may have even succeeded during that time.

Yes, it is important to do your research and understand a market. The problem arises when we are not conscious of our goals and purpose for researching. It is very easy to fall into analysis paralysis, which serves as another form of excuse to delay action (if any).

## Step 3: Catch Yourself from the Chasm of Self-Defeating Thoughts

Our thoughts can easily become a downward spiral. While dwelling on a self-defeating thought pattern, if we do not interrupt it and consciously bring ourselves out, we can become *paralyzed* by fear and lack.

You can shift your emotions and interrupt your self-defeating thoughts by:

- **Changing your language.** - Instead of saying *I can't do this because I don't have enough experience*. Try changing your language to *I don't yet have much experience with this, but I'm confident I could master it. Let me start today.*

- **Changing your physiology.** - Get up and move around. Do something different that dramatically changes your current physical state. Do 20 jumping-jacks while singing *happy birthday*. This is a powerful tool to interrupt any thought patterns.
- **Changing your focus.** - What are you focused on? Explicitly find something else to focus on for awhile.

## **Step 4: Know Your Mind is Not You**

Your mind's perception is not you. Just because you have a self-defeating thought, does not mean that it is true, or that you need to follow its lure. I know this is a tough one, but trust me, you are not your thoughts, you are not your mind, you are not your ego. You are divine, you are precious and you have it within yourself to fulfill your heart's deepest desires.

## **Step 5: Look for the Great Value You Have to Offer**

Instead of looking for reasons why we cannot be successful against another person with a head start, look for reasons why you will win by providing value that the competition has not.

Look for opportunities instead of missed opportunities. Look for things that contributed to others success and use them as inspirations to better your own venture. Look for things that others have done well, learn from them.

Focus on creating massive value. Expect to give more than you receive in return. Once this simple concept is genuinely practiced and integrated, you'll find that the competition really does not matter for you to fulfill your vision.

## **Step 6: Forget about the 'How', Focus on the 'What'**

It is easy to get caught up in the details of How you're going to accomplish your goal, before you begin acting on the idea or project. When you get too caught up in How, you are likely welcomed with a long list of what may seem like impossible tasks. This is very discouraging and will slow down momentum. Besides, things rarely play out as you expect. Yes, it is important to have plans towards accomplishing a goal, but create plans with high-level views without being too bogged down on the How.

Time is much better spent on creating a clear, concrete and measurable target. Know exactly what it is that you want (whether it is a project or in life), create a rough plan and then dive in with massive action. Focus on what you can do now, right now!

As with driving a car late at night along a country-side road, it's dark outside and you can only see the roads two meters ahead of you. You know your destination (your target) and you know that the road will eventually lead you there (your plan). All you can do now is to focus on the next two meters and then the two meters after that (what you can do now). You know that this will lead you there, as long as the car stays pointed down the road.

## **Parting Thoughts**

I share the same fears with everyone else. In fact, I feel them all the time. So much so that several years ago, I would shake at the thought of something that scared me. My hands would tremor and I could feel my heart in my throat. :) I've since learned to dive in, to just do it, and learned that I will be safe once I land on the other side. Every single time when I've put my heart into something, something that scared me or otherwise, I have never failed. Things always turned out better than my fear would allow me to see. Failure is when you give up. You can't fail, if you don't give up.