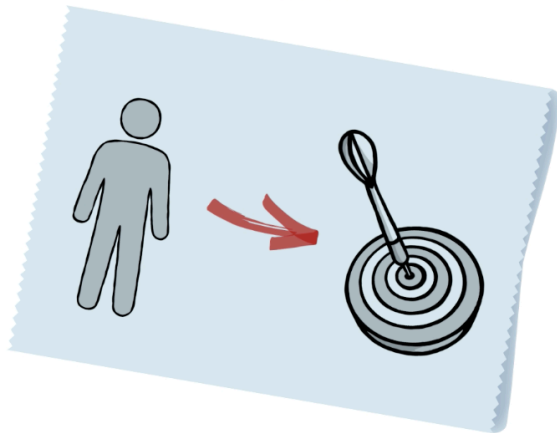


1. Introduction

Setting Goals Is One of the Keys to Success in Life



Plans



Actions



Regardless of whether you set big audacious goals or just implement some small adjustments, setting goals is one of the keys to success in life.

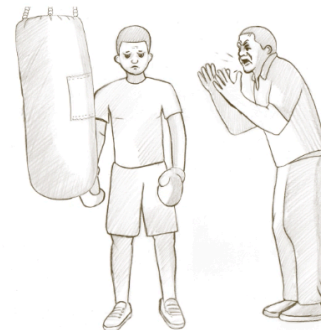
Yet while most of us have no problems identifying goals we want to accomplish and even making specific plans to reach those goals, putting our plans into action is more frequently challenging than we think. One common stumbling

block is a person's low self efficacy or, in other words, low confidence in their own abilities. Individuals who don't possess much self efficacy have a hard time putting their plans into action and following through because deep down they don't believe they can achieve them.

This problem can dramatically affect your life without you even being aware of its root. To solve the problem of low self efficacy, we need to begin by asking the right questions. For example, what do you think are the four main factors that could diminish your self efficacy? How can you develop more confidence in your abilities? What are the most important things you need to know about the influence of your mind on your achievements? These are some of the questions I'll ask and answer in the short course. The advice you're about to discover is based both on scientific research and my personal experience.

My goal is to help you understand how to develop more confidence in your abilities, avoid the most common dangers associated with low self efficacy, and enjoy more success in your life. Let's start by explaining in more detail what self efficacy is.

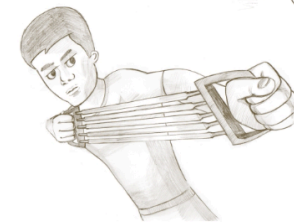
What Are the
4 Main Factors
That Could Diminish
Your Self-Efficacy?



How Can You Develop More
Confidence in Your Abilities?



What Are The Most
Important Things
You Need to Know
About Your Mindset?



2. Basics of Self-Efficacy

Lesson 1: What is Self-Efficacy?

Think of self efficacy as an indicator of how strongly you believe in your personal ability to complete a certain task successfully, it determines things such as whether you'll persist or give up while working on a specific task. How long you'll stick to challenging programs designed to bring long term results like a diet or workout regimen.

What goals you've set for yourself, where extremely difficult ends and impossible starts. The beliefs you have about your abilities shaped your life. They affect how you think, feel and behave. If you have a low level of self efficacy, you'll have a tendency to write off things you consider impossible.

Then, for the sole reason you don't believe you're able to achieve your dreams, you'll shortchange yourself instead of realizing your full potential.

It's important to note that self efficacy is task related. You can have high self efficacy when driving a car and low self efficacy when working on your business. In other words, you may have full confidence in your abilities as a driver, but lack conviction that you're a good entrepreneur.

If you possess high self efficacy in many tasks, you'll generally have a much easier time gaining it in other areas as well. For this reason, we can divide people into groups, those who generally possess high self efficacy and those who don't.

We'll talk about the differences in the next lesson. You might be wondering if there's any difference between self efficacy and self esteem. The chief difference between these two is that self efficacy defines your belief in your abilities. While self esteem is your belief in your own worth. They can sometimes influence each other, but they don't have to.

When you have strong self efficacy for, say, driving a car, you believe you can drive safely. This has nothing to do with your overall self-esteem, which is how you judge your worth as a person. When you have high self-esteem, you consider yourself a valuable human being.

If you're a poor driver, you'll most likely have poor self efficacy when it comes to driving. However, if you don't rely on your driving skills as a source of your self-worth, it won't affect

your self-esteem. There are plenty of millionaires who are lousy drivers and their lack of driving skills doesn't affect their self-esteem.

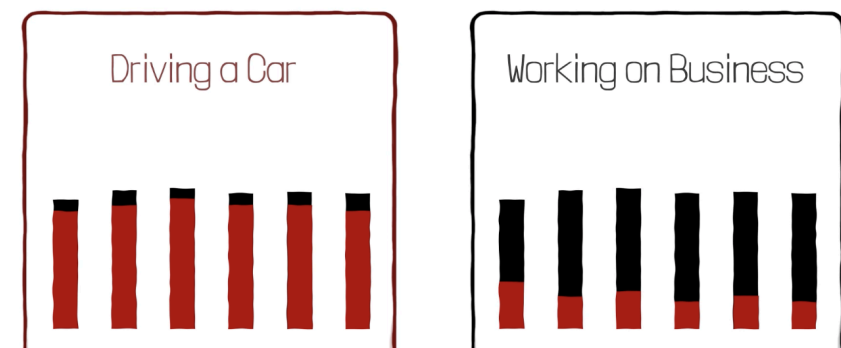
Your level of self-esteem can affect how you approach challenging tasks. If you have low self-esteem, it's more likely you'll struggle with accomplishing new goals because low self-esteem often comes with the belief that you're worthless and you shouldn't even try to change your circumstances. It's also important to note that self efficacy is a good thing as long as you don't mistake it.

For cockiness, people with a strong sense of self efficacy are able to meet challenges head on. But it doesn't mean they walk around bragging how great they are or set unrealistic goals to avoid getting cocky.

Heed the advice of Zen Buddhism, show Zen is a concept of Zen Buddhism, meaning beginner's mind. It refers to approaching a subject you're studying as a beginner, even when you're already an expert. It's about having an open mind, an eagerness to learn and a lack of preconceptions.

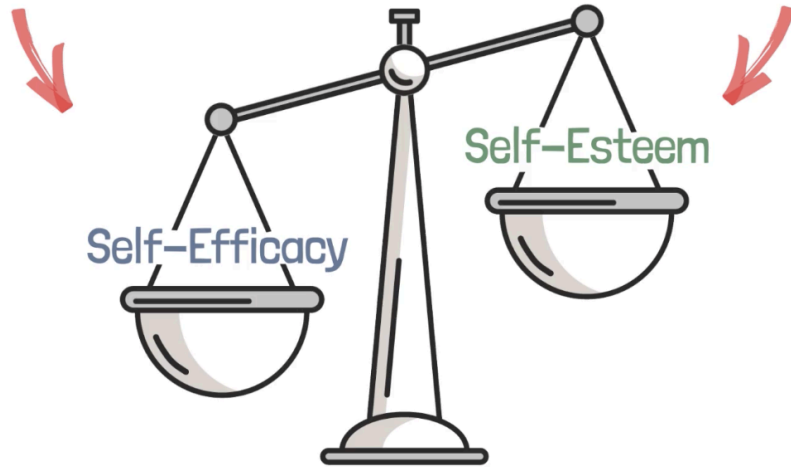
This approach will help you stay humble and keep your mind open to the new opportunities to grow. As Shindo Suzuki, a Zen Buddhist renowned for founding the first Buddhist monastery outside Asia, said In the beginner's mind, there are many possibilities. In the experts mind. There are few. Don't limit yourself by assuming you know everything.

Self-Efficacy Is Task-Related



Belief in Your **Abilities**

Belief in Your **Worth**



Self-Efficacy



Cockiness



Shoshin

*Beginner's Mind



Having an Open Mind,
an Eagerness to Learn,
and a Lack of Preconceptions





Shunryu Suzuki

"In the beginner's mind there are many possibilities, in the expert's mind there are few."

Don't Limit Yourself by Assuming You Know Everything



Lesson 2: How Self-Efficacy Affects Your Life

5 Common Characteristics of People With a **Strong** Sense of Self-Efficacy

1. Challenges Are Something That I Can Overcome and Master
2. I Persevere in the Face of Difficulties
3. I Take Responsibility For My Failures
4. I Put More Effort Into Completing a Task
5. I Commit to My Goals

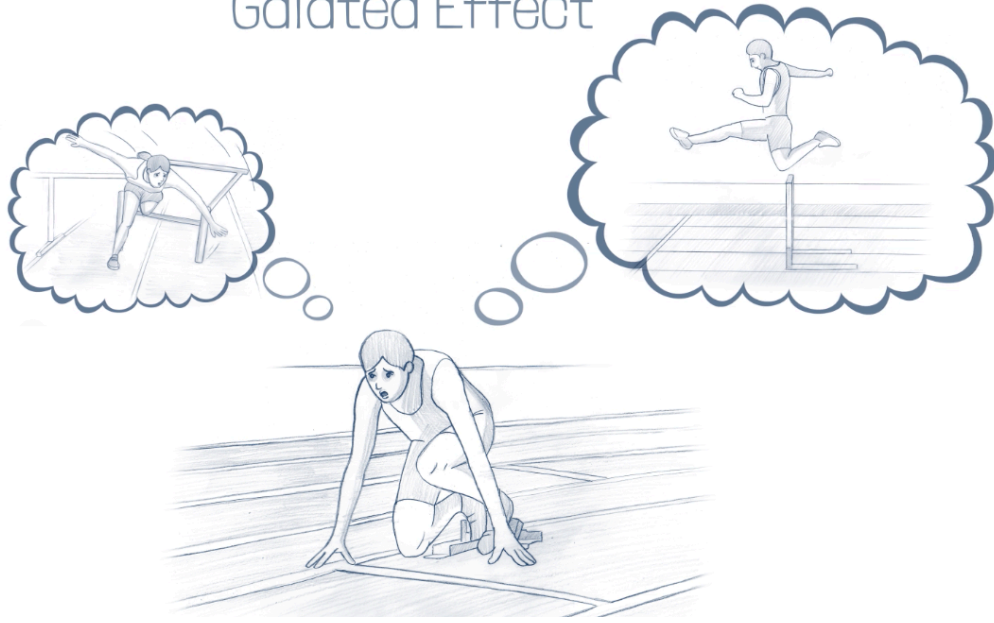


5 Common Characteristics of People With a *Weak* Sense of Self-Efficacy

1. I Avoid Challenges
2. I Believe That Difficult Goals Are Beyond My Capabilities
3. I Quickly Lose Confidence in My Abilities
4. I Tend to Take a Narrow View of the Task
5. I Don't Believe That My Actions and Decisions Make a Difference in My Life



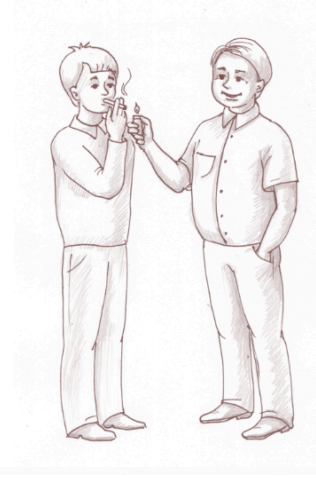
Galatea Effect



Low self efficacy will dramatically lower your chances of achieving personal success. It's because of the **Galatea effect**, which is a type of a **self-fulfilling prophecy that makes our self expectations largely determine our performance**. If you don't believe in your abilities, you aren't likely to set big goals that can make a dramatic improvement in your life. Since you doubt in your ability to achieve success, you won't do your best. After all, why invest effort in something that you feel isn't going to work out? **With such an attitude, failure is pretty much a guarantee.**

On the other hand, if you possess a strong sense of self efficacy, you constantly set the bar higher and higher and improve yourself on a daily basis. You can't help but become more and more successful.

Weak Self-Efficacy



A person with high self efficacy will set a goal to stop smoking altogether and stick to it in the face of difficulties. A person with low self efficacy will set a goal to reduce her smoking and then give up when faced with the temptation to smoke more.

Strong Self-Efficacy



The reason why many people struggle to lose weight might be related to their weak sense of self efficacy and not just their self-discipline, since each failure further decreases your level of self efficacy. In this case, the belief that you can lose weight each time you fail, you perpetuate a vicious cycle that leads you to even more failure. Soon you give up your goal to lose weight altogether because your mind is fixed that you can't achieve it.

Albert Bandura

Four Factors Affecting Self-Efficacy



1. Mastery Experiences – success increases self efficacy while failure lowers it.
2. Social Modelling – when you see someone succeeding, your self efficacy increases. When you see someone fail, your self efficacy decreases.
3. Social Persuasion – encouragement increases your self efficacy while discouragement lowers it.
4. Psychological Responses – experiencing stress can decrease your self efficacy if you consider it a sign of your inability

3. Factors Affecting Self-Efficacy

Lesson 3: The Experience of Mastery

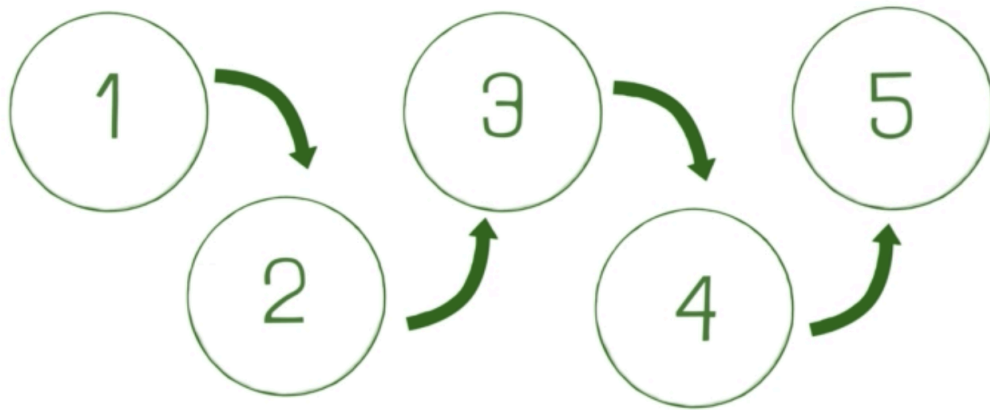
Nothing Succeeds
Like Success



Success by Success,
They Build Powerful
Self-Efficacy

Although your past performance is the most important factor that influences your self-efficacy, **it doesn't mean that if you've experienced a string of failures in the past, you're bound to repeat them.** The key to leveraging this source of self efficacy is to ensure small wins.

The Key Is to Ensure Small Wins



Peter Diamandis

*Bold: How to Go Big, Create Wealth
and Impact the World*



Entrepreneur Peter Diamandis, author of *Bold How to Go Big Create Wealth and Impact the World*, emphasizes in his book *The Power of Establishing a track record to achieve big goals*. In 1982, Diamandis came up with an idea to establish an International Space University. Yes, a university in space. Talk about bold goals. Obviously, the first thing he did was not to build the university and send it into space. He broke down his goal into five phases.

First, organize a conference about the idea of the International Space University ISU.

Second, hold a nine weeks summer session of the ISU.

Third, repeat the same summer program in countries all over the world to prove the concept works.

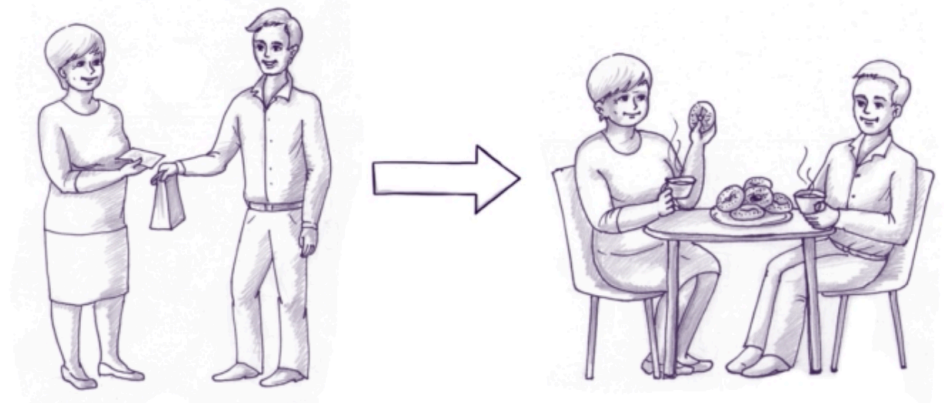
Fourth, establish a permanent campus on Earth.

Fifth, establish a university on the International Space Station.

In 1994, 12 years after setting these big goals, the International Space University established its campus in Strasbourg, France. His goal to establish the Space University no longer sounded improbable.

While your end goal doesn't have to be as big as his, the process is exactly the same if you want to increase your self efficacy. Here's how you can build your self efficacy to ensure success in building your business.

1. Find Your First Client in Your Circle of Friends and Family



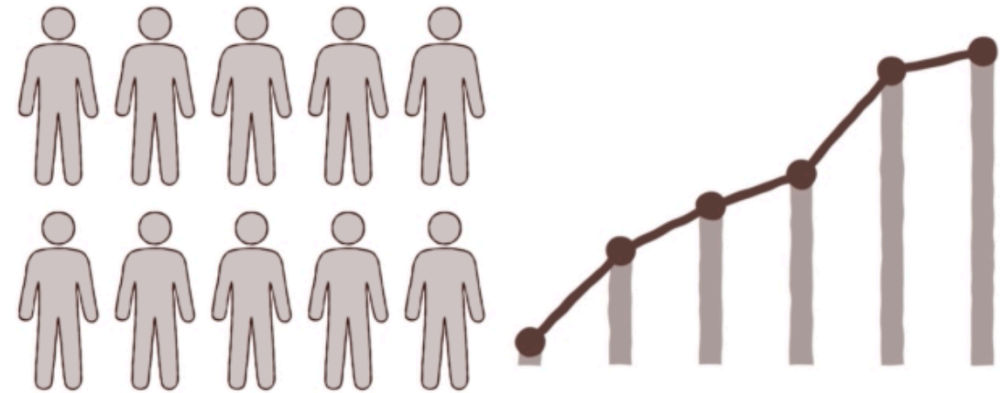
Even if it's your mom, it's still your first client and a necessary step toward gaining self efficacy to grow a full blown business.

2. Make Your First Sale to a Stranger



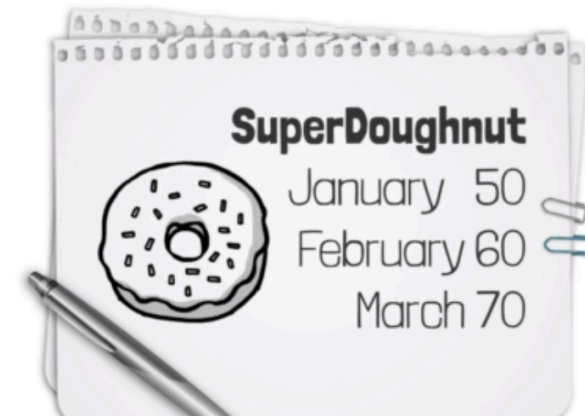
This will give you a powerful boost of motivation that somebody else besides your family and friends is interested in your product.

3. Sell Your Product to Ten Strangers



If ten people bought your product, there have to be many more prospects. You're solidifying the belief in your ability to sell.

4. Establish a Company and Set Small Sales Targets



5. Hire Your First Employee



Sixth, distribute your product to retail stores.

Seven, expand with the help of investors.

Eight Take your brand to overseas markets.

Ninth, go public and get listed on the stock exchange.

Tenth, sell on Mars or stay on Earth and retire after selling your business for millions of dollars.

On a more personal level, here's how you can build your self efficacy.

If all your previous efforts to lose weight have failed, first, start tracking your calories.

It's a simple habit that will increase your awareness and generate results with little to no resistance.

Second, make a small change to your diet.

Eliminate just one high calorie food that contributes to your unhealthy diet the most.

If you successfully resist the temptation to eat it, you'll start believing more in your self-control

abilities.

Third, eliminate another food or an entire group, for instance, all kinds of sugary drinks.

Fourth, introduce more vegetables in your diet to make this change smaller.

Add just one piece of vegetable per day.

Fifth, add some exercise.

Your routine, even if it's just 30 minutes per week, it will suffice for now while you're building

yourself efficacy.

Sixth, set reasonable goals for losing weight, remember, it probably took years to get overweight,

so getting back to your optimum weight won't happen overnight.

Seven Try to avoid recreational eating.

Eat only when you're actually hungry.

Haith, if you're maintaining your exercise regimen, increase it a little bit every month.

Ninth, if you gain a pound, don't get discouraged.

Keep your eyes on the long term prize.

And Tenth enjoy your new body.

By breaking your big goals into smaller, much more achievable steps, you'll ensure small wins that

will help you develop more confidence in your abilities and make it easier to face bigger challenges.



Note that while your self efficacy increases when you achieve successes, it becomes more firmly established

when it's built on successes that require you to overcome obstacles through persistence.

If you only experience easy successes, you'll come to expect quick results with little to no effort.

Consequently, you'll get easily discouraged when you face setbacks.

On the other hand, when you've already experienced successes after pushing through numerous obstacles,

you'll be more resilient and capable of dealing with challenges.

Arnold Schwarzenegger once said strength does not come from winning your struggles.

Develop your strengths when you go through hardships and decide not to surrender.

That is strength.

Mahatma Gandhi said something similar.

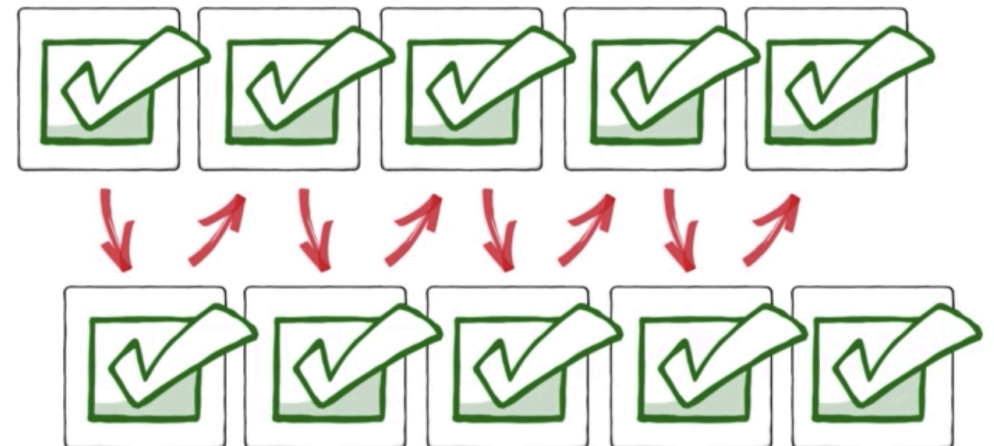
Strength does not come from physical capacity.

It comes from an indomitable will.

When you're struggling, remind yourself that it's your struggles which will make you a stronger, more

resilient and more successful person.

And speaking of struggles in the next lesson, we'll talk about handling failure.



"Strength does not come from winning.
Your struggles develop your strengths.
When you go through hardships and decide
not to surrender, that is strength."

Arnold Schwarzenegger



"Strength does not come from physical capacity.
It comes from an indomitable will."

Mahatma Gandhi



Lesson 4: How to Handle Failure

Albert Bandura discovered that failure damages self efficacy, however, risk taking and its subsequent

failures are essential to achieve anything worthwhile in life, and you can't really avoid it.

What you can do, though, while working on developing yourself efficacy, is to minimize the risk of

failures by focusing on small, achievable goals.

When you experience a streak of successes, you'll become capable of dealing with failures in a positive,

constructive way.

Then when you start taking bigger risks, your newly gained resilience will help you stay confident,

even despite failures.

Still, it's a good idea to change your beliefs about failures.

Even though acceptance of failure in society is steadily rising, many people still avoid setting big

goals as they associate the act of failing with a personal failure.

They think I failed and therefore I'm a failure.

I've noticed this belief is not nearly as widespread in the entrepreneurial circles, where, in fact

failure is often celebrated.

What's the difference between the general population and entrepreneurs?

Entrepreneurs consider failure a part of every achievement.

As Richard Branson said, failure and rejection are an inevitable part of business, and how you deal

with them will ultimately affect your success.

The ability to cope with and learn from failure and rejection can be practiced and honed along the way.

Some people are better at it than others.

We have had many great successes at Virgin, but we also experienced a number of failures.

Every time something hasn't worked out as we hoped it would.

We have picked ourselves up, looked at what went wrong and learn from our mistakes.

Therein lies the key to changing your beliefs about failure.

It's just an opportunity to learn what doesn't work and do better next time.

Remind yourself of this concept each time you're afraid to fail.

Surrounding yourself with people who approach failure in this way will also help you alter your beliefs.

You can also try rejection therapy, a social game developed by Jason Comley, who for a year strived

to get rejected every single day.

The rules of his game are simple rule number one.

At least once every day you must be rejected by another person.

Rule number two, expecting more rules.

Sorry to disappoint you.

There's only one rule.

The only objective of the game is to get rejected.

If your request is granted, you must ask for more until you achieve the successful outcome, which

in this case is rejection.

Rejection therapy is not just a weird game created by a random person.

It's an example of a psychotherapeutic technique called flooding, which was developed in 1967.

It's still used by therapists to help patients overcome phobias.

A patient is put into a situation where she faces her phobia at its worst by facing the worst fear head

on.

The patient's fear gradually minimizes as she realizes it's not something to be afraid of.

Although flooding is not for everyone, as it's more traumatic than systematic desensitization, overcoming

fear step by step, it can work pretty well to overcome your fear of failure.

By facing rejection right away, you'll quickly notice the first results reduced fear of rejection,

which will help you become more at peace with failure.

Note that I'm not a doctor and you should never listen to self-help authors when your mental health

is at stake.

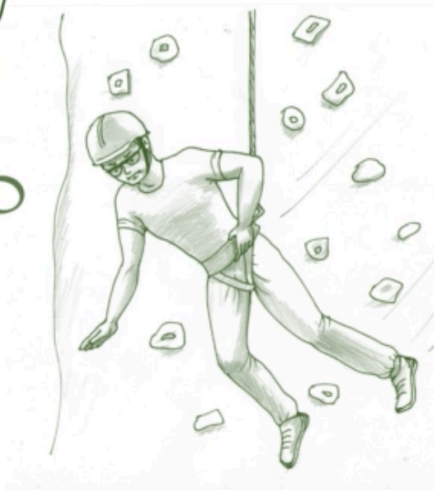
If you suffer from any mental health issues, speak with your doctor.



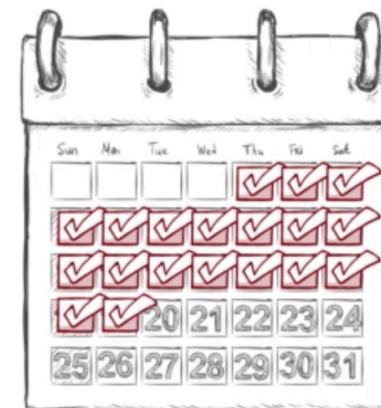
"Failure and Rejection are
an Inevitable Part of Business,
and How you Deal With Them
Will Ultimately Affect
Your Success."

Richard Branson

Failure Is Just an Opportunity
to Learn What Doesn't Work
and Do Better Next Time

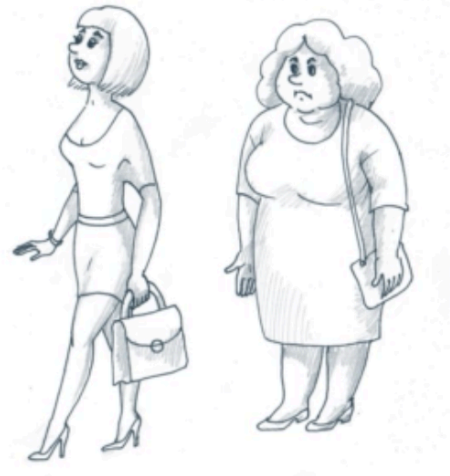
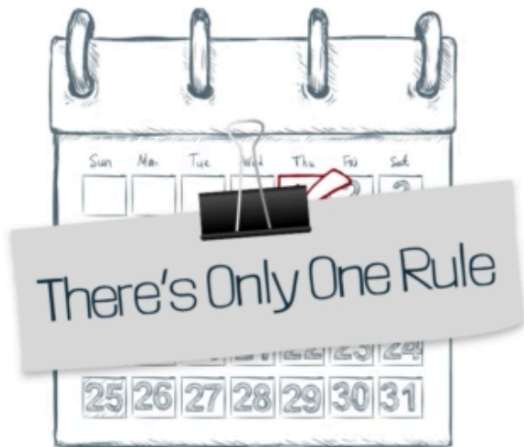


by Jason Comely



1. At Least Once Every Day,
You Must Be Rejected
by Another Person





It's an Example of a Psychotherapeutic
Technique Called **Flooding**



**Flooding Is More Traumatic
Than Systematic Desensitization**

Lesson 5: Social Modeling

Social modeling or vicarious experience, which in simpler terms means watching and imitating other

people, is the second factor influencing yourself efficacy.

It's not nearly as powerful as experiencing successes on your own, but it's still useful, especially

when you have little confidence in your abilities and even small goals appear too big to achieve.

As with mastery experiences, watching others succeed increases your self efficacy while watching others

fail decreases it.

However, self efficacy built on social modeling alone is frail.

If you try to do something after seeing someone succeed but you fail, your self advocacy will dramatically

decrease much more than if you were to fail after your previous small win.

The most crucial thing to understand about social modeling is that the behaviors of your friends influence

your own.

An infamous Bobo doll experiment examine children's behavior after watching adults behave either aggressively

or kindly towards a Bobo doll.

The results showed that children in the group exposed to the aggressive behavior were more likely to

act more aggressively toward the doll.

The children who saw adults act kindly towards the doll were more likely to exhibit the same behavior.

Modeling works in exactly the same way for self efficacy.

When you watch people who constantly set the bar higher and higher, you also strive for more.

When you watch people who fail, failure becomes the norm.

Your belief in your abilities decreases and you want to remain in your safe bubble.

If your friends have a tendency to give up when faced with setbacks, it's likely you'll behave in the

exact same way.

After all, that's the model you've grown to know.

If, on the other hand, they push through obstacles and keep going when you would have given up, it

will inspire you to imitate their behavior.

The effect of social modeling is the strongest.

When you're watching a person whom you see as similar to yourself, you get more motivation by watching

people slightly better than you succeed.

Then from watching the pros, watching the elite performers results in a more detached experience,

there's a wide gap in skills between them and you.

So watching them succeed doesn't make you think that you can do it, too, as in the case of watching

a slightly better friend do it.

To give you an example from my personal life, reading biographies of successful entrepreneurs has never

inspired me as much as watching fellow members of an online forum succeed.

These were the guys I spoke with who had the same exact thoughts and doubts as I did when starting out,

seeing how they went from zero dollars per month to 100 dollars per month to 1000 dollars, 2000 dollars,

5000 dollars per month and beyond has had a much more powerful impact on me than reading about Richard

Branson's newest bold venture, although it's inspiring to some extent to.

You can further boost your self efficacy with public accountability, being a part of a group of people

who share the same goal and are on a similar level is a good way to do so because of the color effect,

wherein people expend more effort in a group than they would if they had been working alone.

Nobody wants to be the weakest link, so everyone works harder.

Do you want to lose weight?

Join online forums for regular people trying to lose weight, interact with them, start your own progress

thread and support others with a similar body type.

This simple practice will develop the confidence in your ability to lose weight to a larger extent than

watching motivational videos of fitness coaches who are difficult to relate to with their perfectly

sculpted bodies.

Do you want to learn a foreign language?

Follow blogs of people who are just starting out with a new language, not polyglots.

Polyglots have a powerful advantage over you.

Most languages share similar vocabulary, grammar rules and other peculiarities.

That makes them easier to learn.

It creates a knowledge gap between you and them, which makes it harder to relate to them.

Moreover, the more knowledge these experts have often, the more difficult it is for them to relate

to beginners because of the curse of knowledge bias.

That is to say, they've forgotten what it's like to not have certain knowledge, no matter what goal

you want to achieve.

Surround yourself with people on a similar level to inspire and motivate each other.

Last but not least, you can also benefit from social modeling by watching yourself perform tasks successfully.

Consider recording yourself, achieving a success, taking photos of your accomplishments or writing

about your successful experiences.

Let's imagine you're learning a new language to improve yourself efficacy.

You can record yourself while speaking on Skype with a language partner.

You can agree beforehand what questions she will ask you and even the answers you'll give when you listen

to yourself.

Having a smooth conversation with a language partner.

Once you overcome the weird feeling of listening to your own voice, your self advocacy will grow.

If you're working on a fitness related goal, you can record yourself breaking your personal records.

I taught myself how to correctly perform weightlifting exercises by recording myself, practicing them

and correcting my mistakes.

Once I learn how to do these exercises, I kept recording my workouts out of habit, watching myself

lift heavier and heavier weights built more confidence in my abilities.

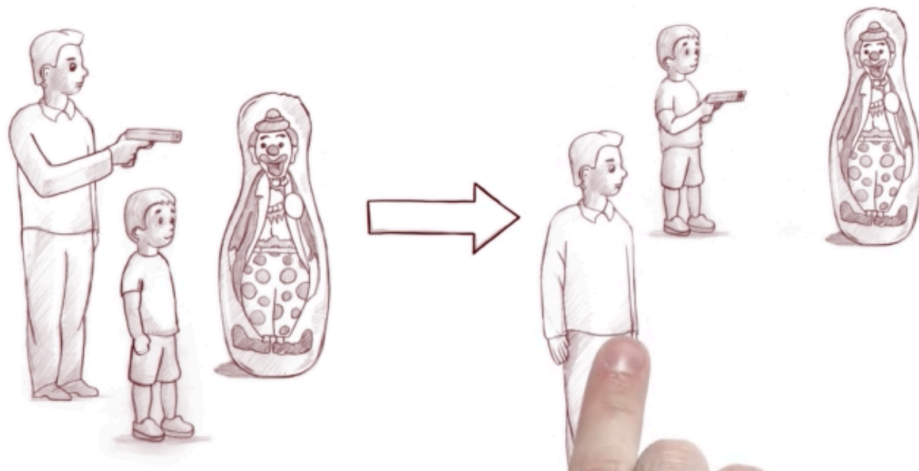
You can combine self modeling with participating in a group of like minded individuals.

If you successfully resisted the temptation to eat chocolate, write a post describing your success,

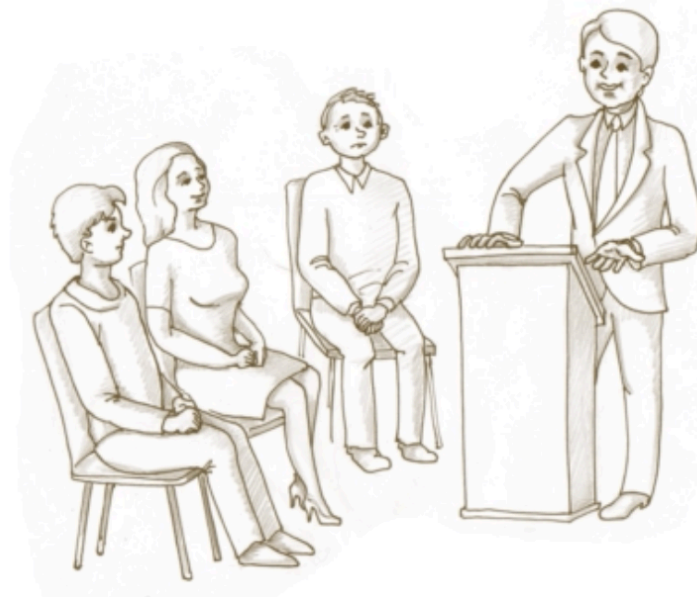
if you sold your first product to a stranger, then brag on the forum for entrepreneurs, it will inspire

people similar to you while building more confidence in your abilities.

The Behaviors of Your Friends Influence Your Own



Public Accountability

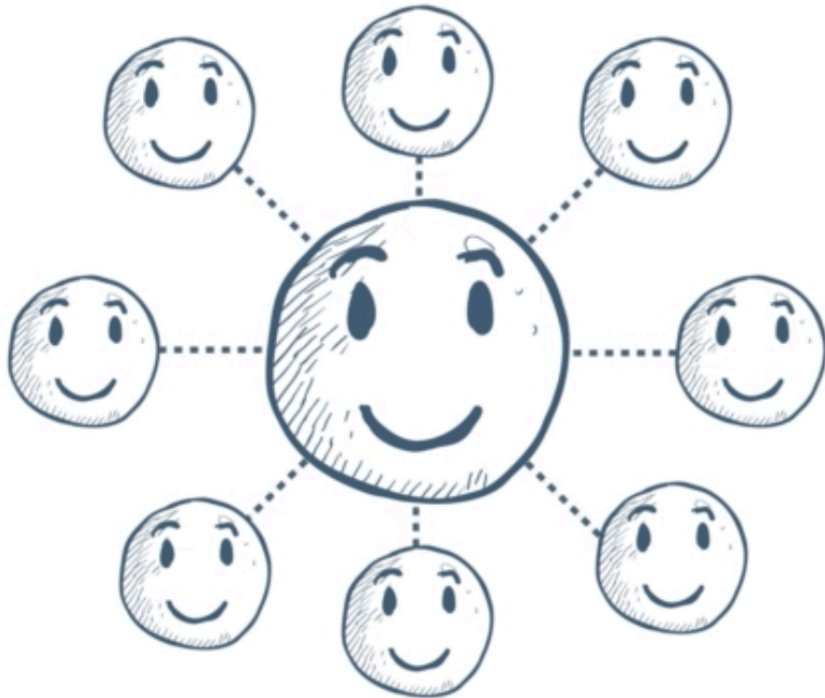
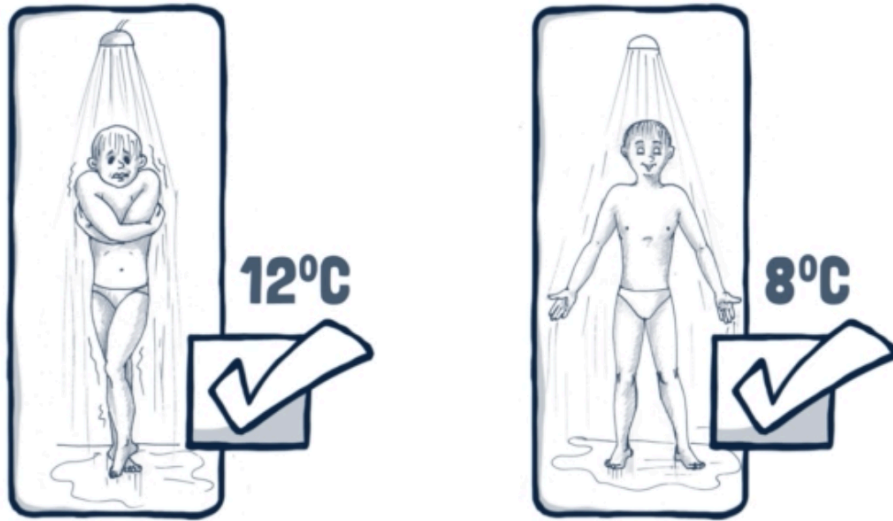


Nobody Wants to Be the Weakest Link

The Curse of Knowledge Bias



Watching Yourself Perform Tasks Successfully



Lesson 6: Social Persuasion

Verbal persuasion, encouragement or discouragement is the third factor influencing yourself advocacy,

words of encouragement, whether they come from other people or from you, produce a short term effect

that can help you achieve a small win.

Words of discouragement, on the other hand, produce a short term negative effect that can prevent

you from pushing a little bit harder to achieve your goal. In the long term, negative input can undermine your confidence in your abilities.

Unfortunately, because we pay more attention to negative feedback, discouragement has a more powerful

negative impact on your behavior than the positive impact of encouragement.

For this reason, it's crucial to avoid people who put you down and reduce or ideally stop spending

time with such individuals.

If you find it challenging to escape from unhelpful people, focus on getting as much encouragement

from other people as possible.

While discouragement is stronger than encouragement, empowerment coming from many different sources

will overpower discouraging words from one or two toxic individuals.

Positive self talk can also provide you with a short burst of motivation that will help you push through

obstacles and reach the next level.

An example of positive self talk is a simple I can do it when working out in the gym or telling yourself

in the morning that today will be another successful day of dieting for you.

You can also use inspirational music is encouragement.

Pick a song you like that has motivational lyrics and listen to it each time you're working on your

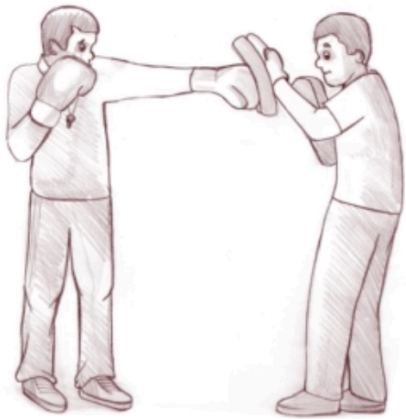
goal.

That's what I did many years ago when I set a goal to be able to perform 50 pushups in a row. I listen to Tupac song Hold on, Be Strong while performing reps. Corny, but it worked for me to maximize results.

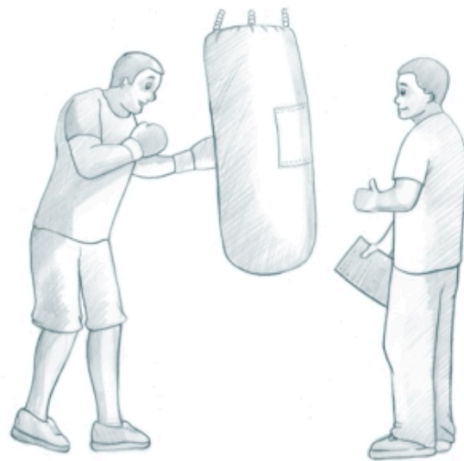
Consider finding a mentor.

An experienced mentor who knows how to relate to a novice can greatly improve yourself advocacy in two ways: by giving you the right example – social modeling and by encouraging you – social persuasion.

Social Modeling



Social Persuasion



These days, it's extremely easy to find a mentor for virtually every area of your life.

If you want to lose weight, you can hire a coach at your local gym.

If you want to learn a foreign language, you can hire a native speaker of your target language as your

private instructor.

If you want to build a business, you can sign up for a seminar or boot camp for entrepreneurs. Mentorship doesn't always have to be costly. Think outside the box. When looking for a teacher, you can exchange skills such as language instruction in English in exchange for language instruction in Spanish.

Find People Who Are Just Starting Out



Find people who are just starting out as coaches and have low rates or contribute to online forums to get noticed by a mentor.

Contribute to Online Forums

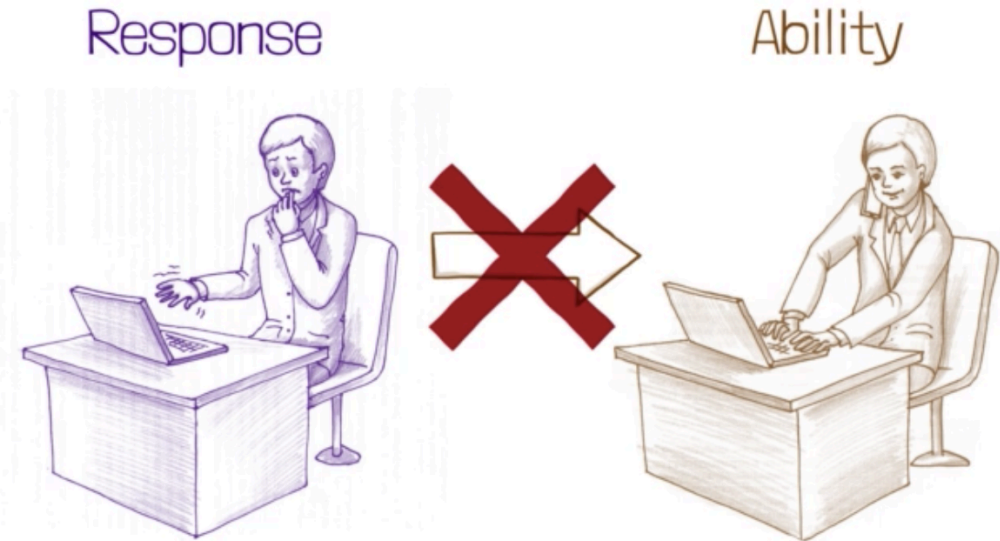


Lesson 7: Psychological Responses



- Shaking
- Aches and Pains
- Fatigue
- Fear
- Nausea
- Butterflies in the stomach

Physiological factors like shaking, aches and pains, fatigue, fear, nausea and butterflies in the stomach should have little influence on your self efficacy. Yet for a person with a weak sense of self efficacy, they add another barrier that will make a person doubt their abilities and affect their performance. What's important to note is that it's not the reaction alone that makes you doubt your abilities. **It's how you interpret it.**



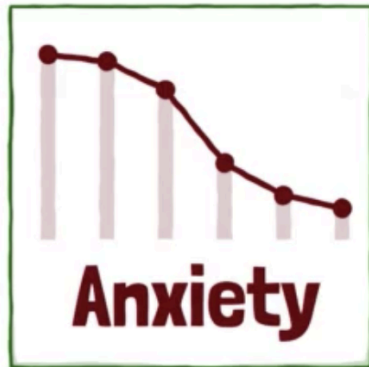
People with a strong sense of self efficacy don't associate their psychological responses with their lack of ability. They interpret them as normal reactions before performing a task. On the other hand, people with low self efficacy interpret these reactions as a sign of their weak abilities, thus increasing their self-doubt. If these symptoms make you doubt in your abilities, it's time to change your beliefs about physiological reactions related to stress.

It's Time to Change Your Beliefs About Physiological Reactions Related to Stress.



Each time you experience shaking, butterflies in your stomach or fear, consider it a normal reaction of your body's heightened awareness.

It's a Normal Reaction of Your Body's Heightened Awareness



Think that it's excitement, not anxiety. Even professional speakers get jittery before a presentation, and it has nothing to do with their ability to perform on stage. Try rejection therapy as a way to get used to these symptoms.



Try Rejection Therapy

You can also practice stress management techniques like **meditation**, or envision yourself **performing the task successfully**. By learning how to better control anxiety, you'll reduce the influence of these symptoms on your self efficacy. However, putting the most focus on the first two factors that influence your self efficacy: **Mastery Experiences and Social Modelling** will lead to **better results than bothering yourself with the little details**.

4. Five Fundamental Rules to Develop More Self-Efficacy

Lesson 8: Set Goals Slightly Above Your Ability

While there are dozens of techniques to develop more self efficacy, there are only five fundamental rules that will provide you with more results than the rest of the little tricks combined. No matter how much you remember from other lessons, the next five lessons alone will help you benefit from this course and develop more confidence in your abilities.

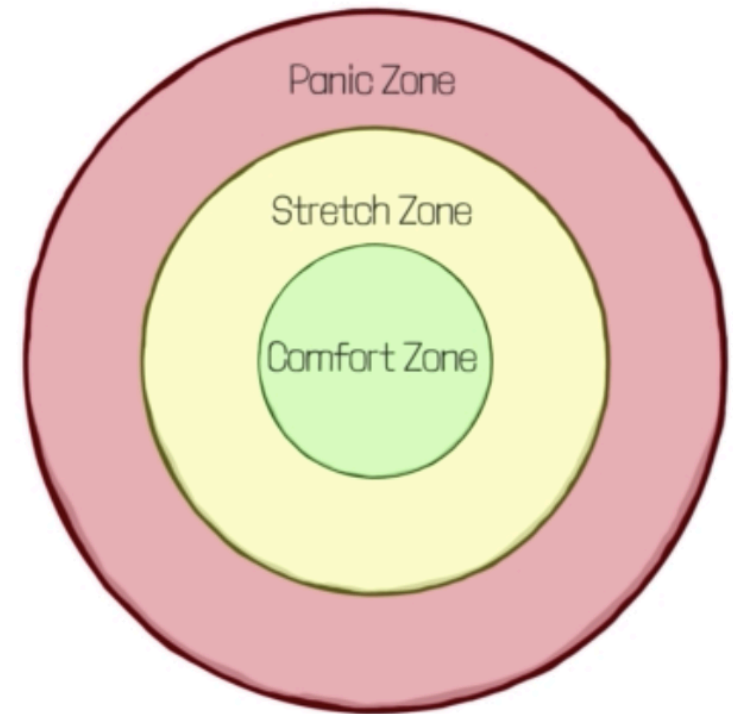
The key, as with everything else, is to **focus on the process, not the event**.

Focus on the Process, Not the Event



Self efficacy can't be built overnight, but these small blocks add up quickly to a strong foundation. Let's start with the first rule: **setting goals slightly above your ability**.

There are three **personal zones of achievement**: **comfort zone**, **stretch zone** and **panic zone**.



The comfort zone encompasses all the things you're familiar with. These are all the things that are comfortable and easy to do. Skills you already possess. Spending time with people you know, learning about familiar concepts.

The Comfort Zone Encompasses All of the Things You're Familiar With



The panic zone consists of all the things outside your ability. Trying them will lead to panic and decreased self efficacy. These are things way outside your abilities, like public speaking in front of 5000 people, while you can't present in front of a few colleagues.

The Panic Zone Consists of All the Things Outside Your Ability



The stretch zone is where you want to be.

It contains all of the things that are challenging yet possible to achieve with your current level of abilities. Things that belong to this zone are within your reach, but make you feel moderately uncomfortable, like striking up a short conversation with a stranger, even though you generally avoid any conversations with people you don't know.

The Stretch Zone Is Where You Want to Be

Comfort Zone



Panic Zone



By setting goals slightly above your ability, you will gradually improve the confidence in your abilities. Each small win will build on top of the previous one, combining it into a big achievement that will do wonders to your self efficacy.

The question of how to stretch your comfort zone depends on your personality. Some people prefer small steps, venturing just a few steps outside their comfort zone. Others, like me, prefer the more extreme approach and trying things bordering the panic zone. The former approach is slower but less traumatic and with a lower risk of failure. The latter approach is perfect for people who are impatient and are OK with the increased chance of failure.

Try both of these approaches and see which one works better for you.

To give you an example, let's say you possess weak self efficacy in regards to waking up early. You don't believe you can wake up earlier than, say, 10 a.m., but you like to change it. The first approach would be to slowly start waking up earlier and earlier, 9:55, 9:50, 9:45 and so on, so that in less than two weeks you'll wake up an hour sooner.

This will develop the belief that since you were capable of constantly waking up five minutes sooner, you can keep doing it until you achieve your target hour.

The second approach is to set your target hour and wake up right away this early. For instance, if your goal is to start waking up at six a.m., you set your alarm for six a.m., there's a higher risk of failure. But if you succeed the first day, the sense of achievement will help you wake up early again the next day.

For another example, a shy person who wants to become more confident also has two options. The first way is to focus on small challenges and increase the difficulty gradually, like asking strangers for the time, then asking for the directions, then chatting up a clerk in the store and then talking with a random stranger.

The second way is to pick the biggest challenge, but not so big that it leads to paralyzing panic and face it head on. Like public speaking in front of a group of ten people OR approaching a random stranger.

Lesson 9: Break Goals Into Smaller Pieces and Simplify

People with low self efficacy believe the tasks are harder than they actually are. Consequently, they don't plan properly because they expect to fail. It's a vicious cycle. You don't plan your tasks because you think they're hard, and these tasks are hard, exactly because you don't plan them.

It's easy to get overwhelmed, especially when you don't believe in your abilities.

Building a business feels like building a medieval castle brick by brick with your bare hands. Shyness feels like a lifetime sentence without parole. It feels as if it's going to take decades to master a foreign language.

According to the 80-20 rule, 80 percent of the results come from 20 percent of the efforts. Breaking your goal into small bite sized pieces that provide the biggest benefits is the key to develop more confidence in your skills.

Let's say you want to learn how to speak a foreign language. There are many aspects of language, hundreds of grammar rules, thousands of new words, new pronunciation and intonation rules, sometimes a new alphabet or characters.

However, do you really need to master all of these things right away?

If your goal to learn a foreign language is to communicate with native speakers, all you need to focus on is the ability to speak with them. Writing isn't important now. Neither is grammar or imitating the sounds of native speakers perfectly.

Let's break it down further as the ability to speak with native speakers is still too vague and can provoke self-doubt. What's the key thing you need to master? Let's say it's 100 or so basic sentences, questions and statements like Hello my name is or What's your name?

Suddenly, the huge goal doesn't seem so overwhelming. In a week or two, you could probably develop an ability to hold a simple conversation in another language.

Ask yourself how you can break your own goal into smaller parts. Consider how you can cut away the unessential to reach the core of the issue. The more manageable you make your goal, the more confident you'll be in your abilities to reach it.

A simple way to help you break your goals into smaller parts is **mind mapping**. I use free software called XMind to break huge concepts into smaller, easy to digest key aspects which I further break into the most fundamental ones.

Lesson 10: Focus on the Big Picture

"You Cannot Overestimate
the Unimportance of
Practically Everything."



John C. Maxwell

Don't waste your time and energy worrying about the little details. People with a strong sense of self- efficacy take a wider view of their goal in order to create

the best plan. It starts with breaking it into smaller parts. But what's even more important is **looking for the root of the problem**.

A study on experts in novice's shows that **novices get stuck thinking about the surface of the problem**, while experts look deeper and **concentrate on the underlying principles**.

It's not the tactics that are important, it's the strategy.

Tactics

Strategy



Gary Keller describes this approach perfectly in his book *The One Thing: The Surprisingly Simple Truth Behind Extraordinary Results*. By asking himself, what's the one thing I can do such that by doing it, everything else is easier or unnecessary.

The ONE Thing: The Surprisingly Simple Truth Behind Extraordinary Results



"What's The One Thing
I Can Do, Such That
By Doing It Everything
Else Is Easier
Or Unnecessary?"

The person who doesn't believe in their abilities will start with an unfocused plan. Consequently, they'll have a hard time working on their goal.

On the other hand, a person with high self efficacy will first spend time identifying **just one thing, a priority that will render everything else unnecessary and only then start working on their goal**.

Lesson 11: Reframe Obstacles

Cognitive reframing is a psychological technique of identifying and replacing negative beliefs, attitudes and ideas with the positive ones.

One of the most important characteristics of people with high self efficacy is that **obstacles motivate them to keep going. Their underlying belief is that each obstacle they overcome is a step closer to success.**

If you want to improve the confidence in your abilities, changing how you think about obstacles is key.

How You Think About Obstacles Is Key



People with low self efficacy consider setbacks the proof that they should give up their thinking usually goes something along the lines of -- another obstacle. This is too hard. Life is telling me I can't achieve this goal.



Restructuring how you think about obstacles is a process that starts with self-awareness. Each time you find yourself discouraged and ready to give up when faced with an obstacle, remind yourself that they are there for a reason.

As American Professor Randy Pausch said, the brick walls are there for a reason. The brick walls are not there to keep us out.

Randy Pausch



"The Brick Walls Are There for a Reason. The Brick Walls Are Not There to Keep Us Out."

The brick walls are there to give us a chance to show how badly we want something because the brick walls are there to stop the people who don't want it badly enough. They're there to stop the other people.

By being aware of your thoughts and actively trying to replace them with the opposite thought, you will slowly reduce the power of this belief on your self efficacy. Soon you'll stop thinking of obstacles as the reason why you need to give up and you'll start thinking of them as the reason why you need to keep going.

Here are a couple of examples of reframing:

- Original thought: A native speaker couldn't understand me when I told him about my family. Clearly, I'll never be able to learn a foreign language
- **Reframed thought: The native speaker couldn't understand me when I told him about my family. Now I know I need to spend more time learning vocabulary related to family.**
- Original thought: I tried speaking with a cute girl and she brushed me off. I'm so awkward. There's no way I'll ever become confident.

- **Reframed thought:** I tried speaking with a cute girl and she brushed me off. It helped me deal with rejection and gave me ideas how to improve my conversational skills.
- Original thought: I lost money. I invested in a business that never took off. I'd better focus on my day job because I will never succeed as an entrepreneur.
- **Reframed thought:** I lost money. I invested in a business that never took off. I learned what doesn't work and will apply these lessons when starting my next venture. That's bound to be more successful.

Lesson 12: Take Control Over Your Life

People with high self efficacy believe that their own actions and decisions shape their lives, while individuals who lack a belief in their abilities may see their lives as outside their control.

In psychology, this concept is called **locus of control**, the extent to which you believe you can control events that affect you. **Changing your worldview is fundamental if you'd like to develop self efficacy**, there's no shortcut to changing it overnight, though. Your locus of control has been developing over many years, along with your personal experiences and your interpretation of them.

A person with **high self efficacy** who loses money on a new business venture, will **look internally** and conclude that the failure was the result of wrong hiring decisions. A bad business idea or not enough capital.

A person with **low self efficacy** will **blame an external force** like the economy, even though there are always businesses that thrive during the crisis.

Beliefs About Control



Beliefs About Obstacles



You can change your beliefs about control in a similar way to changing your beliefs about obstacles. Each time you blame something or someone else for your failure. Think of the reasons why it could have been the result of your actions and decisions.

Taking responsibility for your actions is difficult at first, but **once you learn how to acknowledge your mistakes, you'll be able to improve your performance**. Moreover, **shifting your locus of control from external to internal factors will reduce your stress levels**, which in turn will also improve your performance.

I'll give you an example. One of my most notable failures and successes at the same time was starting a software business. Just a few months after I invested a considerable amount of money in it, I decided to call it quits and sold it.

It would be easy to say it failed because the world was against me, because the economy made my potential clients poor or something like that. But that wasn't the case and never is. The business failed because I shouldn't have started it in the first place. **It failed to grow because it was me who sabotaged it. Everything was in my control and it was my control that made this business fail.**

As strange as it may sound, I found it a reassuring thought to know that it had failed because of me, for a simple reason, I knew exactly what caused its demise and I would do better next time. If it was something outside my control, I couldn't learn anything from this failure. And that's precisely the opposite of how to build self efficacy.

5. Epilogue

In the 12 lessons of this course, we covered the most fundamental knowledge that will help you develop more confidence in your abilities. Yet let's be clear, this course alone won't make any lasting changes in your life. **If you don't actively work on developing your self-efficacy, making any kind of changes in your life will be extremely difficult.**

If you're starting with low self efficacy, your first step is to achieve some small wins. Pick an area of your life you'd like to work on and ask yourself **what little changes you can introduce in your life.** This will help you build more confidence in your abilities.

Achieve Some
Small Wins



Once you enjoy several small wins, it's time to put into use other concepts from this course, most notably:

1. Surround yourself with positive, successful people and model your behavior after them. Besides your own experiences, there's nothing that

has a more powerful impact on your self efficacy than watching others succeed.

2. Reduce the time spent with negative people who discourage you, or, if possible, avoid them altogether. Discouragement has a destructive effect on your self efficacy, especially if you don't possess a strong sense of it.
3. Come up with your own strategies to deal with stress. Better yet, change your attitude towards stress and stop associating it with a lack of abilities. Even professional speakers get butterflies in their stomachs before an important keynote.
4. Take control over your life, break your goals into smaller, achievable pieces and focus on the big picture. It's not the little details that make the difference. It's the focus on the most important things.
5. A strong sense of self efficacy is about the deep belief in your abilities, not about cockiness or your self-esteem alone. **Focus on achieving the mastery, but stay humble and open to new ideas. Just like a novice.**

5. A Strong Sense of Self-Efficacy



This course is by no means the only thing you need to read to achieve your goals. Success is a process, not an event.

Success Is A Process Not An Event



However, I strive to cover the most important aspects of self efficacy and provide you with actionable tips to improve your life in as little time as possible.

If you feel inspired, and more importantly, if you're going to finish this course and work on your goals with a newfound understanding of your personal beliefs, my goal has been achieved.

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