



OVERCOMING FEAR
OF FAILURE

Guidebook for Young Adults

Project nr: 2020-3-NL02-KA205-003289



Funded by the
Erasmus+ Programme
of the European Union

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OVERCOMING FEAR
OF FAILURE

Introduction

Part One

Brief introduction to the Guidebook for Young Adults

"What do you think you are most afraid of?" The most likely answer is "- Of failing".

The fear of failure and the anxiety it generates, are natural emotional processes in human beings, however, the important thing is to understand and be able to act when this fear generates sensations that cause tolerable discomfort.

Sometimes the fear of failure becomes intolerable, causing feelings of great discomfort at a physical and psychological level, which leads to the adoption of two less healthy strategies in the management of this fear: control and avoidance.

A control strategy is used when a person is so afraid of failure that they use compensatory ways of trying to eliminate it, such as working long hours or having constant self-critical and demanding thoughts.

When the person "runs away" from the stimulus that causes fear of failure, the person is using the avoidance strategy, leaving tasks assigned to him/her undone. In the long term, this strategy reinforces the idea that one is not capable, as one does not see one's work done, further increasing a sense of frustration and anxiety.



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However, there are strategies that can help manage the fear of failure and some of them are in this Guidebook, which aims to explain the steps young adults should take in order to create a dynamic positive mindset - the Overcoming Fear Methodology.

This Guidebook is divided into the following chapters:

- Self-reflection
- Accountability groups
- Empowerment and encouragement for future
- Emotional Intelligence

So.... Do you feel that the fear of failure prevents you from achieving your goals? Does it stop you from aiming higher, from going further?

Let yourself be engaged by the reflections, exercises and information in this Guidebook and come with us on this journey of self-awareness, empowerment and mental health promotion for young people that will equip you with tools and techniques to help you overcome the fear of failure.



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OVERCOMING FEAR
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Self-Reflection

Part Two





Self-reflection

Have I failed in my life?

Have you ever thought about your own thoughts or questioned your mental processes?

Do you sometimes take time to clarify your values in a moment of doubt or uncertainty?

If you answered “yes,” you are practising self-reflection/introspection, an important psychological exercise that can help you grow, develop your mind, and extract value from your mistakes. The reflection can be described as examining one’s own internal thoughts and feelings and reflecting on what they mean. The process can be focused on your current mental experience or mental experiences from the very recent past.

Why is self reflection important?

Researchers have shown that we think more than 50,000 thoughts per day, of which more than half are negative and more than 90% are just repeats from the day before.

If you don’t make the time and effort to refocus your mind on the positive through introspection, you won’t give yourself the opportunity to grow and develop. Enhancing our ability to understand ourselves and our motivations and to learn more about our own values helps us take the power away from the distractions of our modern, fast-paced lives and instead refocus on fulfilment.

It is important to do it correctly

Reflecting on ourselves and our environments is a healthy and adaptive practice, but it should be undertaken with some care. To help stay on the right path with your self-reflection, consider asking more “what” questions than “why” questions. “Why” questions can highlight our limitations and stir up negative emotions, while “what” questions help keep us curious and positive about the future.

Self-reflecting questions to ask yourself

1 - Questions to jumpstart self reflection:

- Am I using my time wisely?
- Am I taking anything for granted?
- Am I employing a healthy perspective?
- Am I living true to myself?
- Am I waking up in the morning ready to take on the day?
- Am I thinking negative thoughts before I fall asleep?
- Am I putting enough effort into my relationships?
- Am I taking care of myself physically?
- Am I letting matters that are out of my control stress me out?
- Am I achieving the goals that I’ve set for myself

2 - Questions to ask on a daily basis, to get to know yourself better:

- Who am I, really?
- What worries me most about the future?
- If this were the last day of my life, would I have the same plans for today?
- What am I really scared of?
- Am I holding on to something I need to let go of?
- If not now, then when?
- What matters most in my life?
- What am I doing about the things that matter most in my life?

- Why do I matter?
- Have I done anything lately that's worth remembering?
- Have I made someone smile today?
- What have I given up on?
- When did I last push the boundaries of my comfort zone?
- What small act of kindness was I once shown that I will never forget?
- What do I need to change about myself?
- How many of my friends would I trust with my life?
- Who has had the greatest impact on my life?
- What do I want most in life?
- What is life asking of me?
- Which is worse: failing or never trying?
- If I try to fail and succeed, what have I done?
- Does it really matter what others think about me?
- To what degree have I actually controlled the course of my life?

3 - Sentences to give you insights on how to move further. Please, finish the following sentences:

- I do my best when ...
- I struggle when ...
- I am comfortable when ...
- I feel stressed when ...
- I am courageous when ...
- One of the most important things I learned was ...
- I missed a great opportunity when ...
- One of my favourite memories is ...
- My toughest decisions involve ...
- Being myself is hard because ...
- I can be myself when ...
- I wish I were more ...
- I wish I could ...
- I wish I would regularly ...

- I wish I had ...
- I wish I knew ...
- I wish I felt ...
- I wish I saw ...
- I wish I thought ...
- Life should be about ...
- I am going to make my life about ...

Now you should have plenty of insight into who you really are and what is most important to you. Use your answers to make your decisions about what goals you choose to strive toward, what you would like to do in the future, and what moves to make next.

References

And if you are really keen on self reflecting you can dig deeper here:

- Positive psychology, <https://positivepsychology.com/introspection-self-reflection/>
- Eurich, T. (2017). The right way to be introspective (yes, there's a wrong way). TED.
- Holothink. (n.d.). The art of self-reflection – 5 exercises to find peace in your life. Holothink.org.
- Tartakovsky, M. (2014). 30 journaling prompts for self-reflection and self-discovery. Psych Central.
- William, D. K. (n.d.). 30 thought-provoking questions you should ask yourself every day. Lifehack.
- Wood, K. (2013). The lost art of introspection: Why you must master yourself. Expert Enough.
- Woronko, M. (n.d.). The power of self-reflection: Ten questions you should ask yourself. Lifehack.



OVERCOMING FEAR
OF FAILURE

Accountability Groups

Part Three





OVERCOMING FEAR
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Accountability Groups

Part Three

We all have fears. Fear of failure. Fear of success. Fear of the unknown. Besides the training, there is a way of overcoming that fear. That way is through accountability groups.

An accountability group is a group of like-minded individuals who come together to support and encourage each other to reach their goals. These groups allow you to be honest about your struggles and celebrate your successes with people who understand what you're going through.

Accountability groups are a potent tool, but they only work if you're committed to showing up and doing the work. This is a short guide on starting and maintaining an influential accountability group.

How to Start an Accountability Group?

The first step in starting an accountability group is finding like-minded individuals interested in achieving similar goals. This can be done by reaching out to friends, family, or even strangers who share your interests. Once you've found a few potential members, setting some ground rules is next.

You'll want to consider the frequency of meetings, meeting length, meeting location, and what type of accountability you're looking for (i.e., financial, health/ wellness, personal development, etc.).

One way accountability groups might work to overcome the fear of failure is by providing a space for people to share their fears and anxieties about failing in a supportive and non-judgemental environment.



This can help people feel less alone in their fears and give them some support and encouragement to keep trying despite setbacks. Additionally, accountability groups can help people to stay on track by providing regular check-ins and goal-setting sessions.

This can help people to feel more accountable to their peers and can help to keep them focused on their goals. You can also set specific goals that members want to achieve together or share experiences and strategies to overcome their fears.

Maintaining an Accountability Group

Now that you know how to start an accountability group, it's time to talk about how to keep one going strong. The most important thing is consistency; if you want your group to be influential, you must show up and do the work. That means attending every meeting and being honest about your progress (or lack thereof)

Another critical component of maintaining an influential accountability group is providing support and encouragement to others in the group. This doesn't mean that you have to be best friends with everyone in the group, but it does mean being respectful and understanding that we all have different journeys towards our goals.



Steps to start the Group

Part Three

1 - Define the purpose of the accountability group.

The first step in setting up an accountability group is to define the group's purpose. What is the goal of the group? What do you hope to accomplish by having an accountability group? Once you have a clear purpose for the group, it will be easier to determine who should be a part of it.

2 - Choose members for the accountability group.

The next step is to choose members for the accountability group. When choosing members, it is important to consider people who will be committed to the group's success and willing to hold each other accountable. Additionally, you should choose people who have complementary skills and can provide different perspectives on the issues discussed in the group.

3 - Set ground rules for the accountability group.

Before beginning to meet as an accountability group, it is essential to set some ground rules. These rules will help ensure that everyone in the group is on the same page and knows what is expected of them. Some ground rules that could be set for an accountability group include confidentiality, respect for others' opinions, and active listening.

4 - Schedule regular meetings for the accountability group.

Another critical step in setting up an accountability group is to schedule regular meetings. The frequency of meetings will depend on the group's goals and members' availability. However, it is generally recommended that accountability groups meet at least once per week to stay on track and progress towards their goals.

5 - Evaluate progress regularly and make adjustments as needed.

Finally, it is essential to evaluate progress regularly and adjust as needed. This evaluation can be done as a whole group or individually. It is essential to identify what is working well and what could be improved upon to ensure that the accountability group is influential and achieving its goals.



OVERCOMING FEAR
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Empowerment for future

Part Four



Empowerment for future

The fear of failure can be one of the most debilitating emotions, and it often leads us not to achieve our goals or dreams - or worse still, finish them without being fully satisfied with their outcome. It is an instinct that all living creatures have to protect themselves from possible dangers. We feel this in our minds and bodies when we face something new or unusual. However, there are ways for us to understand where these feelings come from and how they work.

We all experience the fear of failure at some point in our lives, but it's nothing to be ashamed of. The key is not letting your self-doubt get into gear and hold you back from taking risks that could lead to success! There are three things you can do to overcome your fear of failure and put yourself in a position where success is more likely.

1 - Use mistakes as learning opportunities instead of regrets.

Mistakes are inevitable, but they don't have to hold you back. Learn from your mistakes and use them as opportunities for growth so that everything will go better the next time around!

If nothing else has worked - maybe a decision wasn't something you were ready to make or had been putting off.

2 - When you're feeling down, please don't dwell on it.

No matter what you do, staying positive and not dwelling on mistakes is important. Dwelling over failures will only negatively empower them- so if something bad happens, take advantage of the learning opportunity by focusing more positively moving forward!

3 - Acknowledge that failure is just a temporary setback, not a permanent condition.

The secret to overcoming failure? Viewing it as a temporary setback rather than an unmovable wall. If you can learn this, instead of seeing your setbacks and failures as permanent fixtures in life that will never go away then maybe they won't seem quite so bad after all!

River of Life activity

Here goes an easy activity to identify your past fears of failure and empower you to face them in the future.

Take a pen and blank sheet of paper. Find a comfortable place and a quite moment in your day.

Think about your life experiences so far. Draw your life as a river.

Where does it start? From what environment are you coming?

Were there any moments when you felt fear of failure? When were they?

What kind of fears were they? Please mark them down on your river using symbols or icons to demonstrate them.

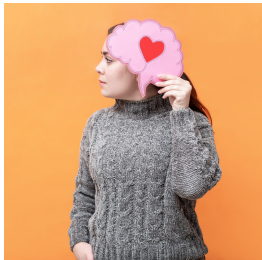
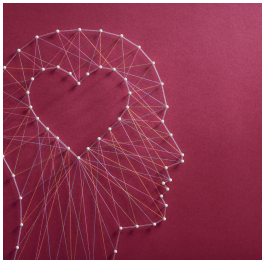
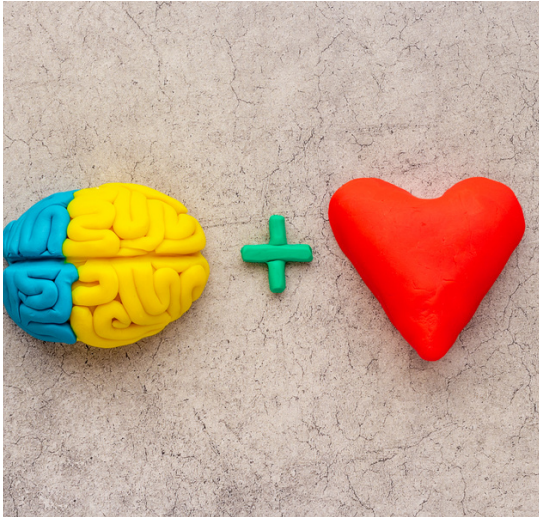
What helped you to overcome these fears? What external factors? What internal factors?

Now think about your future. Where is the river of your life heading? Do you have any fear of failure? What might help you to overcome them?

This simple activity helps you to reflect on your past experiences and find the answers within yourself. We recommend you do the activity by listening to calm, reflective music and avoiding all possible distractions.

Emotional Intelligence

Part Five



Emotional Intelligence Part Five

(Exercises)

Power of Visualization

Place where you feel safe and can relax. No distraction or too much noise.

- Sitting comfortably or lying down with eyes closed, let's begin by becoming aware of the breathing
- Feel the breath as it enters with an incredible feeling and then warm as it gently travels down into the lungs.....
- As you exhale, feel the body releasing toxins, stress and any negativity that has accumulated.....
- Stay with this breathing, focusing on the feeling of deep peace for ten deep inhalations and exhalations....
- Feel the energy that is in the body....
- Become aware of the warmth and tingling of every cell.....
- Feel the energy that is in the extended environment, in every part of nature and in every living thing.....
- Bring all those energies together and feel them as one.....
- Visualize all of that energy shining brightly, as the sun.....
- Bring the shining glow of bright energy over the crown of the head.....
- Feel it starting to travel down into your body from the top of your head, slowly going down into your face and neck, traveling down into the shoulders, all the way down into the arms, down to the fingers.....
- Feel the healing energy and light going down into your chest, all the way down to your hips.....
- Feel it continue traveling down your legs all the way down to your toes.....
- Your whole body is now filled with divine healing light and energy.....
- Feel it warming, healing and expanding through the area.....
- Allow the healing light to bring peace and healing to any emotional issues or traumas.....

- Bring your awareness to any intentions or desires that you may have.....
- Hold the thoughts of those intentions or desires as you allow the healing energy to bring your deepest desires to life and your intentions into reality.....
- Feel your connection to divine energy and light, and know that all is ONE.
- Stay with this deep, relaxing, peaceful feeling of bliss

This brief guided meditation script will guide you through a healing visualization process. You can use this meditation script to experience a deep feeling of peace, tranquility, and transcendence;

For Reference:

The Power Of Visualization And How To Use It (forbes.com)

Cognitive restructuring

Place where you feel safe and can relax. No distraction or too much noise. Sit up tall with your back straight and relax your shoulders.

Begin inhaling and exhaling rapidly through your nose. Keep your mouth closed but relaxed. The in and out breaths should be equal in duration but as short and quick as possible. The bellows breath is a noisy breathing exercise. Try for three complete breath cycles per second. As you breathe, you will notice a quick movement of the diaphragm, like a bellows.

For reference:

<https://www.sriavinash.org/breath-meditation/>

Embrace the mistakes

Place where you feel safe and can relax. No distraction or too much noise.
Take a pen and paper and write on it.

Identifying your mistakes and failures.

Go deeper into understanding how this happened and how it makes you feel?

Establish what you can control and what you can not.

Make a plan to improve your abilities. Some kind of step-by-step program.
Focus and worry only about the things you can control for less stress and more motivation and knowledge to overcome your fear of failure.



Conclusion

The anxiety that the fear of failure causes is a normal emotional process in human behaviour, but it's crucial to be aware of them and to know what to do when the agitation they produce becomes intolerably uncomfortable. Fear of failure is not going anywhere and it's up to you to overcome it. The secret is to avoid letting your self-doubt take over and prevent you from taking calculated chances that could pay off! It is essential to evaluate progress regularly and adjust as needed. Follow these guidelines and you can support youth to achieve it.

This guidebook for youth leaders suggests methods and examples of how to work with youth helping them deeper understand the ways how to overcome fear of failure.

This Guidebook consist of following chapters:

- Self-reflection
- Accountability groups
- Empowerment and encouragement for future
- Emotional Intelligence

Firstly, chapter “Self-reflection” presents the importance of the ability to understand yourself, motivations, and analyse your own values. Shows why it is important and shows many examples of the questions to ask yourself.

Secondly, the chapter of accountability groups presents tools on how to overcome fear. An accountability group is a group of like-minded individuals who come together to support and encourage each other to reach their goals. These groups allow you to be honest about your struggles and celebrate your successes with people who understand what you're going through.

Thirdly, empowerment and encouragement for the future. There are three things you can do to overcome your fear of failure and put yourself in a position where success is more likely. Like using mistakes as learning opportunities, when you're feeling down, please don't dwell on it, acknowledge that failure is just a temporary setback, not a permanent condition.

Lastly, emotional Intelligence - through the power of visualisation, how to use it in your daily life, how to prevent fear of failure, and boost self-confidence.

This guidebook presents good experience and methods tried with the groups on a national and international level. Partners of “Overcoming fear of failure” project hope that youth leaders will find this guidebook insightful.





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