



Working with Fear of Failure

An exercise for building the confidence to try

Purpose: To help you trust your ability to cope

How To Use This Worksheet:

Think of this worksheet as a check-in with yourself.

There are no right or wrong answers.

Take a deep breath, and go through the sheet step by step.

Be honest about what comes up when you read through the steps.

You can either type/write/mark your responses, or think out loud.

Having a printed sheet in your hand usually helps.

Change requires consistent effort, so keep practicing.

Remember

- Simply being curious about what's happening can dig up options
- Failure might be painful, but it is also manageable
- Fear has reasonable needs that you can learn to fulfill
- Courage and confidence grow when you learn to work with fear rather than against it

1) What are you afraid of failing at right now?

e.g. sitting for a job interview and messing up the answers

2) What is the main scary meaning your brain is attaching to this fear?

Tick, write or say whatever fits

- I'll feel ashamed or embarrassed
- My future will be affected
- It will prove I'm not good enough
- People will lose interest in me
- People will lose respect for me
- Someone will be disappointed in me
- _____

3) If the fear did come true, what would be the hardest part for you?

e.g. feeling stupid and exposed

4) Let's check the hard part.

Tick, write or say what feels true

- It will hurt
- It will take time to recover
- I've gone through a similar thing before
- I was able to handle it last time
- Someone I know has been through something similar
- I can think of, or look up, ways to deal with this
- It's not the last or only opportunity, there will be more
- _____

5) If things went badly, what can help you cope afterward?

Tick/write/say any that feel doable

- Talking to someone I trust
- Taking a break, doing things I enjoy
- Doing other things I'm good at
- Dancing it out
- Hanging out with my fav people
- Self soothing e.g. comfort shows, comfort food, breathing exercise etc.
- Therapy
- _____

6) If your fear could speak, what would it ask from you?

Tick, write or say whatever fits

- Reassurance
- Slower pace
- More preparation
- A backup plan
- Permission to try without demanding perfection
- _____

7) What is a tiny step you can take even if you stay scared?

e.g. request them to move the interview to a later date/time

Remember

You don't need certainty of success to move forward
You only need to know that you can handle discomfort

Want to work on this on a deeper level?

[Consult a therapist online](#)