

Leaving Your Comfort Zone

A workbook to guide you in leaving your comfort zone in order to find your success

by **Jim Bellacera**

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I heard it said “whatever does not kill you makes you stronger.”

First of all you need to think outside your box and decide you don’t want to stay where you are, releasing yourself from the trap of mediocrity. Secondly, identify then overcome any personal fears or insecurities that are holding you back. Work on building up your confidence by expanding your social skills, (eye contact and firm hand shake to timely follow ups with prospects or clients). Making even these slight changes will change your results.

Most of us know that first impressions are important, so make sure you are putting your best foot forward. When you take the effort to make a good impression, that in and of itself will give you confidence and naturally causes you to feel better about yourself.

*“Entrepreneurs are usually more comfortable taking risks than most.
Improve your risk-taking ability by improving your performance”*

Most people adjust to the hardship of a less than a fulfilling life rather than facing the changes necessary to become successful.

If you form good habits and continue them daily, you will wake up a different person, eager and ready to take on the world.

Growing up I was a very shy person. I didn't change until I was in my late 20's when I got married. My wife was the life of the party, Miss Social Butterfly. She had the "any excuse for a party" attitude. I always dreaded being around others for fear of having to have conversations with people I didn't know. I didn't think I had anything to offer to a conversation. I had a pretty low self image back then.

I was insecure because my formal education stopped at high school. It bothered me when talking with someone with a higher education, "smarter than me".

I cannot begin to tell you how getting out of my comfort zone allowed me to realize my lack of education was not going to be my downfall. It was my willingness to stretch myself and grow through uncomfortable situations that made me realize I had something to offer others.

You have to want something bad enough.

Trapped in the Comfort Zone of Life

So many people are trapped like I was, in their own comfort zone; victims of their own insecurities and false realities, afraid to go beyond familiar territory. These boundaries are stopping you from realizing what's out there for you. I'll say it again, don't be afraid to dream big dreams if you're willing to work hard enough to make those dreams come true.

What is interesting is that so many people say how lucky someone is for being successful when usually the truth is the successful person went beyond what was safe and comfortable in order to achieve greatness.

This goes for any area of your life, financial, emotional, or physical. It's when you step out into that uncertain territory that allows you to reach places in life that cannot be reached from the comfort of where you currently are.

Comfort Zone Challenges

In my younger years I would say things like, *"I have always worked with my hands and I am not the sales person type. In fact, I don't even like sales people, they're too pushy"*. These feelings came from listening to other people who were not willing to make changes or step out of their comfort zones. So for a while, I felt the same way they did.

It wasn't until I started listening to people who would tell me, "Jim, you can be or do whatever you want in life if you are willing to work for it and make some changes in your life. Stop listening to those people around you who tell you that you can't do something. And more importantly, stop that negative self-talk."

I became a product of the books I started reading and the motivational talks on CD's I started listening to. I started asking successful people what they were like before they "made it" and what they did to get where they are today.

Amazingly most would respond with the same answers. They would tell me before they had achieved success they had to overcome their fears, make changes in their self talk, and avoid as much negative influences as possible.

They stepped out on faith and believed enough in themselves. So with hard work and determination they all changed and created the success they had been dreaming of.

"Courage is resistance to fear, mastery of fear, not absence of fear".
Mark Twain

Write down something you wanted to be or do when you were younger that you never really took yourself seriously enough to chase after.

Commit Your Goals to Others

Many people have the desire to achieve something greater in their life but are afraid to stick their neck out and tell people. What if they failed or quit? As we talked about in “Goal Setting”, the most powerful thing you can do is write your goals down and commit to them by sharing them with others who will support you. Keeping quiet about your goals is the last thing you should do. If you never share your dreams with anyone it is just a wish and you really never have to take responsibility for doing something about it.

Write down something you’ve wanted to accomplish but were afraid to share it with others. Then commit to sharing it with your accountability partner.

Entitlement

Do you know someone that has been raised with an entitlement mentality? Where it is more about “rights” than responsibilities. Or maybe you have developed an entitlement attitude yourself. You will discover that people with that attitude will never be happy or achieve satisfaction. They will always want more for doing less. If you want something no matter what it is in life, you have to work for it or you will never really appreciate it and probably end up losing it.

As I grew up I had friends with that attitude due to inheritance and such. I can see now in our later years they have nothing left and they are miserable. They never took responsibility and developed any kind of work ethic. The very things they thought they deserved and took for granted are gone now.

Write down something you may have felt entitled to but now recognize that you must take responsibility for earning what you want. “If it’s to be, it’s up to me”.

Indecision

Indecision is a terrible place to be. You see, not making a decision is in fact making a decision to do nothing. How many times have you heard someone say, “I have to get my ducks in a row before I can do anything”. People can spend their life putting off making decisions. But remember, “Nothing ventured, nothing gained.”

Write down something you thought about doing but never got around to making a proactive decision. Now years later you are saying, "I wish I would have . . ."

Procrastination

Fear can cause procrastination. How many times have you heard "Ok, after the holidays", "after our wedding", "after tax season", "when school gets out", "after we get settled". This is called procrastination, or as Dennis Waitley puts it, "Some Day Isle".

I myself, live by the saying "Someday is today". Throughout my years in business I have heard thousands of excuses, some pretty hilarious I might add.

Procrastination is setting oneself up to live with regret.

How much regret does one need to live with in a lifetime? Some regrets just naturally come in life; so stop adding to the list, and get on with life. Time is our most precious commodity. Invest it wisely!

Write down all those un-kept resolutions, all the things you never got around to doing.

Example: Weight loss, going back to school, a career change, making a business investment, starting a savings account...

Write down all the possibilities, as many positive things you can think of that could happen to you if you were to step outside your comfort zone, and take that leap of faith.

What's been holding you back, keeping you in your comfort zone? Why?

Trust

These are some of the things I've heard through the years, "I will never trust another person again, all people do is disappoint and hurt me. Every time I trust someone they don't come through with their end of the bargain and I'm stuck doing all the work".

You know the sayings, "once bitten twice shy", or "fool me once, shame on you, but fool me twice, shame on me"! Relationships, personal or in business will always be a risk. How will you ever find that great

opportunity or a wonderful relationship if you do not step out and take a risk? There are people out there that have been in your shoes and have the same fears and expectations and will be accountable to do their part.

I have been burned several times throughout my career by well intentioned people that said they would hold up their end of the bargain only to find I was the one taking all the risks and doing all the work. And on the flip side, I have and I am doing business with some of the sharpest, most accountable and hard working people I could ever hope to find. I know my success is not just based on my efforts alone, so I constantly look for people like me and not give in to the fears that all people will disappoint me.

I also live by these words, *“Believe in everyone but count on no one”*.

Remember, you can't want something for someone more than they want it for themselves.

Write down some things you have done in the past where you have taken a risk with people that have let you down; and then write down what you have learned through this so you can move on with confidence.

Becoming a Risk Taker

People in sales are some of the greatest risk takers because the rewards can be incredible. They have the toughest skin and know not to take the “no’s” they get personally. Cold calling or asking for the “close” or sharing a business idea you are excited about requires taking a risk. Imagine never taking a chance and finding out what it would be like to sell something to someone that would change their life.

If you believe in what you are doing, whether selling a product or representing a business concept, you need to focus on the benefits you are offering and

how it will improve their quality of life.

If you don't believe in what you are doing, find something you do believe in and can represent with confidence and conviction. The financial rewards can be incredible but the satisfaction of knowing you helped someone and made their life better should help you overcome your fears.

Whenever you want to sell something you need to know there is more than just having a good product. You have to learn techniques that will increase your odds. But it all starts with your willingness to step out and be bold and take risks.

Have you ever looked at multimillion-dollar homes, luxury cars, expensive clothes and jewelry, and incredible vacation spots around the world? How about when you walk past First Class on the airplane do you ask, how can these people afford this? Let me make it perfectly clear, they took the risks that those in coach were not willing to take. They were not willing to accept a life of mediocrity. They leaped out of their comfort zone doing what most others are not willing to do.

"The definition of insanity is to continue to do the same things over and over with the hope that those same things will miraculously achieve a different result." Albert Einstein,

In other words, *keep doing what you are doing and you will keep getting what you have. But* you have to decide if what you want for yourself and your family and go for it.

The Solution

Begin by taking small steps to move out of your comfort zone. Take one risk at a time, looking for opportunities in your daily schedule. If you're in sales, ask for the close several times during your conversation. If you have a business, ask your employee's questions like what they think could be a way to improve their opportunities and the benefits to the customer. Empower your customers to help you see things you do not see from your vantage point.

My father worked at a major manufacturing plant when I was a kid and they had a suggestion box for anyone to give suggestions. His suggestions were so helpful that my father was promoted several times over. While my father made helpful suggestions, others just sat back in

their comfort zone and did not try to make a difference. Of course my father moved on from that company to eventually owning his own business and pursuing other dreams and investment opportunities. Some of these came to include me working together with him.

My experience with most successful people is that they have two major things in common. First, they have a positive attitude about almost everything. And secondly, they had expectations of being successful from the beginning.

If failure was not an option, what would you set out to accomplish in the next five years?

It is highly likely that you still have questions and concerns as to how to move forward with the concepts you have learned in this workbook. Maybe you just need some ideas or some direction.

Feel free to contact me at (916) 439-3600 or jimb@YesItWorks.com



Jim Bellacera believes most people go to their grave living quite desperate lives without ever really knowing what they could have done to make it more meaningful and full of purpose or what positive contributions they could have made because they were afraid of the unknown. The unknown will always be present but you have to take a step in faith. Jim likes to tell people to draw a line in the sand and step

over it and to never look back until you have achieved your goals. See more about Jim at <http://successfulthinkersnetwork.com/stn/>