

Stop Holding Back




**An Honest Guide to
Turning Fear into Action**


WORKSHEETS

What are you waiting for?


What is your Hollywood Fallacy?

JOZE	<i>One day I will wake up and magically replace holding back with social confidence. Only then, would I really start living!</i>
YOU	

What is the Godot that you are waiting for?

JOZE	<i>I am waiting for my stutter to disappear</i>
YOU	

What areas of my life do you currently believe you cannot influence?

JOZE	<i>I do not believe I am able to take specific steps to turn my fear into action. Where would I even start?</i>
YOU	

The Appeal of Avoiding

What is a time you benefited from inaction but then paid the price?

JOZE

By not responding to the messages of "Yellow Hat", I was able to protect myself from the shame and embarrassment that I associated with stuttering when meeting new people. I did however pay the price by never knowing how that interaction would have gone.

YOU



How can you overcome the "tyranny of the worst case scenario"?

JOZE

By going to the mall and challenging myself to talk to a hundred strangers per week, I can deliberately expose myself to the worst case scenario (e.g. people laughing when I stuttered) until the worst case scenario lost its power.

YOU



Think about a time when a rejection was actually a useful redirection

JOZE

Getting turned down from the research-oriented Masters made room for living in Mexico City and eventually finding myself in the worlds of stand-up comedy and public speaking.




YOU



Why do you hesitate?

The following 3-step process is a simple way to get started on a pragmatic journey of overcoming your fears. I filled out the first table ; the second one underneath is yours to fill.

STEP 1	STEP 2	STEP 3
Identify your inner stutter	Uncover your self-limiting beliefs	Devise your Action plan
I hold back from speaking up in a meeting out of the fear of judgment	Everyone will judge me harshly for speaking differently, why would I speak?	I will join a public speaking club to overcome the fear of public speaking by consistently getting opportunities to speak in front of others in a safe and supportive environment
I do not say hello to that person I find interesting out of the fear of rejection	That person would certainly not think of me as interesting or worth talking to	I will say yes to attending any social events that friends tell me about and I proactively will look for meetups that I could attend on a weekly basis where socializing is expected and encouraged
I avoid learning a new skill or launching a new project (at work or in my personal life) out of the fear of failure and looking silly	I am bad at learning new things	I will sign up for that class (singing, improv, new language etc.) to re-learn the joy that comes with learning a new skill (including the silliness that comes with it)

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Taming the tiger within

Think about some feared situations you might currently have. What is the proximal fear and might that fear come from through an evolutionary perspective? This exercise allows us to examine the absurdity of the origins of some of our fears. While they served a valid evolutionary reason in the past, they often are linked to risk and threats that are now obsolete.


Feared Situation	
JOZE <i>I am afraid of presenting in front of a large crowd!</i>	YOU 
Proximal Fear	
JOZE <i>They might laugh at me</i>	YOU 
Distal Fear	
JOZE <i>What if they laugh at me , the tribe abandons me and I am all by myself in the wild?</i>	YOU 
Reality	
JOZE <i>Even if they laugh at me, I will survive that situation and I can still go home after. This will not genuinely affect my physical safety and survival prospects.</i>	YOU 

Act your way into new thoughts


Awareness

JOZE	<i>I'm aware that I'm allowing my stutter to interfere with living a life that is worth living</i>
YOU	

Acceptance

JOZE	<i>I accept that I stutter and might always have a stutter. I also accept that I have power over my destiny if I choose to take action</i>
YOU	

Action

JOZE	<i>I go to various events and on solo trips where I would be expected to socialize with a lot of new people as a way to expand my comfort zone in spite of my speaking difficulties</i>
YOU	

Micro-Moments of Bravery

Macro-moment

JOZE

Performing stand-up comedy

ANOTHER EXAMPLE

Taking an ice bath for 2 minutes

YOU



Micro-moments

JOZE

Desensitize to the fear by talking to strangers

ANOTHER EXAMPLE

Start desensitization to the discomfort through minimal cold exposure in the shower

YOU



Action Plan

JOZE

Asking 100 strangers for directions

ANOTHER EXAMPLE

Ending every shower with 15 seconds of cold water

YOU



From moment to momentum

Topic

JOZE

Social Anxiety

YOU



Passive Information

JOZE

Listening to pop singer Jewel on a podcast as she discusses her inspiring mental health journey

YOU



Active Information

JOZE


Attending a networking event and gathering real-life information about how people will react when I interact with them

YOU




Can you stand-up for your life?


Desired Output

JOZE	<i>Overcoming the fear of speaking</i>
YOU	

Necessary Input


JOZE	<i>Talking to strangers</i>
YOU	

Recipe for Input Momentum


JOZE	<i>Saying hello and having a short conversation with one new person every day</i>
YOU	

Do NOT neglect this


Meditation

JOZE	<i>15 minutes of meditation in the morning (and/or breathwork)</i>
YOU	


Gratitude

JOZE	<i>Listing 3 things I am grateful for every morning</i>
YOU	


Contextualizing

JOZE	<i>Before I go up on stage, I contextualize the moment within the grand scheme of things</i>
YOU	

Walking


JOZE	<i>I walk 10,000 steps a day, either outside or at the mall</i>
YOU	

Movement

JOZE	<i>I go to the gym in the morning and the pool when it's available</i>
YOU	

Things I wish I knew back then...

Own what makes you unique

JOZE	<i>Accepting that I stutter. I might also sound different and that's ok. It doesn't mean I'm unworthy, it simply means that I'm different.</i>
YOU	

Use Fear as Compass

JOZE	<i>Saying yes to situations that involve me speaking under pressure, such as asking authors Mark Manson and Ryan Holiday a question during their Q&A sessions in front of a very large audience.</i>
YOU	

Slay the dragon once, twice, and thrice

JOZE	<i>Every time that I'm in a situation where there is an opportunity to speak up or share, if I feel nerves or fear, I know I have to do it, and I proceed.</i>
YOU	