

Worksheet Script for Fear of Success

Some fears and beliefs that some people have may permeate your thoughts

- Fear that you will accomplish all that you set out to, but that you still won't be happy, content or satisfied once you reach your goal
- Fear that you will move on in life letting go of family and friends. Worse yet, they will be uncomfortable with you.
- Belief that you are undeserving of all the good things and recognition that come your way as a result of your accomplishments and successes
- Opposite of fear of failure, in that fear of failure is the fear of making mistakes and losing approval--Fear of success is the fear of accomplishment and being recognized and honored.
- Lack of belief in your own ability to sustain your progress, and the accomplishments you have achieved in your life
- Fear that your accomplishments can self-destruct at anytime
- Belief that no matter how much you are able to achieve or accomplish, it will never be enough to sustain success
- Belief that there are others out there who are better than you, who will replace or displace you if you do not maintain your performance record
- Belief that success is an end in itself; yet that end is not enough to sustain your interest and/or commitment
- Fear that once you have achieved the goals you have worked diligently for, the motivation to continue will fade
- Fear that you will find no happiness in your accomplishments--that you will be perpetually dissatisfied with life.

What are the negative consequences of the fear of success? Fear of success can result in

- A lack of effort to achieve goals you have set for yourself in school, on the job, at home, in relationships, or in your personal growth
- Self-destructive behavior, such as tripping yourself up (gremlins, self sabotage) to make sure that you do not sustain a certain level of success or achievement you once had in school, on the job, at home, in relationships or in your personal growth.
- Problems making decisions, being unable to solve problems
- Losing the motivation or the desire to grow, achieve and succeed
- Chronic underachievement

- Feeling guilt, confusion and anxiety when you do achieve success--this leads you to falter, waver and eventually lose your momentum.
- Sabotaging any gains that you have made in your personal growth and mental health, because once you become healthier, a better problem solver, and more "together," you fear that no one will pay attention to you. You are habituated to receiving help, sympathy and compassionate support.
- Your choosing to do just the opposite of what you need to do to be happy, healthy and successful
- Reinforcing your chronic negativity, chronic pessimism and chronic lack of achievement since you cannot, visualize yourself in a contented, successful life
- Denouncing your achievements and accomplishments, or seeking ways in which you can denigrate yourself enough to lose what you've gained

What do those who fear success believe?

- I have worked so hard to get this far, yet I need to keep on working hard; I'm not sure the effort is worth it.
- I know people care about me when I am down and out, but will they like me when I am on top and successful?
- I've never been happy before, so how can I be sure I'll be happy once I achieve my goals?
- I am nothing, and I deserve nothing.
- How can people like me if I succeed in reaching my goals in life?
- I can't sustain the momentum I would need to achieve my goals.
- How can I be sure that my good fortunes won't go sour and be destroyed?
- There are always more demands and more needs that have to be met in order for me to be successful, no matter what I do it will never be enough.
- They are all better, brighter, smarter, and more talented than I am. I really don't deserve to be successful.
- It's hard to be at the top.
- Everyone is out to shoot down the head man.
- No one really likes a winner.
- Everyone goes for the underdog.
- I am happiest when I am under pressure and challenged.
- Hard work, no play and constant effort make me happy. What would I do if it were different?
- I feel so guilty when I realize how much I have been given in my life.

- I'm always afraid I'm going to lose it all.
- Starting over again gives me meaning and a sense of mission and purpose.
- I'm so bored with what I've accomplished. What's left to do?
- Everyone has the right to fail in life, and I have the right to choose to fail if I want to.

What new behavior patterns can help in overcoming your fear of success?

- Learning to reinforce yourself for the hard work, effort and sacrifices you have made to achieve success
- Being able to honestly appraise your level of achievement, success and accomplishment
- Accepting yourself as being healthy, "together," happy, successful, prosperous and accomplished
- Not giving yourself any excuses for being unsuccessful
- Giving others in your life permission to give you honest, open, candid feedback when they see you self-destructing or backsliding
- Monitoring your level of commitment and motivation to reach your goals
- Visualizing your life when you are successful
- Giving others credit, recognition, and support for their personal achievements, successes and accomplishments
- Honest, open, realistic self-talk that encourages you to work your hardest to achieve the goals that you have set for yourself
- Accepting the compliments and recognition of others with an open heart and mind

Steps to overcoming fear of success

Step 1: You first need to identify the fear of success in your life. To do this, answer questions ``A' through ``J' in your journal for each of the following 12 areas:

At school

On the job

With family

In marriage

In relationships

With friends

In your career

In your emotional life

In your hobbies

In sports

In your physical health

In your spiritual life

- a. What do I think will happen if I achieve success here?
- b. What would success in this area of my life look like?
- c. In what ways do I feel undeserving of success here?
- d. Who am I afraid of hurting or intimidating if I achieve success here?
- e. What do I think is lacking to keep me from sustaining success in this area?
- f. What are my biggest concerns about succeeding in this area?
- g. Who do I believe is more deserving of the success I have or will achieve here?
- h. How motivated am I in the struggle for success in this area?
- i. In what ways do I think that once I achieve success here that I will lose focus or direction in other areas of my life?
- j. In what ways do I think that I'll be unsatisfied or feel unworthy if I achieve success in this area?

Step 2: Once you have completed Step 1, answer the following questions for the same 12 areas:

- a. What evidence is there that I have not sustained enough effort to achieve my goals in this area?
- b. What are my long range goals for this area?
- c. In what ways do I self-destruct achievement and success here?
- d. How much of a problem do I have in making decisions here?
- e. In what ways has my motivation been diminished in this area?
- f. In what ways have I been an underachiever in this area?
- g. Have I ever felt guilt, confusion or anxiety when I did achieve a level of success here?
- h. Have I ever feared losing people's attention, sympathy or concern if I achieved success here?
- i. Have I ever chosen just the opposite of what I needed to be successful in this area?
- j. Have I ever put myself down for achieving success in this area?

Step 3: After looking at the negative consequences of the fear of success in each areas of life, identify the beliefs that lead you to fear success. Once you identify the beliefs for each area, reframe them into something more positive, in the present and life affirming.

Step 4: After you have identified your irrational beliefs and replaced them with rational beliefs and self-affirming scripts, identify what new behavior you need to develop in each of the 12 areas. Answer the following questions in your journal:

- a. How can I improve the ways in which I reinforce myself?
- b. How can I make a more honest appraisal of my accomplishments?
- c. How can I accept myself as being successful?
- d. How can I eliminate all excuses for being unsuccessful?
- e. Who needs to have permission to give me honest feedback when they see me self-destructing?
- f. How can I monitor my level of commitment and motivation to succeed?
- g. How can I improve the ways I visualize what it will be like when I achieve my goals?
- h. How can I improve the ways in which I offer others reinforcement and praise for their individual success and achievements?
- i. How can I improve my self-talk to assist me in achieving my goals?
- j. How can I learn to accept the compliments and recognition of others for my success?

Step 5: Once you identify the behavior traits you need to develop in your life, make a commitment to accomplish this. If you continue to have a fear of success, however, return to Step 1 and begin again.