



Out

of Your Comfort Zone & Loving It!

by Larina Kase PsyD

You're faced with an incredible opportunity. You know that you could propel yourself to new levels of success if you were to take it on and master it. You realize that you could make a significant difference in your company, community, and world. You're thrilled and honored by the good fortune to have this opportunity presented to you...

Suddenly your excitement starts to dwindle. In fact, it turns to dread. You realize...You're leaving your comfort zone.

"Uh-oh," you think. "This is not exactly the easiest thing to take on." Your self-doubts and insecurities start to creep in.

"This could be disastrous! How in the world will I do this? I've never done something like this before. I could make a fool of myself. I'll never be able to show my face outside of my house again. Or worse, I could lose all self-confidence, which is shaky to begin with..." The once exciting opportunity becomes intimidating and overwhelming because we've left our comfort zones.

We Make Monsters Out of Shadows

When we leave our comfort zones, shadows become monsters. Because we're anxious, everything looks threatening, scary, and overwhelming.

We seek a return to comfort. Sometimes we continue to move forward but we

rely on old habits or crutches, hampering our efforts.

When confronted with a situation that we fear we can't handle well or an intimidating change, most people tend to make one (or more) of the following mistakes:

1. They decide to avoid the opportunity. They choose to settle for the status quo rather than going after an incredible change because they fear failure and humiliation.
2. They go after the opportunity before they are ready. They plunge right in (smartly knowing that if they don't take action, they never will). The problem is that they haven't adequately prepared. They haven't lined up the resources and support that they need. They haven't created a plan. They may be successful, but it is more due to luck than strategy.
3. They dilute their responsibility. They go after the opportunity, but choose to be a follower rather than a leader. This way, if it doesn't work, they aren't to blame, but if it does, they can claim partial victory.
4. They rely on old crutches. They go for it, but do so with their old crutches and habits which hold them back from truly pursuing the opportunity.
5. They retreat at the first sign of failure. Unfortunately many people escape from uncomfortable situations too early

– before they have a chance to get used to the anxiety and achieve their goals.

You see, avoidance is the number one killer of confidence and high-achievement. All five of the mistakes above entail some form of avoidance.

The keys, therefore, to success outside of your comfort zone are to:

1. Seek out opportunities to challenge yourself.
2. Align your resources to be best prepared for the challenge.
3. Go for it 100%, without holding back or relying on crutches.

Move (Somewhat) Cautiously But Keep Moving

To take on your biggest challenges, you will need some level of confidence that you can handle them. The way to build this confidence is by building momentum. Start out by strategically taking on opportunities that push you out of your comfort zone by about 20%. Then go up to 40%. Then 60%. Then 80%. Then 100% (your most difficult and important goal).

As Newton discovered, a body at rest stays at rest and a body in motion stays in motion. Get the ball rolling by taking on smaller challenges, and soon you'll have momentum on your side to help you with the larger challenges.

For example, let's say that your challenge is confrontation. You hate confrontation and avoid it at all costs. But in order to better develop your employees and stand up for yourself, you must master the art of confrontation.

You'd start by correcting someone who mispronounces your name or leaves off your job title. Then you'd give an honest performance appraisal (including negative feedback) to your employee. Then you'd confront a coworker who frequently takes credit for your work. Finally, you'd confront your boss who takes credit for your work.

Select Your Comfort Zone to Expand

Select something that is important to you – something you really wish you could achieve but worry about your ability to do so. Once you've identified it, break it up into steps and start at step one.

Pretty soon you'll surprise yourself with all that you're able to achieve. You'll develop a new comfort zone around the previously intimidating situation. Nothing will be out of your reach. **GB**

About the Author

Larina Kase PsyD, MBA is a psychologist and New York Times best-selling author who helps people push themselves and achieve more than they ever thought possible. Learn the groundbreaking 6-Step GROWTH formula in *"The Confident Leader: How the Most Successful People Go from Effective to Exceptional."*
www.pascoaching.com

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Flatter me, and I may not believe you.
Criticize me, and I may not like you.
Ignore me, and I may not forgive you.
Encourage me, and I will not forget you.

Managing Your Time Effectively



The key to working smart is to be more effective, not necessarily more efficient. Efficiency is doing the job right. Effectiveness, on the other hand, is doing the right job! Here are ten tips for managing your time more effectively:

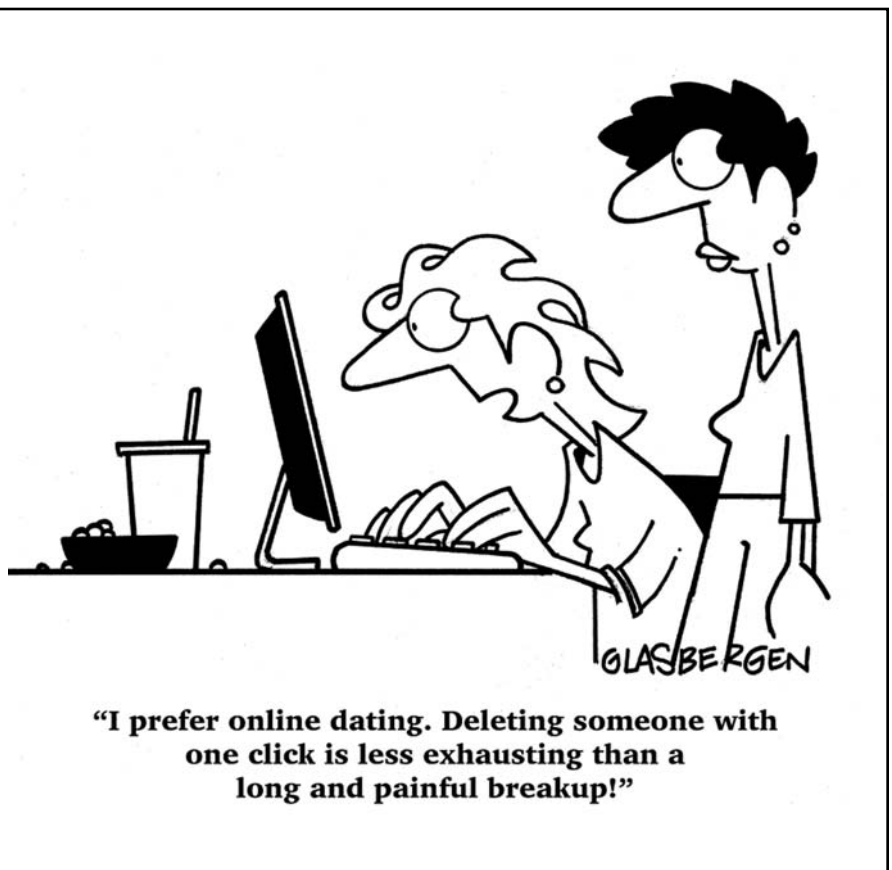
1. Figure out when you are at your peak. Figure out when you are at your prime and plan carefully around this.
2. Turn off your e-mail notifier. Try turning off your e-mail notifier when you need to concentrate on an important project, then you really can focus.
3. Expect the unexpected. Block out some planning time. Everyone needs

some time for thinking, so try to build in some flexibility into your daily routines.

4. Say NO occasionally. Sometimes we may have to be assertive and say 'no' if something is not urgent or a priority. Saying no courteously may be seen as a strength rather than a weakness.
5. Set priorities. Categorize tasks according to priority, for example:
1 = The task is urgent and important
2 = It's important but not urgent
3 = It's urgent but not important
4 = Its not urgent and not important

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Excuses Begone!

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Do I Have to Give Up ME to Be Loved by YOU?

How to Achieve What You Think You Can't (But Really Wish You Could)

When Your Antidepressants Aren't Working

How to Have a Fulfilling Relationship

and Create More Love in Your Life

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