

# EXPLORE YOUR ENTHUSIASM

## EPISODE 82: FEAR AND SUCCESS: NOT MUTUALLY EXCLUSIVE

Today we're going to talk about FEAR + success and how they're related. This episode is inspired by the recent replies to the #bizconfidencechallenge (which you can still join in, it's never too late! At [TaraSwiger.com/BizConfidence](https://TaraSwiger.com/BizConfidence)).

In the first week of the challenge, I challenged you to list three things you're proud of, so that you can see what your confidence COULD be built on. I want you to recognize that confidence is built on action and experience, and I'm betting you already have both. In other words, there's plenty you could build your confidence on.

And yet, just knowing that isn't always enough, so in the next week, I asked you to identify what it is your self-doubt is actually afraid of. If you know all you CAN do, why don't you? Usually, it's because we're afraid of the outcome.

And that's ok.

You see, I didn't ask you to acknowledge your fear because I want you to pay a lot of attention to it; I want you to acknowledge your fear so it doesn't keep controlling you without you knowing it. I want you to become aware of what it is you're afraid of ... so you can move forward ANYWAY.

Because this is the big confusion about Fear and Success. We think they're mutually exclusive. We tell ourselves that if we were going to be good at something, if we were going to succeed, we'd feel confident. We wouldn't be afraid.

But that's not how it works.

In fact, we're only going to feel confident if we DO IT ANYWAY.

The fear is not a sign of imminent failure.

It's not a sign that you aren't yet READY to step forward and do big things.

It's a sign, in fact, that you ARE about to do something big. It's a sign that you're challenging yourself.

And as we discussed in episode 79: Competence builds confidence. You only gain competence by doing things, and then you get confident that you can do more things.

As one of my clients said to me today during our session: So I listed what I'm afraid of ... and I guess, well I'm just going to have to work anyhow, right?

*EXACTLY.*

By acknowledging it, you can recognize it. You can say: ooooooh, that's what's been holding me back. And then reduce it to its actual size and move on.

When we ignore the fear, it grows larger. You know how the side mirror in cars says "objects may appear larger" ... that's what happens to your fear until you turn around and look at it. Once you do look at it head on, it's easier to see that it's actually survive-able. It's something you could probably live with.

So that's why I challenged you to acknowledge your fear, but I didn't just ask you to acknowledge it - part of the challenge is to share it on social media - to talk about it on Instagram or Facebook. If you're like me, that might be TERRIFYING. But here's the reason I didn't just ask you to journal about it privately: You're not alone.

You're not the only one that fears what you fear.

You're not the only one that feels like a fraud.

You're not the only one afraid of not being perfect.

Everyone is.

I can say that without equivocation. After talking to thousands of makers online, in person at craft shows and conferences, after talking to fiber farmers, and traditional artists in their 70s and punk rock makers in their 20s and people who have giant audiences and people who have no audience, they all confess to one thing: They're afraid of messing up. They're afraid they're going

about it all wrong. They're afraid of being found out a fraud. Or they're afraid of failing. Or they're afraid of people not liking them.

HOWEVER: They're not so afraid that they're not living. They're not so afraid that they're not acting. They're not so afraid that they're not making art and sharing it, that they're not writing, that they're not still trying to connect.

So I knew that if I asked people to share it with the hashtag #bizconfidencechallenge, that you would get to see: OH! It's not just me! She's afraid of failure too! She's afraid of looking stupid too! Based on her Instagram photos, I figured she had it all worked out ... but she has fears, too.

And that brings us to this week's challenge: I asked you too look at the lessons you've learned from failure. Do you use each failure as further proof that you suck? Or that you can survive anything?

Because the fact is, sometimes we're going to flop and when we do, we get to decide to use it to build our self-doubt, or to use it to build our confidence in our own resilience.

That's where all this ends up: Yes, you feel fear and you do it anyway. Because even if it all falls apart, you're going to be fine. You're going to survive.

When you believe that ... that's confidence.

You can do stuff anyway.

You can make your art. You can share your art. You can connect with customers ... ANYWAY. Whether you feel confident or not. Whether you feel like you're "enough" or not.

Because that's the connection between fear and success = everyone who is successful, whatever that means for them, they feel some fear ... and they do it anyway.

And that is what builds confidence, so that you can do the next thing. You can't build confidence by sitting around waiting to have the confidence; you build it by taking action, now.

And you don't create a successful business by waiting around until you feel confident that you're good enough; you do it by taking action, now.

Now that you know you don't need to wait around for confidence, it's time to decide: What have you been afraid of doing and what are you going to do, this week? I want you to pick something and DO IT, then tell me about it with the hashtag #exploreyoureenthusiasm.

If you're not part of the BizConfidenceChallenge - you can join in now, no matter when you're listening, just head to [TaraSwiger.com/BizConfidence](https://TaraSwiger.com/BizConfidence) and sign up (You'll also get access to all the podcast transcripts and lots more bonuses!)