



A Pathless Remix

Fear Setting Exercise

Inspired by Tim Ferriss and the Stoic philosopher Seneca, who said "We suffer more often in imagination than reality." This exercise helps you define your fears, identify prevention strategies, and realize the cost of inaction. [Read the full article →](#)

INTRO

Fear Statements

Be as specific as possible. Vague fears hold more power over you than concrete ones.

I am okay not having any paid work for...

If I do not make \$___ in a month / year, I am a failure

I am willing to commit to this path for...

The worst case scenario for me is when...

It is irresponsible for me to...

I will know I have failed when...

STEP 1

Identify Your Shift

What is the change or leap you are considering making?

STEP 2

Worst Possible Outcomes

What are the worst things that could happen if you make this change? List them all — even the unlikely ones.

STEP 3

Prevention Strategies

For each worst-case outcome above, what could you do to prevent it or decrease its likelihood?

STEP 4

Repair Plan

If the worst did happen, what steps could you take to get back to where you are today?

STEP 5

Benefits of Trying

What could be some benefits of an attempt or even a partial success? What might you learn? What skills might you develop?

STEP 6

The Cost of Inaction

If you don't make this change, what does your life look like? This is often the most powerful part of the exercise.

IN 3 MONTHS

IN 12 MONTHS

IN 3 YEARS

Reflection

Look back at what you've written. Most people find that their fears, once defined, are far less scary than the vague anxiety they've been carrying. The cost of inaction is almost always higher than the cost of trying.