

So you've started your own business... and it's damn scary

 By [Chemory Gunko](#)

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Starting any new venture, whether it's personal or business related, is scary.

It's the fear of the unknown, being emotionally vulnerable, exposed and risking failure and embarrassment in the eyes of the people around you.

For many, if not most of us in the working world, we carry an internal dream of branching out on our own and launching a successful business that secures our future happiness and wealth.

Sadly though, most of us don't follow through on this dream because the risk of reward comes along with an even greater risk of failure... and the embarrassment that failure brings just seems too much for us to face or bear.

Taking the first step

Maybe you think that the first step is deciding what business you'll start or gathering the capital to make it for the first few months or even landing that first big client... well it's not.

The first step you're going to have to take as an entrepreneur is facing your vulnerability and fear, because if you don't get a handle on that it can paralyse you and stop your venture in its tracks before you've even begun.

It takes courage to make the decision to start your own business, and from the moment you make that decision, the nagging doubts and fears are going to start creeping in, making you doubt yourself, your decisions, your abilities and worth.

If you don't deal with those emotions upfront, you're going to find yourself selling your services at prices way below what they and you are worth, giving things away for free and basically cutting yourself off from the success and wealth that you deserve.

Failure and courage

When you make the decision to go in a new direction or launch something new, you're risking failure right from the outset - in fact, the risk of failure is equally as great as the opportunity for reward.

While you logically know that the failure won't actually kill you, it doesn't stop you from feeling like it's going to kill you.

The thing about failure is that it brings with it a number of painful emotions that we would all rather not face, emotions like:

- Fear,
- Shame,
- Grief,
- Sadness,
- Disappointment, and
- Rejection

Emotional repercussions

Emotions have a powerful effect on the way we conduct our lives and do business.

When it comes to the horrible negative emotions like fear, failure and vulnerability, the pain of being emotionally exposed and vulnerable leaves us feeling helpless, hopeless and powerless, and in many cases paralyses us into inaction.

So we start with all the great intentions in the world, every positive thought we can muster, talking to people, sharing our vision, selling our services and products... and for the first while nothing, just nothing, seems to happen.

So a month goes by, and then another and then possibly another with nothing happening, no results... and if you're an emotionally oriented or sensitive person, the time until you reach the sense of failure can be reduced to weeks or even days.

Yes, in terms of life, a month goes by really quickly. But when you're the owner of a new business, waiting patiently for the phone to ring or responses to return on that expensive email send you did or for someone to say yes to a cold call you've made, the hours and minutes seem to drag by painfully slowly.

You feel abandoned, alone, scared. You feel personally rejected and that you are a lesser person because nobody seems to want you or what you have to offer.

Mostly though, you feel vulnerable and exposed and like a failure... and most of the time that makes you too scared to reach out even to the people around you who can help you and guide you and support you, because you are afraid of the embarrassment, the shame and what other people are going to think of you.

There's light at the end of the tunnel... and hope

Courage and being brave are very misunderstood emotions, and we tend to think of them as being things within themselves.

What nobody tells you about courage and being brave is that it's not about not having fear, it's about feeling the pain, vulnerability and fear and going for it anyway.

In 1910, President Theodore Roosevelt gave an incredible speech, which sums it up perfectly:

"It is not the critic who counts; not the man who points out how the strong man stumbles, or where the doer of deeds could have done them better.

"The credit belongs to the man who is actually in the arena, whose face is marred by dust and sweat and blood; who strives valiantly; who errs, who comes short again and again, because there is no effort without error and shortcoming; but who does actually strive to do the deeds; who knows great enthusiasms, the great devotions; who spends himself in a worthy cause;

"Who at the best knows in the end the triumph of high achievement, and who at worst, if he fails, at least fails while

daring greatly..."

Dare Greatly

You're out there in the arena, bloodstained, battle-scarred, and covered in mud and tears and you're fighting for your life... you're still standing and you're still fighting.

You deserve all the kudos in the world for that.

So when you're hitting your lows or you're ready to give up, make sure you have a plan of action:

- Make a list of at least five understanding friends or fellow entrepreneurs who you can call who will give you a pick-me-up or a pep talk and remind you that you are a good person, worthy of success and love.
- Set your prices realistically and create a maximum discount you will offer to anyone and do not cross that boundary. Do not sell yourself and your services short.
- If you feel you need to do some free work to get the momentum going, set a limit to how many free projects you'll do and stick to it. Do not sell yourself short here either.
- Do not dwell on the failures or lack of things coming in... celebrate and give thanks for every little bit of progress, no matter how small or insignificant it seems.
- Do not feel embarrassed about where you are... if you're working from home, hey at least you're working. At least you have a place to do your work. Give thanks for the progress you've made and keep putting it out there that you're looking forward to moving into your new offices.
- Send out your invoices regularly and follow up on payments - regardless of how uncomfortable it may feel. Fire clients who refuse to pay you and stick to your guns. If they come back for more work, make them pay the outstanding amounts first as well as the cost of the new work upfront.

You're out there fighting, in the arena, making it happen... and if you stick to your guns you will see the success you deserve.

And for the naysayers who will run you down or try and break your spirit, simply turn around and say to them: Apart from being a jerk, what exactly have you done with your life? That'll shut them up quickly enough.

This article was inspired by the book Daring Greatly, written by author Brené Brown. You can read more about Brené on her website at www.brenebrown.com

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Chemory Gunko is a seasoned Creative Director, a certified NLP Practitioner, Ericksonian Hypnotherapy Practitioner, Energy ReSourcing Practitioner & Life Coach, among others. She works as a marketing consultant and provides copywriting, SEO, graphic design and Joomla! website services.

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