



Adventure Bonus Message #15

How to Overcome the Fear of Trying New Things

You know you want to...but you can't.

Trying new things...it is part of living a full life, isn't it? So, what's holding you back? And how can you kick neophobia (the fear of trying new things), they actually have a name for it, in the pants?

First, don't be so hard on yourself. Trying new things can suck. It probably won't be love at first try. Schedule changes, aching muscles...and who likes to feel less-

than-competent? You've spent years crafting just *what works for you*, from bedtime to gluten-free mocha balls to avoiding birthdays in bars, why mess up that beautiful balance?

Maybe you're paralyzed by fear. Fear of eyes fixated on you (trust me: everyone's busy with their own stuff!), or fear of failing. Just know that shame is a built-in human mechanism. It's hard to shake...but you can, by being kind to yourself.

What holds most of us back though is the all-around inexplicable terror of the unknown. After all, unfamiliar equals danger, right? Isn't that how we humans survived, all these millennia?

Yet you *know* you are missing out. The good news is, sort-of, that *many* people suffer from this fear of trying new things. And there are proven strategies to overcome it.

1. Give your fear a name. Say it aloud. Talk to *it*.

When you get to know your fear, you can determine the right course of action, and break it into manageable steps.

2. Redraw your neural pathway. Use visualization and mantras. *See* yourself in great details, doing what it is you've been wanting to try. *Feel* the feelings that you want that thing to bring you.

And create a mantra. When the habitual thoughts pop up ("I suck. I'll never..."), zap it with your positive affirmation ("I can! I am a [dancer, climber, public speaker, vegan cook...]")

3. Set the right expectations--or none at all. You don't *have* to be the best at it! And yes, ok, discomfort *will* be part of the experience.

4. Move and breathe. Movement reconnects you with the body's intelligence. And conscious breathing opens space between the fear and the reaction to the fear. Remember to say hi: "Hi, Social Anxiety. I see you; I hear you! Thanks, but I've got this!"

5. List the benefits. There is a reason part of you wanted so badly to try this thing. Listen to *that* part. When fear and discomfort are giving you serious push-back, read your list--did you tape it on the fridge? How will trying this enrich my life? That of people around me? Develop talents I *know* I have?

6. Take action. Whatever your undertaking, there are resources all over the web. Find those YouTube how-to videos, articles, chat rooms, armchair experts, specialty stores...and prepare just a bit.

7. Enlist support! There are so many groups, meetups, classes, events...strength in numbers is real. Find people you can bond with over your new activity...and the fear of trying it.

Neophobia might save lives...it also stops progress and growth, if you let it run the show. Cultivating courage, however, will serve you in *all* areas of life. And you *know* you *want* to *grow*...or you wouldn't be here reading this.

Go try something new !!!