



Moving beyond the Fear of Failure

by Phyllis LeFevre, Certified NLP Life and Wellness Coach, phyllis@inspiremomentum.com

It is an old adage that we are often our own worst enemies, but adages are often based upon widely observed truths -- and when it comes to achieving goals and making important permanent life changes, the enemy is very likely to be within.

Overcoming Fear of Failure and rebounding from setbacks are two of the most prevalent issues that our clients come to us with, and two areas where we know that NLP can become your engine for rapid permanent positive change.

For many people Fear of Failure -- one form of self-doubt -- is often the fundamental obstacle to real change. Whether it is difficulty with weight loss or business and professional frustrations, Fear of Failure robs a person of the ability to even *attempt* setting and actively striving towards positive goals.

Since most people have areas in their lives that they sometimes imagine could use improvement -- losing or maintaining weight, professional advancement and beating addictions being obvious examples -- it might seem strange that so many people seem unable to move toward positive change.

NLP offers an explanation in its' concept that Every Behavior has a Positive Intention.

Fear of Failure can be caused by a Positive Intention? Yes.

The Positive Intention is to avoid a feeling of disappointment -- which is really just a nicer word for pain -- in the event of failure. Fear of Failure is actually an unintended consequence of a Positive Intention.



NLP Life Coaching offers a way to untie the knot where an inability to plan positive actions and act on those plans perpetuates lifestyles and careers that are limited by the Fear of Failure and its' consequences.

NLP therapy and Life Coaching starts by illuminating patterns of thought -- as expressed both within your inner dialog and externally towards others -- that undermine your ability to set and achieve goals; act and communicate appropriately based upon your best impulses; and be the person you want to be.

We believe that positive permanent change that overcomes the Fear of Failure can only be achieved based upon a deep organic re-programming of negative thought patterns.

If that sounds difficult, don't be discouraged: it usually isn't -- NLP Life Coaches have found in countless cases over nearly 30 years that for most people positive permanent change is *rapid* once a powerful conscious awareness of negative patterns of thought are recognized.

What happens when you no longer fear failure so much?

We have observed that in almost all cases people who have overcome their Fear of Failure go out and attempt to do a lot more things -- which, inevitably, at least some of the time -- means they get to experience a lot more Actual Failure.

Failure to achieve a goal is, of course, not the same as success, but NLP coaching has proven remarkably effective at helping clients create a positive forward-thinking mindset toward the experience of Actual Failure that empowers them as they set and pursue future goals.

How NLP Life Coaching can help you transform the experience of failure into positive thoughts and actions is a large topic that will be the subject of a separate upcoming article, but we would like to leave you with these thoughts on the first step to dealing with Actual Failure.



We begin by acknowledging that -- whether personal or professional, a big thing or a small thing -- failure could create pain, feelings of disappointment and, sometimes, anger.

NLP coaching guides clients to a better context within which to understand any individual failure, and to identify what in their actions may have contributed to the failure -- so that they can avoid repeating mistakes and perpetuating unhealthy patterns of thought. The presupposition NLP uses is "there is no such thing as failure, only feedback".

We begin by encouraging clients to understand that the most important thing about any failure is often overlooked -- that the person made an attempt to achieve a goal, and that attempt was motivated by a positive intention. That's not nothing!

This initial focus on positive accomplishment is based upon the NLP understanding that it is important for people to celebrate what they have accomplished -- the well-motivated attempt and whatever benefits were reaped -- rather than focus solely on the exact distance they fell short of their largest goal.

Weight loss is particularly easy to quantify in this regard, and provides a perfect illustration of the importance of acknowledging positive things that actually were achieved: Should a woman really feel totally-totally miserable because her goal was to lose 35 pounds and she only lost 27?

We encourage you to overcome self-limiting fears related to failure. You won't succeed every time, but facing and overcoming fear and rebounding from failures are essential steps along the path of you becoming the person you want to be!

Phyllis LeFevre is a certified NLP Life Coach and Wellness Practitioner based near Raleigh / Durham, North Carolina, who develops individualized programs for permanent lifestyle change. Her company, Inspire Momentum NLP, works with clients in a one-on-one setting designing customized coaching programs that will ensure success. You can contact her at (801) 244 8333 or phyllis@inspiremomentum.com