

A S S E M B L Y

FAILURE

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WHERE DOES THE FEAR OF FAILURE SHOW UP FOR YOU?:

I have worked with women long enough to know that the fear of failure is one of the biggest hurdles that we face when we consider putting our ideas, products, solutions and offerings out into the world.

- ***What if nobody responds?***
- ***What if the product I've put my money, time and energy into is met with crickets?***
- ***What if I tell people about what I really want to do and they don't get it at all?***
- ***What if I start something and don't have the stamina to finish it?***

Do any of these things sound familiar? Of course they do - we are completely human and these thoughts are natural to us because our ego and our inner critic are positioned to repeat them to us to keep us safe. Safety is the primary concern of our brain. Not fulfilment. Not growth. Not evolution. Not pleasure. Just safety.

It's really important that we identify HOW this fear of failure is showing up for us right now. Once we can see it for what it is; naming it and how it is revealed in our lives - then we can take steps to loosen its grip over us and build the necessary courage and resilience to move through it.

I'd love for you to reflect:

What specific ways to you see this fear of failure showing up in your life?

Is it in withholding your ideas?

Is it in perfectionism?

Is it in hiding behind someone else?

Is it in relentless comparison that stops you from taking action?

Is in a fixation of numbers, followers, figures and statistics?

Write down some of the ways you can identify that this fear of failure is holding you back:

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DO YOU KNOW WHAT YOU ARE EXPECTING?:

When we set out to bring something to life in the world, often we are caught up in the how, the what and the when that we forget to reflect on what we want this offering to achieve. We spend a lot of time working out the details of all the other stuff without giving thought to our own expectations around it.

Then, when things don't go to plan, we end up feeling hijacked, dejected, thrown and deflated. We haven't fully worked through what we wanted to achieve - what we really wanted to feel. A desired feeling state is ALWAYS at the root of everything we do.

Something that I like to do to try and manage my own expectations around whatever it is that I'm going to put into the world is to work on a loose expectation management system.

I think about what it is I'm working on. I imagine putting it out into the world and then I decide on the tiers of expectations that might unfold with it. Most of the time these look like this:

LEVEL 1- it feels good to have it completed, a few people connect with it, any sales, sign ups or connections feel good to have. I'm proud of it.

LEVEL 2 - it feels good to have it completed, lots of people connect with it, a certain amount of sales (you can assign whatever you want to this area), sign ups or connections feels valuable and good. I'm proud of it.

LEVEL 3 - it feels good to have it completed, loads of people connect with it, sales, sign ups and connections are strong and there is great supportive energy around it. I'm proud of it.

In all of these expectations, I am ultimately affirming that I AM HAPPY WITH HAVING COMPLETED WHAT I SET OUT TO DO. That may sound like a given, but just having it in writing makes ALL the difference.

My own satisfaction is the top of my expectation list. This trumps anything that comes next. Have I been true to my values? Have I worked hard? Have I put the time in? Have I really taken into consideration what will serve my community well?

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Once that is in place, I hold the rest of the expectations a little less tightly.

Once I have decided that I am happy with what I have done or put out there, then I am more able to identify what kind of response or reaction I want to have from it.

The more secure I can feel in the value of my work, then naming the desires for impact that I have can actually help give me the energy and self support that I need to put those things in the eyesight of the people I want to serve or connect with.

It takes energy to do that because marketing or talking about our offerings can be tiring and exposing. Having no idea of our expectations, or just having our expectations swirling around in a mass of insecure ideas can actually harm us, because we haven't fully connected with our desires or outcomes and that is an important and worthy part of the process, not to be overlooked.

I want you to think about something that you'd love to put out there into the world or something you've got that you'd like to revamp and share.

What expectations are you placing on this that you need to name?

What are some expectation levels that you can put in place that will help you feel proud of your work?

Write about it here. Name your desires for this thing. How do you want to feel? What response or impact would you love it to have at every level?:

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FAILURE AS INFORMATION:

Everything we do; every wrong turn, tricky decision, every way that we hide, every time we choose to stop when there are complications is **SIMPLY JUST AN OPPORTUNITY TO RECEIVE INFORMATION.**

Every time we put something out into the world and we get a response, whether good, bad, noisy or quiet – it's all just information. All of it.

Learning this – **THAT EVERYTHING IS JUST INFORMATION** has been a **REALLY SIGNIFICANT, LIBERATING** part of my visibility journey and remembering this aspect has given me real courage as I have decided to put my ideas out there, marketed my offerings and continually chosen to show up for myself.

Everything we receive back – its not good, it's not bad, it's not praise OR criticism. It's **JUST INFORMATION.** And it's up to us what we do with that information.

If you've ever launched something to crickets or posted an idea that didn't take off or developed a product that didn't sell – it's not that the idea was bad. It's not that what you had to offer wasn't valuable or interesting. The quiet response is just information for you. And it's up to us to access and use that information wisely. If our offering is not connecting, it doesn't mean it's a failure. It might just mean that we need to collect more information.

These things that might immediately feel like failure might just be an opportunity to get the information you need to get your thing out there in a way that connects.

- ***It might mean you need more information about the time of the month or year you are offering it.***
- ***It might mean you need more information about the people you are trying to reach.***
- ***It might mean you need more information about the price people connect best with for the type of thing you are offering.***
- ***It might mean you need more information about what kind of set up people feel is accessible etc.***

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- *It might mean you need to build more trust with your customer or audience base in order to connect in the way you are expecting to...*
- *It might mean a hundred other things - but it's for you to find out what the information is!*

This information isn't given to you to shut you down and stop you, like your inner critic or ego would like. It's given to you as a gift to sift through and determine what you should do with it. See this as a gift to build on rather than an out or an opportunity to wallow or quit. If we can see this information as a way of shaping what you do so that more people can connect with it in the way you want them to then we are exercising bravery and resilience and our ego is not in the driving seat – service and value is.

What experience of perceived failure can you go back to and retrieve information from?

Reflect on something that didn't work out, didn't sell or take off and see if there is any information to be found there. Try not to get stuck in a spiral of shame and berating yourself when you revisit this experience, but approach it as an investigator, keen to get more information.

You can write about it here:

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HERE'S THE THING:

When we uncover the ways that fear of failure is showing up for us, we can begin the path of healing. We can acknowledge those protective mechanisms and allow the power that they hold to loosen its grip. That's what happens when we address things: when we call things out for what they are, we shine a light on them and they come out of darkness and begin to be seen for what they are. This is the first step of not letting our fear of failure or our complicated history of being knocked back have power over us.

- *Understanding how our fear of failure is showing up in our lives.*
- *Setting self-supportive expectations that focus on being proud of our work & ideas.*
- *Seeing all responses to our work simply as information to collect and review.*

And guess what? The more we give each other permission to try and keep trying, the less hostile and risky we make the world for each other. The more we keep showing up, keep moving through the fear of failure into the things that bring us fulfillment, the more we give other women permission to do the same.

Let's be people who are loyal to themselves, who know that there is learning in the trying.

Know that I am walking the same path with you, here for the long haul.