

individuals diagnosed with lung cancer who keep smoking. Awareness is not enough. With your conscious mind, however, you can kill fear with kindness. Love, after all, is on a higher frequency than fear. Since the subconscious works well with repeated thoughts, consciously using empowering affirmations can help replace and dispose old fears.

Let's expose your hidden barriers to success by using the combined wisdom of Mat Boggs, executive director of the Brave Thinking Institute, and Gay Hendricks, author of *The Big Leap*. They note that there are four hidden barriers to success.

FOUR BARRIERS TO SUCCESS

- 1. Feeling Fundamentally Flawed:** Not feeling good enough, fear of judgment and/or rejection. At the root, you've wanted to fit in since birth. In fact, your DNA is programmed to fit in for survival. Being rejected from the pack meant being out in the cold, a vulnerable target. For centuries, being accepted was life or death. Now it's just fearing critics, judgment, and/or inferiority. You may even fear being too fit or losing weight because you fear it will change your relationships.

Signs and Symptoms:

- You fear friends won't accept you if you say no to alcohol.
- You point out your flaws before others, thinking it will hurt less.
- You want to start jogging, but you worry what the neighbors will think.
- You clean your house before your hired cleaner arrives.
- You are addicted to perfectionism and fear judgment.

- You reach a goal but fear growth and leaving your comfort zone.

Positive Repatterning: I love this quote by Theodore Roosevelt: “It is not the critic who counts...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...and who at worst, if he fails, at least he fails while daring greatly.” There are critics, but there are also risk-takers and trend-setters who pave the paths for others. No one escapes fear completely, but when you move forward with progress, instead of waiting for perfection, you might lead the pack in the end.

2. **Fear of Outshining:** You might fear outgrowing or outshining your parents, family, friends, or coworkers. You fear feeling superior while others feel inferior. You might fear appearing too selfish or greedy, which means you secretly believe in lack or a limited supply. At the root, there is also the primal fear of being rejected, leaving you thinking if you surpass others, you might be exiled while the pack maintains its alliances.

Signs/Symptoms:

- You play small to avoid outgrowing your relationships.
- You avoid appearing smart so others won't feel inferior.
- You feel uncomfortable with accolades or being the center of attention.
- You talk more about your failures than your successes.
- You fear having more money or things or a larger home than your friends.
- You want to run a marathon but fear your friends will sneer.

Positive Repatterning: Keep growing. The world needs inventors and those willing to reach farther. You and I would still be using horses and plows otherwise. Risk-takers find cures and become heroes. There is no shortage of abundance. There is an unlimited supply for everyone who takes a step. Poverty doesn't help anyone advance, but riches sure can. Be a diamond in the rough; diamonds have flaws but still shine.

- 3. Fear the Burden of Success:** This fear is also known as fear of burnout or having less freedom because of the commitments that accompany success. You might fear joining a gym and/or changing routines, for instance. If you reached success previously and fell, you might fear trying again.

Signs/Symptoms:

- Thinking you've already peaked or your good days are behind you.
- Thinking you don't have time—code for being too scared to try again.
- Thinking you won't be able to have fun anymore if you commit to a health program.
- Thinking it will cost too much (gyms, equipment, eating healthy, new clothes) or fear of gaining too much bulk if you exercise.

Positive Repatterning: Olympic athletes, billionaires, and so on all take breaks. Aim for quality over quantity with workouts and food. Do what you love, and it will naturally balance in other areas, including rest. You deserve a life you love.

4. **Fear of Abandonment:** Looking fit, being the healthy one, or looking different can mean risking abandonment by family, friends, or coworkers.

Signs/Symptoms:

- You join your friends on the weekend out of guilt despite your schedule.
- You stay later than you intended because of peer pressure.
- You eat what friends eat and drink, even though you'd rather not.
- You gossip with friends, even if you don't agree.
- You fear charging for your services and tell yourself it's okay, despite resentment.
- You are a people pleaser/caregiver who puts others' needs before your own to the point of exhaustion; you forget to put your own oxygen mask on first.

Positive Repatterning: “In a relaxed and easy manner, everything required is being accomplished in ways that feel really good to me for the highest good of all concerned,” says Kirsten Welles, master coach of the Brave Thinking Institute.

You might have noticed the overlap in these barriers to success—they are intertwined in ways that are difficult to separate. For instance, you can fear the *burden of success* and *abandonment* at the same time. In any case, one may stand out more, and therefore, a certain affirmation may also stand out. Revisit these fears often and pay attention to your thoughts as they guide you.