

Starting Small is the Opposite of Staying Small

Here's a quick tip for getting started on a project when you feel afraid:

Reduce the size of your fear by reducing the size of your first step.

The thing about courage is that it increases with competence. It's like the scene from *Man on Fire* where Creasy tells Lupita "There's no such thing as tough. There's trained or untrained." By starting small, you gradually build the confidence to go big.

Some would say "be fearless." I say "fear less by doing a little bit less of what you fear."

Use what you know you can do as a bridge to get to what you fear you can't do.

You can't force yourself to be bold any more than you can force yourself to bench press an amount of weight that's greater than your level of conditioning. You have to start with what initially seems to be a shameful size and you leverage your existing strength as a way to gain greater strength. You don't get stuck by lifting small weights. You get strong by lifting small weights. The people who get stuck are the ones who don't lift any weights at all because they're ashamed to be the person lifting the little weights.

Just like muscular strength, boldness is built bit by bit.

Instead of forcing yourself to be fearless, use your already existing boldness to gradually nudge yourself beyond your comfort zone.

You won't get stuck by starting small. You'll get stuck by refusing to start at all.