

Break the patterns that keep you small

Why capable people hold back, and how to step forward

Playing small is how we protect ourselves from rejection, failure and judgement. It isn't a lack of ability. It's human. But protection has a cost: the opportunities that pass us by.

1

Stop waiting to feel ready

Your brain predicts what comes next from past experience. For something new it has no data, so the feeling of *ready* rarely arrives on its own. Don't wait for the emotion: build a plan and follow it. Motivation follows action. Take out the first plate, and you empty the whole dishwasher.

Try this: *What story am I telling myself about why I'm not ready?*

2

Dare to be scared

Big goals can feel overwhelming. Life isn't Google Maps; it's more like sailing: keep a rough direction and adjust as you go. Pick one smart step you can act on right away, that feels a little bit scary. Fear is a sign of growth, not a stop sign. Then tell someone: saying it out loud makes it real.

Try this: *My step: _____ How scary, 1-10? _____ (aim for below 5)*

3

Stay in the driver's seat

Critical voices get louder when you step out of your comfort zone. Many formed when we were young, to keep us safe, and they didn't grow up with us. Notice the signals, in your mind or your body. Name the voice, talk to it the way you'd talk to your best friend, and keep your hands on the wheel.

Try this: *My voice says: ... / I'd tell my best friend: ... / And I'll still take my step.*

The one thing I'll do differently this week:
