

This is the **DO IT SCARED PODCAST** with Ruth Soukup, **EPISODE #51**. In today's episode, we are going to talk about some simple things you can do right now to increase your confidence, so that you have the courage to start going after your big goals and dreams like never before.

Hey there, and welcome back to the Do It Scared podcast! As always, my name is **RUTH SOUKUP**, and I am the founder of Living Well Spending Less and the Living Well Planner, as well as the founder of Elite Blog Academy, and the New York Times bestselling author of five—very VERY soon to be six--books.

In fact, I'm super excited to finally be able to tell you that my new book, Do It Scared, is available for preorder everywhere AND that we've put together some INCREDIBLE bonuses that you can claim once you order—and I'm not even kidding when I tell you that they are so, so good!

But I'm probably getting a little ahead of myself here, so let me say more about that in a little bit. In the meantime, whether you are new and just finding me through this podcast for the first time, or whether you've known me for a while from Living Well Spending Less or Elite Blog Academy—welcome! My hope is that this is a place where you will find new inspiration and motivation to move past the things that are holding you back so you can create a life you love.

In today's episode, we're going to chat about a topic that I know for sure affects so many people on a daily basis—ESPECIALLY women—and that's confidence, or more specifically, the lack thereof. And when it comes to going after our big goals and dreams, and daring to create the life that we've always wanted—a life we love—so many of us let that lack of confidence in ourselves and our abilities stand in our way.

We doubt our own greatness. We compare ourselves to other people. We let that voice of self-doubt in our head be the loudest thing that we hear.

And it holds us back and keeps us stuck.

But what we are going to talk about today is some super simple but VERY concrete steps that you can take to boost your confidence, not temporarily but for good. Steps that will help you move past fear and stop allowing your own insecurities to hold you back, and instead give you the courage to step outside of your comfort zone and make real and necessary changes to your life, changes that will eventually get you to where you want to be.

Because the reality is that you are the only thing standing in your way of the life that you want.

You are the one who is making this harder than it has to be.

And the sooner you can embrace that truth, the sooner you will be free to start really pursuing your goals and dreams wholeheartedly, knowing that you will make mistakes—just like we talked about a few weeks ago—but never doubting that those mistakes and lessons are all part of the process.

And ultimately, that's what this podcast is all about. It's about having the courage to step outside our comfort zone, to set big goals and then dare to go after them, in order to get unstuck and create a life we love.

Because courage doesn't mean we are never afraid. Instead, courage is being scared but taking action anyway, despite our fear. It is putting one foot in front of the other, even when we're not quite sure where the path will lead us.

Before we dive in, I just want to say from the start that if you want to go deeper with everything we are about to talk about today, and if you want some concrete help in increasing your confidence, then I encourage you to join our brand new Do It Scared Confidence Challenge.

This 5 day challenge is completely free to join, and let me just tell you—it is POWERFUL, and it will change you in just five short days. It will help you apply everything we're going to talk about today to your own life in a very real and practical way. You can get all the information at doitscared.com.

Oh, and by the way, DoltScared.com is also where you can get all of the information about ordering the Do It Scared book, and about all the incredible preorder bonuses, so be sure to check that out while you're there as well!

And then as usual, to get the shownotes for this episode, simply visit DoltScared.com/episode51.

Okay guys, with all of that out of the way, let me start with an important question:

What would you DO if fear no longer stood in your way?

Have you ever really thought about it?

How would it feel to have the confidence to pursue your biggest goals and dreams without even thinking twice about whether or not you should? To be able to just confidently pursue any dream, any idea, and never worry about failing or making a mistake, or about what other people might think about it?

What if, when you looked in the mirror, you LOVED the person staring back at you, just as you are?

We don't always think about confidence as the counterpart to fear, but the truth is that the two go hand in hand. And the reality is that building your confidence is the surest way to start conquering your fears and daring to do it scared, so that you can finally dare to start creating the life you've always dreamed of—a life you absolutely LOVE.

And know when I say that, and when I talk about creating a life you love, that I don't mean creating a perfect life, a life where nothing ever goes wrong, or a life where you won't still sometimes experience pain or adversity or struggles or challenges.

That's just life. There will always be obstacles to overcome.

But daring to create a life you love goes much deeper than that. It means daring to step outside your comfort zone, and actually pursue those big goals and dreams, rather than allowing yourself to stay stuck out of fear of the unknown. It's a life filled with meaning and joy—a deeper joy that only comes from doing hard things. It's the

satisfaction of knowing you're giving it your all, and not letting anything stand in your way.

And let me just tell you—in my own life, I certainly haven't always felt confident and courageous.

In fact, for much of my life I felt afraid and unsure. In my early twenties, I went through a terrible depression that almost killed me. I survived five suicide attempts, only to find myself divorced, bankrupt, and completely lost and alone.

But the thing about hitting rock bottom is that there is really no place to go but up. And so, I slowly put together the pieces of my shattered life by taking one small step at a time

And what I learned is that each small step that I took gave me the courage and the confidence to take another one, until eventually I was able to create a life that a few years ago I only could have dreamed of—a life I truly love.

That is exactly what I'd like to help you do too!

That's why today we're going to talk about five steps you can take right now to dramatically increase your confidence and give you the courage to start going after those big goals and dreams like never before.

STEP ONE is to **IDENTIFY YOUR FEAR**

We're all scared of something, right?

I, for one, am completely terrified of heights and snakes.

But, the type of fear I'm talking about is not these kind of phobias, but the fear that holds us back in life—the fear that keeps us stuck, keeps us from stepping outside of our comfort zone and trying new things, and prevents us from wholeheartedly pursuing our biggest goals and dreams.

That's the kind of fear that we talk about on this podcast every week, and the type of fear I look at in in-depth in my upcoming book, *Do It Scared*, and it is the kind of fear that inspired me to dig deeper and commission an entire research study, during which we surveyed more than 4,000 people on the role of fear in their lives.

And what we learned was pretty fascinating.

You see, as it turns out, not all fear is created equal. In fact, the way fear plays out in our lives, holds us back from pursuing our goals and dreams, and keeps us stuck is very unique to the individual.

What we learned is that there are seven very unique and distinct ways that fear manifests itself in our lives and holds us back from going after our goals and dreams—something we call the seven Fear Archetypes™.

The Procrastinator most fears making a mistake while the Excuse Maker is scared of being blamed or taking responsibility. The Rule Followers has an unhealthy fear of authority and an irrational aversion to breaking the rules, while the Self Doubter fears they aren't capable or good enough. The People Pleaser fears being judged or letting people down, while the Outcast fears rejection, and the Pessimist spends their lives trying to avoid pain or adversity.

And while all that is pretty interesting, the really IMPORTANT part of what we learned is that it is BECAUSE fear looks different for everyone that it is so important to identify exactly what kind of fear is most prevalent in your life, and most likely to be holding you back. Because once you have first identified your fear for what it is, it is then that you can start to overcome it.

In other words?

Identifying your fear is the first step to conquering it!

The Fear Archetypes—both what they look like and how to handle each one—are a topic I cover in depth in *Do It Scared*, and something I'll be talking about in detail here on this podcast in just a couple of weeks, in Episode 53, but believe me when I say so let me just tell you that the instant insight you can get into both yourself and the people closest to you when you start to explore the way fear affects us all is pretty astounding.

Luckily, we've also created an assessment tool that can help you identify the way fear is most holding you back. The free version of the assessment will reveal your top archetype, which is a great starting point for identifying the way fear is manifesting in your life, or you can upgrade to the premium report, which will give you a lot more insight into your top three Fear Archetypes, including how they interact—and what you can do about them.

But Identifying your fear—that's the first step to building your confidence, because it gives you the point of reference from which to start from.

STEP TWO:, then, is to **REFRAME YOUR THOUGHTS**

Because, you see, one of the biggest things that holds us back when it comes to fear and ultimately erodes—and sometimes even destroys—our confidence is the negative self-talk that happens inside our head. Sometimes these are known as limiting beliefs. But it is that little voice in the back of our mind that whispers little things like “who are you to think you'll be able to do something like that,” or “you're not supposed to do it that way,” or “you're not good enough to try that,” or “you might get it wrong.”

It's the little voice that tells you you're not pretty enough or smart enough, that you haven't had the right education or experience, that you're too old, or too young, or that you'll never be successful or never break free from the rut that you are in right now.

We all have that voice.

It might be telling us we don't deserve to ask for that raise, or it could be saying we aren't as talented or witty or well-spoken as a co-worker. It might be whispering things like “you're not a good mom” or “you're a terrible housekeeper”, or “you don't have time for that.”

That voice might be warning us not to try new things or take a risk because we might fail. Or the warning might be that we don't want to reach out and ask for help because we might get rejected. It could be telling us not to put 100 percent of our energy and efforts into pursuing our dreams because we're not sure what the people around us will say. “What if they don't understand,” it whispers, “or what if they make fun of us?”

That voice is destroying you.

But do you know what that voice really is?

It's just a thought, or a series of thoughts that keep coming back.

That voice has NO BASIS in reality. It's not the truth. And it doesn't have to be your truth. You can turn off that voice. You can reframe your thoughts to start believing something new.

And that's step two.

Because once you've identified your fear archetype & how it plays out in your life, you can then start to see the patterns of negative self-talk that happen in your mind related to this fear.

And once you've named your fear and identified the messages that are playing, it is essential to reprogram that message and reframe your thoughts.

Because if you want to stop listening to that message, then you need to figure out some way of replacing it with a new message.

So how do you do that?

Well, one very simple way to start is by using positive affirmations, something we talked about in detail in Episode 5.

At that means that you very intentionally craft a new script for yourself, one that you read and repeat out loud to yourself, every single day.

And I know that probably sounds kind-of hokey, but it really does work.

Think about it. If the self-talk that is currently going on in our head is programming our brain to believe things about ourselves that are untrue, then the best way to reprogram our brain is to start negating those negative self-talk messages with something new. Something that actually IS true.

We have to start changing the message that is being played, into something that is not so self-defeating.

And before you get the wrong idea about what this looks like, let me clarify that this doesn't mean you should start standing in the mirror and repeating things that you don't actually believe.

Instead, your affirmations need to take whatever message is currently playing, and reframe it in a different, more positive, but very specific way. And they need to be scripted with honesty, so that you can reset your truth and actually begin to internalize and believe the new message.

So for instance, if the voice in your head is telling you that you are no good at writing, you could replace that message with one that says "The more I write, the better writer I will become. It takes time and practice to hone a craft, and so I will keep writing and keep improving, so that I can make an impact with my words."

It might take a little while, but your brain and your subconscious would start to accept that new message as your new truth, and that limiting belief would start to fade away.

But notice that the new message doesn't say "I'm the best writer the world has ever

seen. I am a rockstar. No one can write as well as me.”

That message wouldn't resonate, because you wouldn't believe it.

Reframing your thoughts is all about re-training your brain to stop believing the negative thoughts and instead see the truth.

And that's step two.

STEP THREE, then, is to **START THINKING BIG**

And if you've been listening to this podcast for a while, you know this is one of my favorite topics!

But imagine with me, for a minute, this scenario.

You're in an airplane, all buckled up and ready for takeoff. Your bag is stowed securely under the seat in front of you, your tray table is latched, and your seat is in the upright position. You even took the time to watch the life-jacket demonstration and read the safety instruction card. You have done your part. You are good to go.

And then, as you are about to take off, the pilot makes a startling announcement.

“Good morning, folks, thanks for joining us today. We're going to be in the air shortly, but to be honest, we're not really sure where we want to go. We've decided we'll just take off and try to figure it out in the air.”

It's hard to even imagine, isn't it?

Because obviously, a situation like that would never actually happen in real life. Every time you get into an airplane, you know where you are going, and more importantly, so does the pilot. And even if they have to make a few tweaks and adjustments along the way, depending on the weather and jet streams, the general direction is clear. The pilot's job is to navigate the route and make the best possible decisions along the way.

And while it's easy to laugh at the absurdity and complete futility of getting into an airplane without a destination, the reality is that this is the approach that most of us are taking towards life in general a lot of the time. We're just going through the motions, trying to figure it out as we go along, to take care of all those daily responsibilities and keep the plane in the air. But without a clear sense of where we are headed, it is impossible to make the best decisions along the way.

Without a target, we will always be a little lost.

And that's exactly why setting goals, and especially learning how to think big and set stretch goals for yourself is SO important. We need big goals to actually get big things done, and to let us know where we are headed. Without them, we're ultimately just flying around in circles.

You need to set goals that will push you past your comfort zone and ignite that fire in your belly. You need to start daring to believe that you are capable of more, daring to set goals so big that they make your chest tighten or your stomach flutter.

Because those are the goals that will motivate you.

That flutter in your stomach and tightening in your chest that you feel is the good kind

of fear, the self-preservation kind of fear that kicks in when we need to do things we don't think we can do. And that's the feeling you want to create by committing to BIG goals.

Because, believe it or not big goals can give you the confidence to know you are heading in the right direction, even if you don't know every single step along the way.

And so step three in this process of boosting your confidence is to give yourself permission to start thinking BIG without any judgment or self-editing. Let yourself be free to dream about the WHAT, without worrying just yet about the HOW.

Set the timer for thirty minutes, and for that half an hour, turn off all those voices in your head that instantly tell you that's not possible or that's stupid or who are you to even think about something like that. Just turn them off and dream. Don't hold back. Don't worry about what's possible or impossible. Don't worry about how you'll get there. Don't self-edit. Give yourself thirty minutes to imagine the wildest possibilities, even if they are completely crazy and unrealistic.

Chances are, as you do this exercise and think through these big goals and ideas that you've dared yourself to dream about, the one thing you are most excited and passionate about will become more clear. Automatically rule out anything that is not at least an eight on your excitement scale. Don't even consider anything that's not sparking an extreme amount of passion and energy inside you.

And then, from the items that are left, pay attention to which goal or idea seems to spark the most passion and excitement—and the most fear—inside you. What's the one that feels distinctly uncomfortable and yet strangely exhilarating, all at the same time? What's the one that feels uniquely purposeful, like it could be a game-changer or the thing that finally gets you excited to jump out of bed in the morning? What's the one that feels right?

That's your one goal.

And by the way, if none of them make you feel that way, then either you might not be thinking big enough, or you're just really out of practice when it comes to setting big goals. In that case, you could do a couple of things.

First, you could look for inspiration in other places—read biographies of people you admire, try taking a class (either online or in person), or consider talking to a trusted friend, mentor, or even a therapist to work through your mental block. Then go back and repeat the thinking big exercise in step one, and really focus on eliminating any self-editing or judgment.

Second, you could look at all the things you've written down so far and try ramping them up or multiplying them until they are much bigger and do cause that little flutter in your belly or tightening in your chest, and they do start sparking a passion that scares you a little bit. Sometimes you just have to push.

And from there, you'll need to fully commit to this big goal. You need to write it down and say it out loud and actually do whatever it takes to make it real.

So start thinking big—that's step three.

STEP FOUR is to **SEEK OUT ENCOURAGEMENT**

Because let's not kid ourselves here. Doing it scared is not for the faint of heart. The process of facing our fears and going after big goals and dreams is not always easy. In

fact, it very rarely is.

After all, if it was easy then everyone would be doing it. If it was easy, it wouldn't be special or significant or noteworthy. If it was easy, it wouldn't be worth fighting for.

And while on one level, in theory, most of us probably understand that to be true, on a practical level, it's not always easy to remember. When things get hard or disappointments and obstacles show up, all that optimism and excitement we felt in the beginning is soon replaced with discouragement and frustration and fear.

We don't want it to be hard. We don't want it to hurt. We don't want to get our hands dirty, or to have to fight for what we want, or to feel the pain of defeat or the humiliation of failure. We don't want to face adversity, or to risk being judged by others. We don't want to have to take responsibility or find out that we might not be good enough to achieve what we want.

When the going gets tough, it can be tough to stay encouraged, and to keep our confidence up. But that is exactly the time when we need encouragement the most.

And that means that one of the very best thing you can ever do for yourself is learn how to put safeguards in place that will help you stay encouraged and boost your confidence with constant reminders of what you are capable of.

Because the thing is, as humans, I'm pretty sure that we have an insatiable need for encouragement. It doesn't seem to matter how often we might hear that we are smart or capable or beautiful or courageous or any other number of positive messages, we still need to hear it again and again. No sooner than we've heard it, we forget it again. Life gets crazy or hard or stressful, self-doubt and all those fears creep in, and suddenly all that confidence starts to fade away yet again.

And that's why it is so important to keep filling up. There is no limit to the number of motivational and self-help books you should read, the number of times you should read your favorite bible verses or devotionals, the number of inspirational podcasts you should be listening to, or the number of events or gatherings you should attend, because the energy and excitement, the motivation and the inspiration that feels so incredible in the moment will eventually fade away. But even so, the more positive and uplifting messages you have pouring in, the more likely you'll be to hold on to some of it.

You need to keep filling up, and actively work at staying motivated and encouraged and inspired. Get other people's voices in your head to cheer you on and make you believe you are capable of more.

Make it a habit to listen to podcasts or encouraging audiobooks while you're driving or working out or doing the dishes.

Since you're already listening to this podcast, that's a great start! In fact, I've had several listeners tell me that they just listens to all of the episodes over and over again on repeat, so that they always have my voice in her head.

But it doesn't have to be my podcast, or any podcast for that matter.

You could make it a goal to read at least one inspiring book a month or be on the lookout for events and gatherings happening in your area that will get you fired up. It might be going to church regularly, or finding a television show or you tube channel that inspires you.

Or you could join some sort of online accountability group, such as Doing it Scared, which is our own members only community designed to provide ongoing encouragement and motivation.

The point is not what you do to stay encouraged, but that you do it, and do it regularly. Actively work at staying motivated, and make encouragement and inspiration a priority so that the progress you make doesn't fade away.

And that's step 4—seek out encouragement.

And then finally **STEP FIVE** is to **TAKE ACTION**

Because, you see, action is the ANTIDOTE to fear!

Courage and confidence is like a muscle—the more you exercise it, the stronger it gets. And that means that you sometimes have to take just the smallest step in the right direction in order to give you the confidence and courage and strength to take the next step.

I know, because I've been there.

In Because, you see, by the time I turned twenty-three years old, I was pretty sure I had ruined my life forever. After a long and devastating 2 year battle with depression, a battle I almost lost, I found myself divorced, bankrupt, and all alone.

It's a story I've talked about in depth on this podcast, especially in Episode 27, but suffice to say that by 23, I had hit rock bottom.

I had no job, no money, no degree, and no hope.

But after giving up and several months of lying in bed, I finally found a new therapist and told her, "I've just spent two and a half years talking about every bad thing that has ever happened to me, and I don't want to talk about it anymore. It hasn't helped, and now I just need to know how to live again."

And for the next two years, that's exactly what she helped me do. Put one foot in front of the other and pull my life back together. I got an apartment and a part-time job, and then an even better, full-time job. I adopted a dog so full of energy that I was forced to get outside and take several long walks a day. I started making new friends—healthy friends—and I started repairing the old relationships I had destroyed. I relished being single, had fun camping and hiking on the weekends, and started meeting new guys and going on dates. I went back to college to finish my degree, and I started applying to law school.

My therapist helped me see that every small bit of progress that I made was helping lead to the next one, and she made me recognize that I didn't have to have my whole life figured out all at once, I just had to keep going. And eventually she helped me realize that if I could make it through the other side of a massive two-year mental breakdown, I could make it through anything.

I just had to keep going.

Because there was never a moment where my life magically turned perfect, and that certainly would that be the last time I struggled in life. I did go to law school, only to realize nine months into it that law school was not for me. I tried many other paths after that, and it would take me years to discover the path I was actually meant to be on.

But taking one step gave me the courage and the confidence for the next step, and then the next one after that.

And that's what I want for you too.

Because, you see, the final step in building your confidence is to just TAKE A STEP in the right direction, towards that big goal, of yours whatever it may be. It doesn't have to be a big step, but it does have to be something.

It could be joining an accountability group, like our Doing It Scared members-only community. It might be signing up for a class, or finding a mentor. It might be marching into your boss' office and asking for a raise, or for more responsibility. Maybe it will be throwing out all the junk food in your pantry so you can get serious about losing weight. Maybe it will be cutting up all your credit cards. It could be buying a planner and just blocking out time to pursue your dream.

But it needs to be something.

What are you going to do to get yourself one tiny step closer to your goal?

So take action—that's step five.

We don't always think about fear as the counterpart to self-confidence, but it really is. Our fear keeps us stuck, and that in turn, erodes our confidence.

And so, the first step we need to take, if we want to have the confidence to finally pursue our goals and dreams wholeheartedly, is to identify our fear. We need to identify and name the specific ways that fear is manifesting itself in our lives, and holding us back.

From there, step two is to reframe our thoughts. Once we can see the thought patterns and limiting beliefs that are connected to that fear, we can start to address them and change them. From there, it is time to stop looking inward and instead look forward.

That's why step 3 in this process is to start thinking BIG, and to give yourself permission to consider—and shoot for—the wildest possibilities.

Of course it's easy to have that confidence shaken, and that's why step 4 is to seek out encouragement, and to keep filling up on a regular basis. Read books. Listen to podcasts. But keep those positive messages flowing in.

And then finally, step five is to take action. Because action is the antidote to fear, and that is why you need to just take one small step, and then another. Confidence and courage is like a muscle—the more you exercise it, the stronger it gets!

And In the end the only difference between the people who succeed and the people who fail is that the successful ones refuse to quit.

And once again, guys, if you want to go deeper with these five steps and really get serious about overcoming fear and limiting beliefs, and increasing your confidence, I strongly, strongly encourage you to join our Do It Scared Confidence Challenge. It is completely free to join, and it is SO powerful! Just go to doitscared.com to get signed up!

Before we go, then, I just want to say, as always, that I LOVE hearing from you! If you have any questions about what we talked about today, or any other topics that you would like to see addressed on the Do It Scared podcast, please feel free to reach out, either via email or just by messaging me on Instagram.

You can find me there at [@RUTHSOUKUP](#)—that's r-u-t-h-s-o-u-k-u-p.
And that about does it for this episode of the Do It Scared with Ruth Soukup podcast!
Thank you so much for joining me today! If you liked what you heard, you can leave a review on iTunes, or, better yet, share this episode on your Insta story and tag me to let me know! If I repost your story, we'll send you a do it scared t-shirt just for fun!

Also, be sure to subscribe, either on iTunes or Stitcher or wherever you like to listen, to be notified of new episodes!

And speaking of upcoming episodes, be sure to join me next week as we celebrate ONE WHOLE YEAR of the Do It Scared podcast with my dear friend, the ever inspirational Susie Moore. Susie was my first-ever podcast guest, so you may remember her from Episode 2, which is still one of our most popular episodes to date! She has a ton of really great advice to share about this issue of confidence and increasing your courage to do hard things in your life. It's definitely a must-listen!

I'll catch you then!