A person with long hair

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From Comfort Zone to Growth

(#1 of 2)

December 12, 2021

Well hello Friends. I hope you had an amazing week!

Before we get started, I have two announcements.

First, I wanted to let you know that in January I’m leading a two-part workshop called Goal Getter.

So, if you’ve got big things you want to do in 2022 and you want some helpful structure and mindset ninja approaches to help with that, go to thepurposefulcareer.com/goalgetter and sign up on the wait list.

We won’t start until early January, but when you sign up, I’ll send you more information on what we’ll cover, the materials and all the goodness I’ve got planned.

So, whether you’re wanting to work on getting promoted, starting a business, improving your relationships or maybe something personal like losing wait, this will give you proven tools and techniques that help.

That’s thepurposefulcareer.com/goalgetter.

I hope to see you there. I’d love to meet you and help you get started on turning 2022 into your best year yet.

And of course, January is perfect timing because that’s when our thoughts turn to possibilities.

So, most of us will set a bunch of goals.

And when we do, a lot of us go all in. We allow ourselves to get super excited about what it will mean to have the goal. How it can change our life. All the things.

But soon after, many of us will quit.

It’s like 27% quit by end of week one. 31% by end of week two. And finally, by the end of the first month, more than 50% of us have quit.

Not just quit on our goals but quit on ourselves.

I don’t know if you can relate to this, but I certainly can.

I’ve quit on a lot of my goals over the years.

A LOT. But not all of them.

Take this podcast for example. I started it on January 3rd, 2021, and when I started, I promised myself I’d do a new episode every Sunday.

And I’ve done it. In just two weeks, I’ll have achieved that goal.

But it wasn’t easy. I wanted to quit. So. Many. Times.

I kept telling myself I didn’t have the time.

That it was too hard.

That it was taking too long to build my audience.

That there were other things I “should” be doing with the time I spend on the business.

And there’s a lot more excuses where that came from. Believe me.

I could fill this podcast with my excuses.

But I didn’t quit. I kept going. Every week.

And what I learned is that – no matter what the goal is – the biggest hurdle is mindset. It’s about not letting yourself talk yourself out of the goal, out of doing the work, just because it feels a little uncomfortable on occasion.

If we want to achieve a new goa, we must overcome the urge to quit.

To keep going when you feel scared or uncertain or uncomfortable.

To practice the self-command that it takes to stay consistent. Even when it’s not fun. Even when you don’t have time. Even when there’s an unplanned emergency or whatever else is going on.

And that leads me to my second announcement.

I’ve done a lot of thinking about what I learned this year by NOT quitting on my big goal.

By following through every week. Just like I promised I would.

Even when I didn’t want to.

So, this coming Wednesday, I’m going to share a bonus episode on “The big lessons I learned from my first year of podcasting.”

And I can promise you that whatever goals you have planned for next year, you’ll be able to relate to a lot of those lessons.

So please join me on Wednesday for that episode.

And now, we’ll get into today’s topic which is The Four Zones of Growth.

This is the first of a three-part series on The Comfort Zone.

And I thought it was a great lead-in to all the goal-setting stuff most of us will be doing in January – at work as well as in our personal lives.

This series was inspired by an infographic I as I was doing some study on positive psychology, which is one of the key methodologies I use in my coaching practice.

This infographic illustrates that the path to growth is divided into four zones.

First is the Comfort Zone.

Next is the Fear Zone.

Following Fear is the Learning Zone.

And last is the destination, the Growth Zone.

And if you want to see the graphic visual, check out my Instagram or Facebook page today. And by the way, if you’re not already doing so, please follow me over there. In all honesty, my social presence has left a lot to be desired this year but THAT just means that it’s at the top of the list on my big goals for 2022. So, let’s connect because there will be a lot of new goodness coming.

Anyway, the Four Zones of Growth is a cool infographic. It instantly changed how I thought about fear and the very real struggle most of us feel when we try new things.

And when I viewed growth in this new way – as four zones that we continually move in and out of – it gave me a sense of hope. And it made the fear associated with change seem less permanent. Less scary. Because this new graphic shows it as more a phase we move through and that just past that is the reward which is the excitement and passion that comes with learning new things and growing in ways that are important to you.

The graphic is amazing. Head over the Instagram and check it out. I think you’ll love it the way I do. Makes change and growth seem so much less scary.

So, in this episode, I wanted to define each zone.

Because I think this structure is a really helpful way to think about growth. And what it takes to get to next level growth. And the very real way that our need to feel safe and in control – by being in our comfort zone – prevents us from trying the new things we really want to do in our lives.

So, the first zone is the Comfort Zone.

This is the space where we feel just like the name suggests. Comfortable. And who doesn’t want to feel comfy, right? In this zone, we feel safe and in control. When we’re in this zone, things are easy. We know how to do all the things. Nothing fazes us. We don’t worry about being judged. We don’t worry about failing. Because we’ve done it before. So that means we don’t feel much stress or anxiety. Instead, we know exactly what to do and what to expect. And in theory that sounds great, right?

We all want to feel comfortable. We all want to feel safe. And life without stress, anxiety and self-doubt sounds pretty sweet, right?

But here’s the thing.

The Comfort Zone can seduce us into thinking that because we feel ‘in control’ and ‘safe’ we should stay right where we are. But the problem is that if we stay in our safe little comfort zone – we limit our growth. And we’re unlikely to ever reach our full potential.

So, while the comfort zone feels good, it isn’t a good place to stay too long if we’re interested in growing. I actually think this is the place where passion goes to die. But we’ll talk more about where passion gets ignited shortly.

First, we have to talk about the price we have to pay to get to growth, which is found in the Fear Zone.

If we want to learn and grow or really, do anything new, we must leave the comfort zone. And as soon as we do, we enter the Fear Zone.

In the Fear Zone, we experience all the ick.

The fear zone is scary.

We don’t know what to expect.

We’ve not done the thing before, so we don’t know how to do it.

We fear failure and judgement.

We doubt ourselves.

We get overwhelmed.

We experience all the imposter syndrome stuff around procrastination, perfectionism, self-doubt and all the things.

It takes real courage to leave the safe little cocoon of the Comfort Zone and enter the Fear Zone. And it takes even more courage to STAY in the Fear Zone. To not run back to the warm embrace of the Comfort Zone.

Because many of us will go back and forth between the comfort zone and the fear zone. As soon as it gets a little hard or uncomfortable, we will sometimes go back. We’ll tell ourselves that is the thing was meant for us it wouldn’t be so hard or scary. That we wouldn’t feel so crappy.

And when we go BACK to the comfort zone, It FEELS so much better there. Right?

So, when we go back to that, and all those nasty, scary thoughts and feelings go away, we can make the mistake of thinking that the comfort zone is where we belong.

But it’s not. The comfort zone is the place where – if we stay too long, we settle. We get stuck. The place where passion goes to die because we never let ourselves try or learn new things.

It’s takes courage to enter the Fear Zone. And it stays grit, commitment, determination, and resilience to STAY. To keep moving through the fear zone until we get to the other side.

And that’s the important thing to know. That’s the thing that made the Four Zones of Growth Infographic so visually profound for me. It shows that the fear zone isn’t the destination. We don’t get stuck there. We won’t always feel so crappy. It’s just a mindset-based place we need to move through. And it’s worth it to keep going because right on the other side of the Fear Zone is the Learning Zone.

The Learning Zone is where inspiration and passion live. It’s not necessarily easy. We’ll still have to deal with challenges and problems. But we’ll learn new skills. We practice them by doing them again and again as we work to master that new thing. And as we learn and master the new thing, we start to become a new version of ourselves. And that feels so amazing, right?

Just past the Learning Zone is the destination we were looking for. It’s called the Growth Zone. This means we’ve mastered the new thing and in doing so, we’ve also learned so much more.

Things like we can do hard things.

We can stick with what we started.

We’re capable of learning and getting good at something new.

This increases our self-confidence that we can do things we’ve never done before. Something we all know how to do when we’re children but that most of us forget for some reason as we age. But the more we tackle new things and work through the four zones of growth, the more confident we are and the stronger our belief that we can master the things we set out to do.

But here’s the kicker about the Four Zones of Growth. They never end. Because once we’ve worked through the four zones to get to Growth, once we’ve achieved that goal, it’s time to set another. If we don’t, we’ve just moved our cheese a bit. Meaning that by mastering the new thing, we’ve just created a NEW Comfort Zone. And in order to keep going and keep growing, we’ll need to set a new goal and work through those four zones again.

And again.

And again.

The Four Zones of Growth. Amazing preparation for all those big new dreams you’re imagining for 2022. And next week, we’re going to talk about Leaving the Comfort Zone. I’ll walk you through how to do it and give you an exercise to get a jump start on something big and new you want to do next year.

Don’t forget to check out the Four Zones of Growth infographic on my Instagram @thepurposefulcareer.

Be sure to join me on Wednesday for the bonus episode.

And don’t forget to sign up on the wait list for our January workshop at thepurposefulcareer.com/goalgetter. Space is limited to the first 100. So be sure to sign up!

Until next time, make it a great week my friends.