

3 Simple Steps for Stepping Out of Your Comfort Zone

On a recent morning text to our team, Auxano's Founder and Team Leader Will Mancini posed the following question to be asked of church leaders:

>> Where could you use [break-thru clarity](#) on your leadership team?

Most leaders can immediately identify a **barrier or roadblock** that stands in their way of moving forward to better future. Many leaders also have some idea about how to break that barrier.

There's another type of barrier that's more subtle, yet none-the-less blocking:

It's our Comfort Zone.

No one likes to move beyond his or her comfort zone, but that's really where the magic happens. It's where we can grow, learn, and develop in a way that expands our horizons beyond what we thought was possible.

Also, it's terrifying.

This article on HBR.org encourages us how to get out of your comfort zone. Here are the highlights:

> Tip 1: Recognize When You're Tricking Yourself

Instead of rationalizing why the behavior is something not worth performing, actively brainstorm all the reasons why it is worth performing. How can taking the leap and starting to work on performing this tough, but key behavior advance your career, give you chances to grow and learn in exciting ways, or whatever other goals you happen to care about?

> Tip 2: Construct a Plan That's Unique to Your Situation

Taking a leap without a plan is bold, but unwise. And without a strategy for how you are going to actually make this change, you'll likely end up just where you started. So what kind of strategy should you use?

> Tip 3: Find a Mentor or Coach

Even with a solid plan and a revitalized sense of purpose, a good source of help, courage, inspiration, and feedback can seal the deal. It can be a professional coach, but doesn't have to. A thoughtful and encouraging colleague or friend can also do the trick.

These 3 simple steps beg another question: **What are you waiting for?**

That question was on my mind as I began my day's reading, researching, curating, and editing – and over a period of a few hours, the following came together:

*Excellence isn't about working extra hard to do what you're told. It's about taking the initiative to do work you decide is worth doing. It's a personal, urgent, this-is-my-calling way to do your job. Please stop waiting for a map. We reward those who draw maps, not those who follow them. - **Seth Godin***

Mapmakers are those who can effectively circumnavigate constraints in order to make things happen. We all deal with constraints, especially if we are working inside an organization. There will always be organizational charts, reporting structures, budgets, and defined career paths of some sort. The question isn't whether constraints exist, but whether persist in finding our way around and through them.

Where in your life and work are you waiting for permission? Don't anticipate that someone is going to hand you a map. You'll probably have to make your own. The good news is that once you get moving, the terrain becomes more visible and navigable. It's only when you're standing still, unaware of what's over the next hill, that the path of progress is opaque and frightening.

Say yes, then figure it out along the way. - Todd Henry, Die Empty

A quote often wrongly attributed to The Cheshire Cat:

*If you don't know where you're going, any road will get you there. – **George Harrison**, from his song "Any Road"*

The actual conversation between Alice and The Cheshire Cat:

"Would you tell me, please, which way I ought to go from here?"

"That depends a good deal on where you want to get to," said the Cat.

"I don't much care where—" said Alice.

"Then it doesn't matter which way you go," said the Cat.

"—so long as I get SOMEWHERE," Alice added as an explanation.

"Oh, you're sure to do that," said the Cat, "if you only walk long enough."

And, from everyone's favorite graduation gift book,

You have brains in your head. You have feet in your shoes. You can steer yourself any direction you choose. You're on your own. And you know what you know. And YOU are the one who'll decide where to go...

– Dr. Seuss, Oh, the Places You'll Go!

A closing challenge from Todd Henry:

*When you look back on your life, the moments you will be most proud of will likely be the ones where you **stepped out of your comfort zone** in the **pursuit of something you believed in**. Don't allow the lull of comfort to keep you trapped in a place of complacency and subpar engagement.*

You must own your own growth and take responsibility for your own progress.

inspired by, and adapted from, Todd Henry's [Die Empty](#), with a little help from Andy Molinsky, Seth Godin, George Harrison, Alice in Wonderland, and Dr. Seuss

Would you like to know more about stepping outside of your comfort zone? [Connect with an Auxano Navigator and start a conversation with our team.](#)