

# F.E.A.R.

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So, you've found a marginal gain, you've aligned it with your values and tried to create a habit, but it just hasn't worked. Or perhaps you're curious about the content at the end of the challenge so you've skipped ahead. Either way, in this exercise we're going to be covering **F.E.A.R.**, where we will create some mental preparation for the most common barriers to behaviour change:

## F.E.A.R.

- F** = Fusion (things your mind tells you. When you get caught up in it, it gets in the way)
- E** = Excessive goals (your goal is too big, or you lack the skills and/or the resources)
- A** = Avoidance of discomfort (reluctance to make room for any discomfort this challenge brings)
- R** = Remoteness from values (losing touch with - or forgetting - what is important or meaningful about this)

Now, write down every single thing, no matter how small, that has made it difficult to follow through on your behaviour change. Leave the column to the right blank for the moment.

Obstacle	Label

Now using the **FEAR** model, go back and label each answer with as many letters as you like – whichever best describes this obstacle – in the 'Label' column.

Some examples of what may come under each **FEAR** item are below:

- Fusion** = I'll fail; it's too hard; I'll do it later; I'm too weak; I can't do it
- Excessive goals** = You lacked the time, money, health, facilities, skills, or support necessary; or it was just too big and you got overwhelmed
- Avoidance of discomfort** = You didn't want to make room for the anxiety, frustration, fear of failure, or other uncomfortable thoughts and feelings
- Remoteness from values** = You forgot or lost touch with the values underlying this goal

## F.E.A.R. (cont'd)

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The way we counter **FEAR** is with a **DARE**:

### D = Defusion

- Name the story your mind is telling you
- Thank your mind for trying to look after you, but let it know you can take it from here
- Name the passenger that often uses this voice. What would they look like or talk like?
- Practice mindfulness (see the 5-things toolkit)
- Or simply imagine your thoughts coming and going like passing cars

### A - Acceptance of discomfort

- Name the feeling (see the emotion identification toolkit)
- Observe it like a curious scientist – if it had a colour, what would it be? What shape would it take?
- Rate it on a scale of 1 to 10
- Commit to allowing it, breathe into it, make room for it, do not resist it,

### R = Realistic goals

- If you lack skills, set goals around learning them
- If your goal is too big, think about the next smallest action you can do to get started
- If you lack resources, brainstorm what you can do to get them or reduce the resources required by your behaviour
- If the goal is truly impossible, e.g. due to health or financial issues, or external barriers over which you have no direct influence, then perhaps think about setting another goal

### E = Embracing values

- Connect with what matters to you about this goal. Is it truly meaningful? Is it aligned with your values? Is it truly important? Is it moving your life forward in the direction you wish to go? Perhaps revisit our 'Understanding your why' section for more information on this.

Using the ideas from **DARE**, how can you effectively counter your **FEAR**?

Counter

One last question. Are you willing to make space for difficult thoughts and feelings without struggling with them in order to pursue what matters to you?

If so, great!

If not, revisit the values section. Think to yourself, does this change truly matter to you? Would you rather have the vitality-draining pain of staying stuck, or the life-enhancing pain of moving forward?