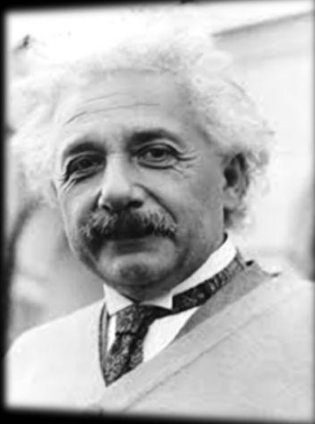
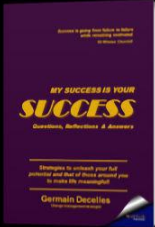


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Anyone who has never made a **mistake** has never tried anything **new**.



**MY SUCCESS IS YOUR SUCCESS**  
Qualities, Reflections & Discovery

Albert Einstein.  
(1879 -1955)  
German-born theoretical physicist, widely acknowledged to be one of the greatest and most influential physicists of all time. Einstein is best known for developing the theory of relativity.

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## FEAR OF FAILURE

*Everyone hates to fail, but for some people, failure poses such a significant psychological threat that their motivation to avoid failure outweighs their motivation to succeed.*

This fear of failure leads them to unconsciously sabotage their chances of success in various ways.

Failure can elicit feelings such as; disappointment, anger, frustration, sadness, regret, and confusion which, while unpleasant, are usually not enough to trigger a full-fledged fear of failure.

Indeed, the word is somewhat of a misnomer, as it is not a failure per se that underlies the behavior of those who suffer from it. On the contrary, the fear of failure is essentially a fear of shame.

People who fear failure are motivated to avoid failure not because they cannot handle the basic emotions of disappointment, anger, and frustration that accompany such experiences, but because failure also makes them feel deep shame.

Shame is a toxic psychological emotion, because without feeling bad about our actions « the culpability » or our efforts « the regret, » shame makes us feel bad about who we are.

Shame is central to our ego, our identity, our self-esteem, and our feelings of emotional well-being.



The damaging nature of shame makes it urgent for those who fear failure to avoid the psychological threats associated with failure by finding unconscious ways to lessen the implications of potential failure.

For example, buying unnecessary new clothes for a job interview instead of researching the company. This allows them to use the excuse of simply not having had time to prepare well.

There are several signs to help you grasp the meaning of the fear of failure.

We experience all these things to some degree.

1. Failing causes, you to worry about what other people think of you.
2. Failure makes you worry about your ability to pursue the future you want.
3. Failing makes you fear that people will lose interest in you.
4. A failure makes you worry about your intelligence or your abilities.
5. Failing makes you fear disappointing people whose opinion you value.
6. You tend to tell people in advance that you don't believe you can succeed, in an attempt to lower their expectations.
7. Once you fail at something, you find it hard to imagine what you could have done differently to succeed.
8. You often have last-minute headaches, stomach aches, or other physical symptoms that keep you from finishing your preparation.
9. You are often distracted by tasks that prevent you from completing your preparation and which, in hindsight, were not as urgent as they seemed at the time.
10. You tend to procrastinate and run out of time to complete your preparation properly.

You may want to investigate further through further reading on this topic or speaking to a mental health professional.

What to do when you fear failure?

The main problem with fear of failure is that it tends to operate at an unconscious level.

For example, you might think it's essential to finish writing your month-end report because you promised to send it by the end of the weekend, even though you're also on the point of completing a sale that will positively affect this month-end report.

To help you overcome and conquer failure, it is important to be willing to believe that failure makes you feel both fear and shame. Also, finding people you trust with whom you can discuss your feelings will help.

Bringing these feelings to the surface can prevent you from expressing them through unconscious efforts. Getting comfort from people, you trust can boost your sense of self-esteem while minimizing the risk of disappointing them.

Also, another good way is to focus on the aspects under your control. Identify the aspects of the task or preparation that you have control over and focus on those.

Think about ways to reframe aspects of the task that seem out of your control so that you can regain control.



Self-sabotaging behaviors can also arise from your need to control a situation. When you are in control, you may feel safe, strong, and ready to face anything that comes your way.

Certain types of self-sabotage provide this sense of control. What you're doing may not be good for your mental health or your relationships, but it helps you stay in control when you're feeling vulnerable.

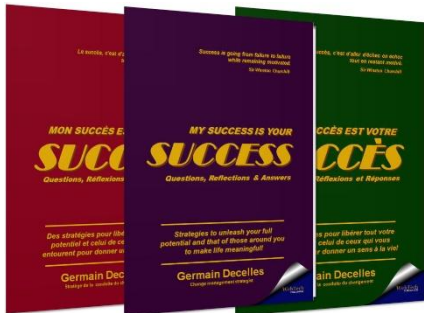
Take the example of timing. Maybe you want to postpone a research paper because deep down you're worried that you won't write it as well as you hoped.

You know, writing it at the last minute, won't help quality, but it will give you control over that outcome because you chose to write it at the last minute.

It can also happen in relationships. Opening up to someone emotionally can feel extremely vulnerable.

By keeping things in, you hold what seems to have the upper hand. But in the end, you don't reap the rewards of building intimacy by not sharing your vulnerabilities.

Find out more about « the fear of failure » with *My Success Is Your Success*. The book through questions, quotes and reflections provides the necessary elements to explore all about motivation so to shape your success and help those around you do the same. Remember that success is all about team efforts!



This 404-page book, available in French and English, is the fruit of forty years of experience acquired with local and international organizations and companies and during consultancy, change management, transition, and marketing services. For more information and to consult the flipbook, go to: [www.webtechpublishing.com](http://www.webtechpublishing.com).

### About the Author

In addition to writing, Germain Decelles acts as Change Management Strategist. He has over 40 years of business and consultation experience with local and international markets, including sectors such as retail trade, distribution, information technology and communications, transportation, manufacturing, financial services, and government organizations.



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