

# CHALLENGE VI

## LEAVING THE COMFORT ZONE

*I am getting ready to file the paperwork to start my business. Part of me screams, “What are you doing? What about security, your job, health insurance, the kids? Why do you want to leave the comfort zone?” That’s the scared part of me. The other part of me is cheering me on—congratulating me—loving me into wholeness. This part of me believes in what it cannot see. It has faith in me.*

One day, it will happen. We leave our jobs for good. The difference this time is that we don’t leave for a higher salary, a better title, more perks or greater clout. We leave to discover more of our potential, what we are truly capable of.

This transition of leaving the comfort and security of a job is challenging for many people. It requires faith in the unknown, and becoming comfortable with uncertainty. Many of us had years of training to be an employee. We were taught how to follow rules, who to report to, where we worked and even when. I had a difficult time letting go of the security of a job, even though I had known for a while that I was primarily there for the paycheck. I was addicted to security in a sense. My identity was wrapped around a job.

While I knew three years before I finally left my job that I wanted to be an entrepreneur, I did not make the break until I felt slighted by my employer. Even then, it took two attempts at leaving and returning before I could leave for good. I discovered that the more successful I became and the more money I made, the more difficult it was to leave.

Regardless of how and why we transition out of an employee role and into an entrepreneurial role, we are leaving what we are comfortable with and are venturing into the unknown. We may feel a new array of feelings that we haven’t felt before. And if we do not have faith that we can get through these feelings, we will likely return to what we know, a job, even temporarily. Mike, a successful accountant who became an entrepreneur, had that experience. After admitting that he was low on money and needed to return to a job, he shared the following comment, “I have never had my confidence shaken like it has been from going out on my own.” He went back to a job—but only for a few months. It is amazing just how vulnerable, how exposed we can feel when we leave the comforts of a job.

**When you experience uncertainty, you are on the right path—so don’t give up.**

*Deepak Chopra*



## Trading Security for “Uncertainty”

*It was worth trading my security and unhappiness for uncertainty and aliveness.*

We are stripped of the “corporate cover” as the veil of security in our jobs is lifted and we come face-to-face with ourselves—our faith and belief in who we are. We see ourselves and feel our vulnerability and for many of us, it is a completely new experience. This ability to face ourselves is the greatest challenge and the greatest opportunity we have in entrepreneurship. How do we do this? We learn to have faith in uncertainty and in the unknown. We find security within ourselves instead of outside ourselves. The idea of security we get from a job can be an illusion. If we think we are secure in our job, then we don’t confront uncertainty.

For me, feeling uncertainty and being OK with it took me a long time to understand. I’d ask myself, “Why is uncertainty so difficult for me?” I got the answer—even though it was an answer I didn’t like. I didn’t have faith in myself. I lacked a belief in myself, had little self-esteem and didn’t feel secure within myself. Wow! What a blow to my ego. But it was true. And once my truth was revealed to me, I could begin to do something about it. The irony of this revelation was that I saw myself as self-assured and good at what I did. What I realized was that I borrowed “security” from my employers; it was on loan to me. The security that I felt when I worked at a job was never mine. It was not at the root or core of my being, where it needed to be. I hadn’t yet developed these qualities within myself.

The awareness that I was borrowing my sense of self from my employer was monumental in terms of understanding why I had such a hard time leaving my job. I recognized and accepted that I lacked a sense of security in who I was. This acceptance brought an understanding as to why I went back to school for all those degrees—and sought higher-paying jobs and promotions. The better I got at my job, the more security I needed, so it was a vicious cycle that I didn’t even realize I was in until I tried to get out.

As you choose to experience uncertainty, you are transformed merely through the experience of choosing the unknown path. The unknown path is actually the journey to one’s core or soul. Clients develop faith in themselves and discover who they truly are through this experience. They begin to have a new level of living and freedom.

Each person’s set of securities is unique. For some, it is salary, hours, perks, 401(k) programs and insurance. For others, it is the less tangible things such as familiarity and predictability. Whatever it is, it is important to recognize what makes us feel secure, so that we can at least be aware of our feelings when we let go of this security. We can make it through this phase. Even though I have felt uncomfortable through many “growth spurts,” the most uncomfortable time was leaving the security of my job and making my initial transition into entrepreneurship.

Describe what makes you feel secure about being an employee. For example, I felt secure with a salary I could depend on each week, quick results from my hard work, job satisfaction, knowing that I had a place to go every week, and being recognized for a job well done.

---

---

---

---

---

What is motivating you to let go of these securities and make the transition into entrepreneurship?  
What motivated me was the passion I felt to be my own boss. I didn't act on this passion until I was uncomfortable in my work situation. Write your motivation for leaving your job and transitioning into entrepreneurship.

---

---

---

---

---

What does the uncertainty of leaving or having left your job feel like to you? Is the feeling of uncertainty negatively or positively affecting you? For example, are you losing sleep or sleeping better? Do you feel freedom or fear?

---

---

---

---

---

---

If you have a difficult time dealing with uncertainty, as so many entrepreneurs do, ask yourself why. Look deep for the root or the cause of this discomfort. I suggest that you ask yourself this question and not expect an answer right away. A good time to ask the question is during your meditation time, before you go to bed or right when you wake up. The answer will come to you

when you are ready to hear it. Or you may consider writing about it in your journal or talking with supportive friends. Write below your discovery of why uncertainty is difficult for you.

---

---

---

---

---

Once you acknowledge that uncertainty causes you discomfort or challenges you, you can begin to do something about it. For example, if you discovered that you need to work on your self-confidence, you can go back and work on the self-confidence exercises in Challenge I, or look to other sources and ways to develop your self-confidence. The same holds true for any discovery about yourself that you have. The goal of this exercise is to recognize where your discomfort regarding uncertainty comes from, what the root of it is and then take appropriate action. It is important to mention that changes we make in our lives take time. It may not be enough to work on self-esteem or self-confidence through one exercise. Some exercises may need to become part of your daily routines. Write down what actions you will take to work on the roots of your discomfort regarding uncertainty.

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_

***I am comfortable with uncertainty.***