Get Out of That Comfort Zone – Have Fun, Learn, and Grow!

We all have a comfort zone. In it we have all the things we feel comfortable with: activities, people, foods, places, and ways of being. Inside our comfort zone is everything we’re comfortable with—everything we know, everything we’ve done in the past, all the classes we’ve taken, all the conversations we’ve had, the places we’ve been, and the people we know. There are also all those things that everyone is comfortable doing like brushing our teeth, watching TV, eating, playing video games, texting and talking with friends.

So what do all these things have in common? They’re familiar, they’re known—we’re very comfortable doing all these things and hardly think about them. But what would happen if we never went outside our comfort zone? What if we never experienced anything new? What if we simply woke up every day and did only the things in our comfort zone? What would our life be like? We think the best answer to that question is BORING!

If we know that living our lives continually inside our comfort zone is boring, then what words can we use to describe what is outside of our comfort zone? Something interesting happens as we move out of our comfort zone. As we move from the known and familiar into the unknown and unfamiliar we may feel awkward, uneasy, fearful, even challenged. But it can also be fun, exhilarating, and fulfilling.

Think about the first day of school or moving to a new school. Finding your classroom, wondering if you’ll like the person you sit next to, wondering what your teacher is going to be like. In those moments, for a lot of us, we’re out of our comfort zone. But waiting for us outside of that comfort zone could be a new friend or a favorite teacher.

There are a lot of other things outside our comfort zone, things we may actually long for but hesitate to pursue because we’re fearful of stepping out of our comfort zone. Think about your comfort zone and write down some of the things outside your comfort zone that you sometimes think about doing. Maybe it’s trying out for a sport, performing in a show or concert, running a marathon, or even climbing a mountain. Or maybe it’s as simple as raising our hand in class to answer a question! Or approaching a new person in class to introduce yourself.

We all like to stay inside our comfort zone because it’s easy, familiar, and yes, comfortable! Everything outside it seems uncomfortable and even risky. Yet as with anything too comfortable, our comfort zone can become boring and stagnant. If we stay in there long enough we run the risk of getting stuck in a rut. So sometimes we venture out to the limits of our comfort zone and peek out. There’s that new thing waiting for us. Then that little voice in our head screams Don’t go out there! It’s too risky—stay in here where it’s comfy!

Consider this: if our days are not making us feel challenged or uncomfortable, if we’re not experiencing anything new and different in our lives, we are not growing. To grow, to learn, to get out of our comfort zone, we have to take risks occasionally. And with each small risk we take—each step we take outside our comfort zone—our comfort zone expands. And taking that step next time is no longer risky—we’re now comfortable with it and it becomes part of our comfort zone.
And one more thing: it’s important to remember the power of **fimage** in this process, so be sure to read our next article: **Fimage = No Fear of Image**. Then make it a personal project to take one small step out of your comfort zone every day, or just every week if that feels more comfortable for now! Consider some of those things that hover just outside your comfort zone—not those distant big ones like climbing a mountain. Choose things at first that will make you stretch just a little bit, then move on to the bigger ones. When we stretch ourselves and take risks to step out of our comfort zone, we let go of our fimage that in the past might have been holding us back—stopping us from doing the things that we want to do, from being the person we want to be. By letting go of our fimage and moving out of our comfort zone, we learn and grow. Our challenge is to find ways to be in a continual state of growth. That’s when we have fun, that’s when we learn and grow.