

# REMARKABLE LEADERSHIP LESSONS, LLC

*Cultivating Leadership Habits that Close The Leadership Gap*

## **The Break Up Begins With You Finding The Motivation to Break UP Courage, Risks and Reward**

**5-Part Coaching Program  
Break UP to Better at WORK!**

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## Introduction

### Purpose and Possibilities

If you want be recognized and rewarded at work, this e-booklet is for you. If you want progress on the issues most important to you, this e-booklet is for you. If you want to strengthen your leadership skills no matter where you sit in your organization, this e-booklet is for you. If you are tired of waiting for a boss, mentor or a mythical sponsor to step up and give you promotion, this e-booklet is for you.

Our content is about possibilities, not daydreaming, wishful thinking. Rather, roll up your sleeves, realistic and courageous thinking, as an avenue to generate the kinds of rewards you want to see by breaking UP with old ideas and embracing new possibilities.

By downloading this e-booklet you have taken the first step. And if you complete this 5-part independent program, then you will have taken the second step to breaking UP with a job, a boss, a career that just doesn't fit anymore. This 5-part self-directed coaching program presents simple yet effective tools designed to help you understand and examine how you think about what needs to be in place for you to make a change.

This e-booklet come from the experiences of HELP SQUAD member Denise Cooper who works with people in organizations around the world, across sectors, cultures and job roles in positions high and low, helping them each to tackle their most pressing challenges.

“For me there is no greater blessing than helping people move their career forward, seeing them stop working for the wrong boss or company, and find the right fit. In the process of breaking UP with a job, company or boss that just isn't right for you, you will develop the skills necessary to live in our fast pace, constantly changing world of work,” says Denise.

For many people, the hardest part of a break UP is finding the courage to identify and embrace what is most important - to stay where you are or to take the first step to move forward to better with a new state of mind and a new job with the possibility of making more money, doing what you really love and finally finding your purpose. Unless you care about your desire deeply, the ability to move on is grounded in the assumption that there must be a reason to exercise leadership, to have a courageous conversation with a boss or go on an interview, take the risk on a new idea or direction.

What needs to happen to make the effort and risk worthwhile? When it gets tough, what purpose would keep you motivated to stay in the game, especially when it looks like it will never happen and when the tyranny of the day takes over your calendar? Is a promise of better the reward that will keep you trying?

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The goal of this e-booklet is to provide you with practical steps to start you on your journey to breaking UP to better. Denise wants to support you in moving closer to maximizing the chances of success and minimizing the chances of your staying in the same place. Remember, you are here because you want something different. Take the time to invest in setting yourself up for success. This e-booklet will get you started. When you're ready for more...our HELP SQUAD is here for you.

## About Denise Cooper



Over the last 10 years, Denise has been the guiding force behind an international coaching company. She earned an **MBA from Washington University** in St. Louis, MO, coaching certification from **North Carolina State University** and studied under Judith Glaser to earn the distinguished designation as a certified **Conversational Intelligence (C-IQ) Coach**.

***“Leading in general is not for the faint of heart. But leading during tough times means unearthing long held beliefs that need to be examined, challenged and re-envisioned. To be successful, executives need to be comfortable in using their unique strengths to bring about tremendous value for everyone involved.”*** Denise Cooper

The foundation of her work is teaching executives this one fundamental truth: When you're running lean, trust between management and employees is the linchpin for sustaining high performance. Denise is the creator of a 12-month interactive leadership program called *The Leader's Journey: Creating A*

*High Performance Culture and A Business Made to Succeed: A New Way Of People Planning: Scaling for Growth and Productivity in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century* and considered an expert in identifying a person's passions, strengths, ways to minimize weakness so executives can lead talented groups of people towards greatness.

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## **A Few Tips from Denise On How To Get the Most Out of This e-Booklet**

Finding the motivation to move forward begins with learning what is stopping you from making the decision to do something different. What stops us all is how we evaluate risk versus the perceived reward of finding the courage to take a chance.

The best way to complete these sections is to do one or two sections and then let a few days pass and then complete the next assignment. Learning and growth occur not in the moment that a new idea occurs but when we examine the idea and test it against what is happening in your life.

With every new client, I tell them the story of learning to swim. You can read every book on how to swim. You can practice moving your arms by watching a YouTube video and visualize yourself in the water swimming like a pro. However, you don't really know what it's like until you jump in the water.

It's not until you jump in and the water splashes on your face, goes up your nose and you experience that feeling of going under that you realize no matter how many books you read, no matter how many videos you watch ... you still can't swim so I highly recommend you plan to complete the exercises over a few days. In between, ask yourself the questions at the end of each exercise about different aspects of your life. Record or journal your answers.

Once you have completed the 5 parts, go back and review your answers. Note what has changed? Are the answers still good? What did you learn about yourself and are you ready to take the next step or did you find you simply are not ready to take the action to turn your desire into reality? Whatever you discover know ALL is good. Some dreams just don't spark the motivation to go after them but if you find you are ready for the next step in your break UP... contact me. I'll be here waiting for you.

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## Part #1 - Taking a Chance and Making a Mistake

Welcome to Part #1 of the Courage, Risks and Rewards Coaching program.

We start Part #1 of the program by exploring what taking chances and making mistakes means to you.

So, let me ask you a question, **have you ever held back from doing something because it was too risky?**

We probably all have done that at one time or another. Taking a chance usually means we have something to lose, and many of us shy away from losing. Let's face it, no one wants to lose.

Still, taking chances is an integral part of life, and if we want our lives to change for the better, we have to become more aware of what we are willing and not willing to risk.

Let's begin this session by **exploring what taking a chance means to you, and what makes it such a risky proposition.**

Take a moment and look back on your life and think of a time when you took a chance at something. It can be anything – big or small, at work, or in your personal life.

Next, I would like you to identify a time in your life when you made a mistake at something. Again, it can be anything – big or small, at work, or in your personal life.

A 'mistake' can be regarded as something we wish we could go back and do differently.

After reading this section, go to worksheet #1.

There are two columns labeled with the following two phrases:

- Label the first column: "Taking a Chance"
- Label the second column: "Making a Mistake"

With the experiences of 'taking a chance' and 'making a mistake' fresh in your mind, take two minutes to write down in each column what the two phrases "Taking a Chance" and "Making a Mistake" personally mean to you.

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<b>Taking A Chance</b>	<b>Making A Mistake</b>
Taking a chance means to me...	Making a mistake means ...

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Now that you have answered the questions, what does it mean to take a risk and what does it mean to make a mistake? Please complete Part #1 by answering the following questions:

- What links do you see between these two phrases – ‘taking a chance’ and ‘making a mistake’?
- Where do you focus most of your time and energy: a) on taking a chance or b) on avoiding a mistake?
- How does your concern about making mistakes impact your willingness to take chances?

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## Part #2 - Your Attitude Toward Taking Chances

Welcome to Part #2 of the Courage, Risks and Rewards Coaching program.

In this section, you will dive deeper into the concept of having courage, taking risks and reaping the rewards. But before you do, I want to share with you the most important message to take away from this coaching program. It is:

**“The biggest risk in life is not the possibility of making a mistake;  
it’s never trying in the first place.”**

We are constantly taking chances in life whether we realize it or not. When you get on a plane, cross a street, or just walk down the sidewalk, you run the risk of something bad happening. As much as we try, we cannot completely avoid risk. Taking a chance to do something new or different does take effort, especially if you are uncertain of the results.

For your next exercise, you will continue to explore the effort(s) required for you to take more chances. You will do this by first becoming aware of your perspective on taking chances, and then recognizing the rewards you can receive from the risks you take.

You will also look at what can help and hamper your effort when taking a risk. This the “Courage, Risk, and Rewards” approach to taking chances. Let’s start by looking at the first element: **Courage**.

We sometimes think that doing nothing is being neutral or safe. That isn’t always the case. Doing nothing can actually be negative; the comfort zone we live in can be very seductive. Everyone desires comfort, but too much comfort can work against us, because an inability to step out of our comfort zone limits our potential.

Many people avoid taking chances because they are afraid. Being trapped by fear and refusing to take a chance leads to a safe, boring, and mediocre life. People with this mentality do not thrive, learn, love, or grow to their fullest potential because they will never step out of their comfort zones and take a chance.

By having the courage to take risks, you explore, discover and maximize your potential.

Now, you are going to do a fun activity called ‘That’s Just Crazy!’

I’d like you to take three minutes to assess your attitude towards risk as well as how courageous you would be to do various activities that require different degrees of risk.



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On Worksheet #2, there are four different quadrants that contain the following headings:

- “Not a problem for me to do”
- “I have done this, but found it scary”
- “I would be willing to try this”
- “I would never do this”

Worksheet #3 contains a list of various activities for you to assess your willingness to do.

Read over the activities on Worksheet #3 and place those activities in the quadrants on Worksheet #2.

Work quickly, trusting in your gut reactions rather than dwelling and thinking too hard about each one; after all, there are no right or wrong answers here.

Also, you can either write the activity in the appropriate quadrant on Worksheet #2, or just place the activity number in the appropriate space.

Begin now.

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## Worksheet #2 – “What Am I Willing to Do”

<p><i>Not a problem for me to do:</i></p>	<p><i>I have done this, but found it scary:</i></p>
<p><i>I would be willing to try this:</i></p>	<p><i>I would never do this:</i></p>

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## **Worksheet #3 – “That’s Just Crazy!”**

Activity:

1. Take part in a karaoke competition
2. In a no-smoking area, ask someone to stop smoking
3. Ask for a raise
4. Go for counseling to sort out personal difficulties
5. Hug a complete stranger who is in distress
6. Run a 10K
7. Get in a physical fight
8. Quit your job without having another one lined up
9. Take a vow of silence for a day
10. Turn off all electronic devices, don't use/check social media for a weekend
11. Ask for feedback about your performance from 10 colleagues
12. Go on a blind date
13. Dance in the pouring rain
14. Give honest feedback to your boss about their leadership style
15. Learn to dance (Hip-Hop, Salsa, Jazz)
16. Speak to an audience of a thousand people
17. Eat something that's alive (like an insect)
18. In an elevator, laugh hysterically for 5 seconds in front of strangers
19. Apply for a new job outside your field of expertise
20. Fast for at least two days
21. Take a ride in a hot air balloon
22. Spend a week at a meditation retreat
23. Live in a foreign country for three months
24. Swim nude in a public place
25. Jump off a high cliff into the ocean

I'd like you to take three (3) minutes to assess your attitude towards risk and to determine how courageous you would be to do various activities that require different degrees of risk.

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Now that you have completed this activity, please complete Part #2 by answering the following questions.

- What did you notice when going through this exercise?
- What surprised you?
- Where were your personal boundaries \_\_\_challenged?
- What did you learn about your attitude towards risk from completing this exercise?"

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## **Part #3, Section 1 – Why We Avoid Taking Risks**

Welcome to Part #3 where you are continuing your exploration of what it means to have courage, take risks and reap the rewards.

As you discovered in Part #2, taking chances often has a negative connotation because it implies danger, anxiety, worry, and possible loss.

But taking chances also has a positive side because often the reward is greater than the risk.

Most of us are pretty good at not taking dumb risks, but many times we also miss the smart risks that come our way.

Let's take a closer look now at this idea of risk, the second element of our "Courage, Risk, Rewards" approach to taking chances.

To understand risk better, let's look at why you avoid it, and how you can feel empowered to take more chances in the future.

Famous race car driver Mario Andretti once said, *'If things seem under control, you're just not going fast enough.'*

Before we can stretch out of our comfort zones and be willing to take new chances in life, we need to first look at why people avoid risk.

There are many reasons why people avoid taking risks, of which 6 reasons I want to share with you here. They are:

1. *Failure* – I might not get what I am aiming for.
2. *Exposure* – If it doesn't work out, it might reflect negatively on me.
3. *Embarrassment* – If I push for something, and it doesn't work out, I could be judged by others.
4. *Rejection* – I could be rejected by others.
5. *Loss* – If I try something new or different, I might have to give up what is familiar.
6. *Disapproval* – If I do it then others won't like me.

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## **Worksheet #4 - “Why We Avoid Risk?”**

### **Part 1 - “Why We Avoid Risk”**

*“Taking a new step, uttering a new word, is what people fear most.” ~Fyodor Dostoevsky*

1. Which of the 5 reasons resonates most with me?
2. What are some other reasons I avoid risk?

### **Part 2 - “Supporting Risk-taking”**

*“Don’t be afraid to take a big step. You can’t cross a chasm in two small jumps.” ~David Lloyd George*

1. What is my reaction to these five powerful perspectives?
2. Which perspective(s) would inspire me to take a chance? Why?

Then return to this module to complete Part #3, Section #2.

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## **Part #3, Section 2 – What Supports Risk Taking**

Welcome to Section 2 of Avoiding and Supporting Risk.

In Section 1 of this module, we looked at why people avoid taking risks and why you avoid risk in your own life. Let's continue by exploring ways you can put supports in place to help you take more risks.

If taking chances is important to move forward in our lives, then what can we do to support ourselves in doing so?

There are five powerful perspectives on risk-taking that will empower you to take more chances in life:

*Take the Plunge –*

- o Taking action towards achieving what you want is not really a risk. Action, no matter how small, will always create positive movement forward.

*Say 'Yes' to Life –*

- o Life isn't about obligations, commitments and to-do lists; it's about being able to say 'no' to the distractions and 'yes' to the things that matter most.

*Go Out on a Limb –*

- o The view will be much better from there, and you are bound to find some fruit.

*Swing for the Fences –*

- o If you win, you will be happy; if you lose, you will be wise.
- o Most people spend too much time pondering what won't work. As a result, justify why it is best to take no action at all.

*Roll the Dice –*

- o Never let the odds keep you from doing what you know in your heart you were meant to do.
- o If you are going to try, go all the way. Otherwise, don't even start.

Refer back to Worksheet #4. Take three minutes to complete this module by answering the questions about "Supporting Risk Taking."

Record your thoughts here...

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## **Part #4 – What I Gain From Taking Chances**

Welcome back to Part #4 of the Courage, Risks and Rewards coaching segment.

You have made great progress in this coaching program. So far you have:

- Explored what it means to take a chance and make a mistake
- Discovered what your attitude is toward taking chances
- Looked at why you avoid risk. And, explored ideas to support you in risk taking

Now, we are going to bring this coaching segment full circle by discussing what you will gain from taking chances.

Taking chances can simply be a matter of perspective. Those who are willing to take chances are looking at what they stand to gain, rather than what they could lose. They also know that even though something may not work out, no decision is catastrophic.

If we look logically at what we stand to lose and what we stand to gain, and make an educated decision, we truly can't lose when taking chances. In fact, if you are consistently taking risks in life, you will ultimately come out ahead. Thomas Edison failed thousands of times when creating the light bulb before he finally succeeded. No matter how many failings he experienced, he only needed to succeed once. Today, he is known as one of the most famous inventors of all time.

Happiness in life comes from acknowledging the need for change and being willing to try something new because the status quo is no longer working.

Let's take a closer look at the rewards we can reap from taking chances.

Take a moment to think of a risk you have been hesitant to take.

Now, weigh the possible losses and rewards you might encounter if you took that risk.

Take 5 minutes to follow the steps listed below in Worksheet #4 by identifying a risk, and then exploring its possible losses and rewards.

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## **Worksheet #5 – “The Rewards of Risk-Taking”**

So, what have you wanted to take a chance on?

Think of a desire or dream you have not pursued because of what you might lose if it doesn't work out. If you need more room than this page, feel free to add a sheet of paper.

Instructions: In the first column below, list what you think you will lose if you take this chance and it doesn't work out. Write down every possible negative outcome you can imagine.

Next, take each of the items you have just identified as a possible loss and in the second column flip them around into possible positive rewards.

Write down every possible positive outcome you can imagine.

<b>What do I stand to lose?</b>	<b>What do I stand to gain?</b>

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When finished, look over the costs and rewards you have identified. In which direction does the scale tip? If the possible losses still outweigh the possible rewards, consider revising your dream or desire so that the scale tips in the other direction.

As a final thought, consider the consequences of not taking this chance on yourself and your dream. What do you stand to lose then, and are you willing to live with that?

Now that you have completed this activity, please complete Part #4 by answering the following questions.

- What did you notice when you identified the possible rewards of taking the risk instead of just focusing on the losses?
- Why identify possible rewards when assessing risk? What does this do for you?
- What did you learn from this exercise?

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## **Part #5 - Review and Lock It In**

Welcome to Part #5 of the Courage, Risks and Rewards Coaching program.

Throughout this coaching program you have discovered that if you play it safe, you will not reach your full potential of happiness and success.

As hockey great Wayne Gretzky once put it, ‘You will always miss 100% of the shots you don’t take.’ Failure is inevitable. EVERYONE fails. This much is true - no risk, no reward. And remember, you only need to succeed once no matter how many times you meet with failure. Sometimes, being right on with just one risk that you are willing to take is all you need to change your life forever!

Before we conclude, let’s summarize what you explored during this coaching program.

- You looked at your personal perspective around risk taking.
- You explored why you avoid risk and what you can do better to support yourself when taking chances.
- And you just looked at the possible rewards of stretching out of your comfort zone and doing things new and different.

To conclude this program, I would like you to take a few minutes to review your completed worksheets and to answer the following questions:

- How has my level of courage and my perspective on taking risks changed as a result of this program?
- Going forward, what would support me the most when taking a risk?
- What reward from risk-taking would motivate me the most to take a chance?

This concludes the coaching program on Courage, Risks and Rewards. I hope you found it valuable in helping you assess your future opportunities and to take the risk!