

FROM THE FOUNDER OF THE INSECURITY PROJECT

Unhindered



THE SEVEN
ESSENTIAL
PRACTICES FOR
**OVERCOMING
INSECURITY**

JAEMIN FRAZER

UNHINDERED. THE SEVEN ESSENTIAL PRACTICES
FOR OVERCOMING INSECURITY.

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For information contact the author at <https://jaeminfrazer.com>

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Self Help

Mind Body

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Preface

For the last ten years, the pursuit of solving the insecurity problem has become my obsession. It has entirely captured my attention and all ambition I have for my life is directed to this end.

This subject has occupied every spare corner of my brain and there are very few nights where the desire to understand and explain how insecurity can be overcome does not work itself into the fabric of my dreams.

This book represents the very best I have to offer on this subject. I have poured my heart and soul into creating a framework that is intelligent, effective and complete.

To set up the conversation about such a difficult and vulnerable issue, there are three vital distinctions to be made about the nature of insecurity:

1. It is natural
2. It is useful
3. It is removable

In understanding this triad, you will find the access point into the way of solving insecurity for good.

It is natural

It is unavoidable. Even perfect parents could not protect their children from developing irrational fears and self-limiting beliefs. Doubt and fear show us where the edges are. They let us know we are alive and that we deserve to be safe.

It is universal. Every human being who has ever lived, and is yet to live, will face this same longing for love, belonging and significance in the process of forming as an adult. Understanding the universal nature of the fear of not being good enough allows each of us to see our own struggle with insecurity as somehow special or unique. It's not that some people face the insecurity problem while others are spared, everyone develops this fear. If insecurity is the constant, the variable is what people do with it.

It is useful

There are seasons of life where having something to prove, driven by fear is incredibly motivating. In this book, I'll show you examples of insecurity driving up performance and boosting personal capabilities.

The issue is that while it starts out as natural and useful, there is definitely an expiry date on both the usefulness and naturality of this fear. In fact, the longer insecurity remains intact and unaddressed inside you, the more toxic and maddening it becomes. We are supposed to remove it.

The gift within our insecurity is the resistance it provides. Growth never exists in a vacuum or perfect condition. It requires some kind of oppositional force. We reach full stature as we reach for the stars while simultaneously being pulled back to earth. If there was no gravity, we would float off into space.

From the deep dark recesses of our mind a voice of fear taunts us. The terrifying question of what would be discovered if we were to be laid bare, can either paralyse or energise us.

What if it's true? What if you are no good? What if you are unworthy? What if you are not enough?

*Sure, but what if it's **not** true? What if there is no substance to this fear? What if I am inherently good? What if I am deeply worthy? What if I AM enough?*

The voice of insecurity gives us the opportunity to find out which one is true. The most meaningful victories in life always come in the face of the biggest challenges.

Insecurity proves to be a worthy adversary to test yourself against. Like a loving mentor, it desperately wants you to win while making it as difficult as possible for you to do so. This makes the victory real.

Nothing of value comes without a cost. To have the opportunity to genuinely overcome insecurity will cost you everything. If

you lose, you die. If you win, you get the holy grail and are able to drink from the well of everlasting life.

It is removable

I have no confidence in the common thinking about what one is to do with self-doubt, fear and limiting beliefs. The advice of podcasters, authors and athletes on dealing with fear frequently leaves me puzzled, while conversations about insecurity with practitioners in the personal development space rarely inspire me.

The general consensus seems to be to struggle against insecurity the best you can. Mask, medicate and manage the monster. It is my heartfelt conviction that we can and must do better than that. The natural cycle of insecurity is for it to be felt, faced, deconstructed, removed and replaced.

This book is devoted to the process of *solving* the insecurity problem.

Jaemin

Introduction

So, what's the problem?

Let me begin with 2 of my all-time favourite coaching questions:

1. What problem are you most looking to solve right now?
2. Are you sure that's really the problem?

Two interesting things happen when you allow these questions to work their magic.

Firstly, most people realise that they've never actually named the problem. They are not actually clear about what's wrong at all. This question forces you to be specific. What exactly is the problem here? You can't fix it if you don't even know what it is. What exactly is wrong? What specifically don't you like?

Being as precise as possible gives you clarity about where to focus your attention in order to fix the problem.

Maybe your marriage isn't great right now.

Is it everything about your marriage or only certain parts of your marriage? What's not the way you want it to be?

Maybe you haven't felt healthy in ages.

Yes, but what specifically is happening in your body that makes you feel unhealthy?

Perhaps your finances are stressing you out.

What do you mean by that?

Maybe you feel stuck or trapped and haven't been happy in ages.

Are you sure that's how you feel? And how do you know this is true?

Or maybe every time you arrive at work, there is an empty feeling in the pit of your stomach.

What exactly is the problem here?

When you remain vague or abstract about the things that aren't working, you have no capacity to improve your situation.

Secondly, just because you think you've accurately understood the problem doesn't mean to say that you have. Because

problems feel bad, they almost always come with an inbuilt sense of judgment. We feel that we must have done something wrong to be experiencing this problem in the first place. And if you've done something wrong, there must BE something wrong with you. It all becomes very personal.

The pain associated with this problem makes it incredibly hard to clearly see the true nature of the problem itself. It is impossible to do self-judgment and self-awareness at the same time. In the presence of judgment, we must defend and protect our interests instead. This invariably leads to a faulty diagnosis.

We see and feel pain on the surface and therefore imagine that's where the problem lies. Due to our inadequate diagnosis though, we waste effort solving the things that are merely symptoms of a deeper problem. This leaves us in more pain and more deeply impacted by the underlying problem.

Be precise

The value of letting these two questions do their work is that you move from abstraction to specificity. Embedded in this shift is the experience of moving from powerlessness to full empowerment.

When a problem is experienced in loose, abstract and imprecise language, you'll notice that the problem appears to be outside of you in a way that you have zero control over. The accompanying feeling is therefore to be overwhelmed and

anxious. There is nothing you can really do to solve the problem; you'll just need to manage the situation as best you can.

As you get precise and accurately identify the real problem, however, you'll notice that it is actually entirely within your aegis. You are therefore completely capable of solving the problem. The feeling about the problem changes significantly. As soon as you see clearly the exact nature of the problem, you also see that the problem is you. You discover that the problem is not due to what is happening to you, as first thought, but what you are bringing to the situation.

When you feel overwhelmed and anxious about a problem, this is simply clean feedback to let you know that you haven't properly understood what the real problem is. You will know that you've accurately understood the true problem when you feel clear about the solution and confident that you are capable of resolving the issue.

Let's try this idea in the five most common human pain points.

Weird Health Stuff

Amanda's story – Health pain

For a number of years, Amanda had experienced increasingly serious health issues, to the point of being severely limited by her medical conditions. Things just kept getting worse and her life had practically ground to a halt. The physical sickness was ruining her business and relationships. Therefore, when she came to see me, the problem she was most looking to solve, was the negative impact her health was having on every area of her life.

Now obviously I'm no doctor, but that was kind of the point. She had already spent thousands of dollars on numerous medical specialists and none of them had been able to give her more than vague diagnoses and generalised ways of managing her health. The value of asking me to observe her situation was that because I was not impacted by her pain, and had no vested interest in solving her problem, I was able to see patterns that were hidden to those closer to the situation.

Here is what emerged after some gentle inquiry:

- She had always been very healthy until a few years into starting her own business,
- Over the last 5 years, she got really sick twice a year and each time was worse than the one before,
- Being sick forced her to be cared for by her mum,
- She described herself as a chronic people pleaser and could never say no.

Exploring the unconscious strategies beneath these patterns it became apparent that:

- Because her dreams were not initially supported by her parents, as many young people do, she made a vow to prove them wrong.
- While this driven-ness caused her to be highly motivated and achieve some remarkable results it was also a brutal strategy with zero scope for intentional rest. Becoming really sick was the only time she stopped.
- Being sick was the only time her mother and her knew how to do relationship naturally. Mum would take charge and care for her little girl. They'd never worked out how to do adult to adult relationship even though Amanda was in her 30's and had lived out of home for more than 15 years. There was certainty and safety in this set up that unconsciously caused them both to hang onto the sickness because of the relationship benefits.
- Being a people pleaser means always saying yes and

serving other people's agenda even at your own expense. Being bed ridden provided the only opportunity for saying no without feeling guilty.

Clearly, the problem actually had nothing to do with health. Every time she had focused on solving the health problem before only ever led to short-term benefits and actually added residual disappointment.

The real problem needing to be solved here was entirely about her sense of self. A deep insecurity had been undermining her independence, assertiveness and adult decision making. Her ill health was simply the by-product of this dysfunction.

Robbie's story – Losing weight

Robbie came to me looking to achieve three outcomes, one of which was to lose 15 kilograms. He'd been trying hard to get his weight under control for most of his adult life. Fifteen years ago, he successfully lost 20 kgs but didn't manage to keep it off and has been overweight ever since despite his best attempts at diet and exercise.

Robbie thought that his problem was he'd never liked fruit and didn't enjoy exercise. He felt that he just lacked the discipline and consistency to stick to a health plan that would enable him to lose the weight.

I was far less convinced this had anything to do with the extra

kilos. Being curious about what had created this issue in the first place led us to discover the real problem.

The breakthrough came when I asked him if it was ok for him to be attractive. He laughed. No one had ever called him attractive, and he'd never thought that of himself. He'd been the happy, friendly, cuddly teddy bear for as long as he could remember.

The thing is, when Robbie was 10 years old, he had a particularly painful experience at his school athletics carnival. He'd decided that this would be the year he would emerge as talented young athlete and so had convinced his dad to buy him some flash new running spikes along with a matching pair of shorts and racing singlet. On top of this, he confidently told his friends and classmates that he'd hoped to win some or all of the races.

Unfortunately, on the day of the carnival things didn't go to plan and he failed to even win a ribbon of any colour, new spikes and all. His mates took great pleasure in reminding him of this fact and made fun of him mercilessly.

When I took him back to that defining moment to review the data, Robbie realised that the impact of that experience had changed his whole life. Specifically, it was the meaning he'd placed on that event that really defined him.

In that moment Robbie decided that when you stand out, you get found out.

See Robbie thought he had a weight issue, a motivation problem, and a fruit problem. The truth is, that he's been hiding since he was 10! This is clearly not a health problem. This is about insecurity.

Losing weight and being attractive is incredibly dangerous because it would bring him face to face with his deepest fear – being found out!

Until he deals with this insecurity, there is no possible way his subconscious will allow him to lose weight. It will use all kinds of fun but untrue stories to keep him in the dark about what is really going on.

Erica's story – Extra weight

At 40, Erica was really sick of the way she looked. The extra 15 kilos of weight she'd been carrying was creating massive pain and although she'd done everything she could think of to try and fix it, she was desperate to resolve this issue for good.

As you'll see later in the book, feeling acute pain about what you don't want is incredibly useful for real change. In the safety of a clean judgement free coaching space, we were able to explore the issue more deeply.

Erica imagined that the real problem was that she lacked the discipline and motivation to stay on track with a diet and exercise regime. She explained that she was not naturally drawn to

sport, fitness or exercise and so always had to force myself to do these things. As a busy working mother, these things kept getting pushed down the list of priorities.

She also told me that her mum always solved relationship problems with food and that is exactly what she has learnt to do as well.

I told her that this was not the problem but that clearly, she needed to be fat.

After she got over the initial shock caused by the brutality of that assessment, we both roared with laughter! What other space could I say those words to a woman without getting stabbed in the throat with a fork?

I explained that I didn't care whether she was skinny or fat. It made no difference to me! She told me she wanted to be skinny yet was constantly unable to achieve that result despite her best efforts. The point is that obviously, this is not about better diet and exercise otherwise she would have already worked out how to solve that problem.

There must be a deeper problem to solve before she can see change in the issue with her health.

I began exploring the deeper issue by asking if she had always been unhappy with her weight. Here's what we discovered:

- It was only 15 years ago that her weight had increased. Before that, she had never had a problem with staying healthy.
- Things changed after her fiancé cheated on her in the lead up to their wedding, when she was at her most slim and attractive. From that point, weight had been an issue.
- She'd attached her whole hope for happiness, family, and security on this relationship and couldn't imagine a life without him, so she continued with the marriage and suppressed the pain of being hurt so personally.
- Once she was married to him, her deep fear was that he would reject her again. That would prove once and for all that she was not good enough.
- The unconscious protection strategy to keep herself safe from this fear therefore was to never show up at her best again. That way, if he was to cheat on her again, he'd be rejecting the fat her, not the real her.

Clearly Erica does not have a weight issue.

Having an extra 15 kilograms was allowing her to hide from what she was most afraid of. Therefore, it was not safe for her to lose the weight without first dealing with the deep insecurity.

Bernadette's story – Super skinny

Bernadette was obsessed with being skinny and looking good. She didn't look like she had an eating disorder and boasted that she ate a cheeseburger everyday. She wasn't anorexic or bulimic. She looked perfectly fit and well. It wasn't until she was pregnant with her first baby and the thought of being 'big' compromised not only her own health but her baby's health as well. She came to me because her friends and family were worried about her and because she was suffering severe anxiety about not being fit and skinny.

Here's what we discovered:

- She grew up in a large family. Her dad would favour the pretty, skinny daughters as opposed to the larger, less pretty ones
- Her parents later divorced
- She connected skinny and attractive with not being rejected
- She was highly motivated to stay skinny so her husband wouldn't leave her
- She thrived on the compliments she'd get, and this measured her value and worth
- As a result, she created an arbitrary number on the scales she could never let herself exceed.
- She never missed an exercise session, even when it cost her in other ways

- Has been on every diet under the sun — no sugar, keto, 5-2, eat only a handful, etc

While it is much easier to judge people who are overweight, the point is, some skinny people are just as insecure. They are driven to not get fat out of a fear of rejection, a need to be affirmed or a craving for attention. Ultimately however, they are still hiding from being found out, just in a different way. The deep fear is that if they were to show up as themselves, there would be nothing special about them and they would be exposed.

The point is, this was clearly not a health issue, a weight issue or even an anxiety issue for Bernadette. This all came back to her fear that she was not really worthy of love.

Weird health stuff

I geek out on health conditions that doctors are at a loss to know what to do with. The moment someone describes their condition this way, I'm super curious to explore the real problem.

You've got psoriasis...there is no cure. You'll have that for the rest of your life and need to constantly treat the symptoms.

Autoimmune diseases. Sorry...got nothing. Just get some rest and try to avoid stressful situations.

Suddenly developed bad allergies to certain foods and

additives...steer clear of nuts, eggs, gluten, soap, sugar and carry an EpiPen at all times!

If it's a weird health thing, then more than likely it's actually not weird at all. Calling it weird is only making it more powerful and giving you less ability to do anything about it. What if it is simply the symptom of a deeper problem?

People work perfectly. You are not broken. The results you are getting in every area of life are the exact results you've designed your system to create. Every behaviour is meeting a need and every strategy has a positive intention.

What looks like a health problem, may not have anything to do with health at all.

The health pattern

Health is definitely one of the five key areas that is most affected by insecurity. Typically, this is how it shows up:

- Carrying extra weight
- Obsessed with staying skinny
- Frequently sick or have patterns of sickness
- Weird health issues that Doctors can't diagnose
- Lack of energy
- Poor sleep
- Skin issues
- Autoimmune diseases
- You don't feel healthy.

What happens when you try to solve it on this level?

The patterning in the area of health underneath all this, is that you have to fight against yourself to become healthy.

The major thinking problem here is that there is some fat, lazy, recalcitrant part of you that has no interest in succeeding or being healthy. In order to win in life, you must conquer, subdue or even kill this part of you.

This leads to a focus on self-discipline to solve your problems. Convincing yourself that you really just need to be more disciplined, try harder and be better. The only reason that your last efforts didn't succeed can only have been because you just didn't try hard enough! You NEED to be more disciplined!

This thinking leads to the following ineffective behaviour:

- Just trying harder
- Telling yourself to be better
- Beating yourself through self-judgment
- Negative self-talk
- Forcing yourself
- Tricking yourself
- Making deals with yourself
- Fighting against yourself
- Not being able to rest
- Always looking for someone to hold you accountable
- Never feeling you've done enough

The reality is, just because you see pain show up in your health, doesn't mean that you have a health problem.

Do you want to be well?

There is this cool story in the bible about this magic kind of pool that sick people used to camp around in the hope of being healed.¹ The story goes that once a year an angel would appear and stir the water and the first person to dip a toe in would be totally healed.

There is this paralysed guy who has been camped near the pool for 30 years waiting to be healed. One day Jesus walks by and asks him if he'd like to be well. Seems like a strange question. I mean of course he does, right? He's totally committed to being rid of this condition that has afflicted him for most of his life.

The full implications of this question are life changing. If you want to be well then pick up your mat and walk out of here. If you want to be well, then you can't be defined as the sick guy who has no responsibility and has everyone else care for him. You will have to step up and function in the real world, fend for yourself and take full responsibility for your own life. If that's what you want, then you can have it now, magic pool or not.

I'm not saying that sickness isn't real. It's just that sometimes we can be hanging onto it more than it is hanging on to us. It is amazing what we can let go of when we are ready to be free.

1 This story is found in John 5:1-15

The point is, this is NOT the battle. Your health is NOT the problem. Trying to fix your health without dealing with your own underlying insecurity can NEVER lead to lasting change. Remember, people work perfectly. Of course you are unhealthy. But your body craves health and is entirely capable of getting you there as you give yourself full permission to flourish.

Accept that being unhealthy is working for you. Sickness gives you rest. Extra weight allows you to hide. Being less than your physical best dials down people's expectations of you in every other area as well.

Sure, you still fail and get judged but it is the sick, tired, fat version of you getting judged, not the real you. If you were to show up at your absolute best and then fail, or be judged and rejected, that would be the ultimate failure!

Rather than fighting yourself to try and make the change, realise that until it is safe for you to show up in the world at your best, then you will continue to be unhealthy as a way of staying safe from what you are afraid of.