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## **Comfort Zone: Take a Risk**

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“Only those who risk going too far can possibly find out how far they can go.” — T.S. Eliot

As I sat on the beach recently watching a storm out over the ocean, I considered the vastness of the universe and the beauty of the mysteries of the unknown. The world is full of mystery and unknowns and the way we approach these can say quite a lot about who we are. My youngest nephew, Joe has always been a little tempted to stretch the boundaries of his comfort zone. He came home one day prior to starting the seventh grade and announced he would be trying out for the soccer team at school, he had never really played, practiced, or shown an interest in the sport. He played for the next six years, played well, played hard, and it became his passion.

After he graduated from high school three years ago he attended college briefly, then one day out of the blue he announced to the family that he had decided to join the Marines. This kid who had never been a color between the lines person was about to embark on one of the most rigid, structured careers in existence. He made it through basic training, almost a year of schools and has now been at his unit and in a job he loves for over a year. The adage “the opposite of fear is faith” is often used to bring to light the thinking that fear can be paralyzing while faith can encourage the calculated risk-taking that moves us toward our life goals.

Fear of moving out of your comfort zone can be immobilizing. Several years ago I worked for a mental health agency that used the term “putting you in your dots” to refer to a therapeutic technique geared toward helping families to move beyond the obstacles in their habits and lives. I often refer to the term “taking a leap of faith” as a way to inspire clients to take a risk and change the habits that have often become ingrained in their way of life. With all the ups and downs in our lives today we are becoming more steadfast in clinging to some of our habits or ways that are not necessarily the best for us. Our lives are so hectic and chaotic that we spend most of our time holding steadfastly to some semblance of routine, even sometimes a destructive one. Taking a step toward making a change may not only be scary, but the time and energy required may seem daunting. It can be relatively simple to step out of your comfort zone just by doing something- anything- differently or having the courage to do something before anyone else. Find time to slow down, let go, and take time to really look at yourself. Always remember to be true to who you are and ask yourself what you really have to lose.