

# Planning for The Road Ahead

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**TAKE THE ROAD**  
**LESS TRAVELLED**

## PLANNING FOR THE ROAD AHEAD

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## Take the Road Less Travelled: Planning for the Road Ahead

### Lesson 3— PDF Transcript

**By the end of this lesson, you will be able to:**

- Protect your confidence and self-esteem
- Deal with the “evil monster” that tells you to stay where you are
- Build a better relationship with yourself

Hello everybody. My name is Olle Lindholm and welcome to the *Take the Road Less Travelled* course. I’m really glad to have you with me.

### Introducing the evil trolls

Today, we’ll be talking about planning for the road ahead.

Unfortunately, both you and I know there are some evil trolls out there who want to see us fail. That’s the price we pay for choosing to take the road less travelled. There are some people who don’t want us to follow our own path, because it reminds them deep down that they are not happy with theirs.

What we need to remember is that people have different worldviews and different priorities. What’s important to you might not be so important for them. We all walk on different paths, which means it’s useless to try to constantly compare our own road to someone else’s.

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There will be times when we will meet rejection and resistance. The trick is to know how to protect your confidence and self-esteem, so you don't let others stand in your way towards a more happy and fulfilling life.

### Protect your confidence and self-esteem

I'm sure you've already met a lot of resistance and rejection in your life.

It's inevitable in the long run. In fact, a dose of resistance and rejection can actually be good for us. It makes us more humble, and it also tells us that we're doing something worth doing.

If it wasn't, Resistance would give us a free pass. That's how it works. I can guarantee you'll meet people who don't believe in Your Thing, who think you're stupid and careless. Let them think that. Don't waste your precious energy arguing with them.

Instead choose which feedback is important to you. Whose opinion do you value and treasure? Why? Listen to those people and learn to ignore the rest. As Dr. Seuss says:

**"The people who mind, don't matter, and the people who matter, don't mind".**

The key lesson for you here is to create and protect your own feedback loop. It's one of the most effective ways to look after yourself, to protect your confidence and self-esteem.

## Exercise more personal courage

Both you and I know that you have a long and windy road ahead of you.

You will doubt yourself from time to time, and there will be times when you feel alone and scared. That is completely normal – in fact, it's a great sign that you're building up the courage to take the road less travelled.

**Remember that courage is not the absence of fear, it's taking action despite fear.**

Researcher Cynthia Pury identifies two types of courage. She talks about general courage and personal courage.

General courage is when you see Bruce Willis in *Die Hard*. It's heroic, noble, and admirable. Personal courage, on the other hand, is when we overcome our own fears, like going on a plane even though we're afraid of flying.

One way to exercise more personal courage is to take those small "baby steps" that we talked about in the previous lesson. Another way is to build a better relationship with yourself. Let's talk about that next.

## Build a better relationship with yourself

Have you ever paid attention to how you talk to yourself?

My guess is that you can say some really mean things. The inner dialogue can be very revealing. Sometimes, I feel like there are a million different people up there, fighting for my attention.

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But not all voices are created equal.

We all have a mean little monster inside that's just waiting to take us down. It kills all hope for the future. You can name this monster, if you want to. I've named mine Ursula and she can be a real bitch sometimes, pardon my French.

The point is, now that I have a name for her, I can talk to her and tell her off. Just like your mother told you, ghosts and scary monsters become less scary when we address them and talk to them directly. They don't like to be visible; they are afraid of the light.

You'd be wise to build up a more kind and loving relationship with yourself. After all, you will keep yourself company for many years to come. You might as well make it a good one!

If you find that you're stuck talking to your Ursula, or Maude (or whatever you choose to name your evil voice), there is a way to snap out of the never-ending gibberish that's sucking your precious energy and that's making you feel awful.

Whenever you hear yourself say something mean, like "I'm not good enough", then gently ask yourself this powerful question:

**"Would I say this to my best friend?"**

You'd be surprised at the effect such a question can have for your well-being. Of course, you wouldn't go around telling your best friend that she's not good enough! (Unless, you're a really bad friend, but that's a different matter.)

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Science shows that we could all use some perspective and distance in our lives, because it's so easy for us to get caught up in the story created by our own thinking.

Next time you are catching yourself with that little evil voice inside, ask yourself: "Would I say this to my best friend?" and you will most likely smile, and think to yourself: "Of course not!"

### Befriending yourself on paper

To truly build a remarkable relationship with yourself – one filled with love, gratitude and acceptance – you'll want to put your caring thoughts on a piece of paper.

This act alone has a positive effect for your well-being and it helps you to enjoy the journey, even when it gets tough. There are a few ways you can do this.

One is to start a journal. It doesn't have to be anything fancy, but if you can afford it, buy a book that makes you smile, that makes you feel special.

You fill these pages with inspiring quotes and passages from books, films, or even music lyrics. You will come back to these pages later when you're struggling to follow your own path.

Also, have a place in your journal where you gather some "feel good" thoughts; this might be qualities, traits and accomplishments that you're proud of, or nice things people say about you.

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This “compliment” section is a great back-up for those bad days, when you’re feeling down and your mini monster is taking over the show. It’s also teaching you to tune in and shed light on the positive aspects of your life – a new habit that will serve you well over the long haul.

A journal is also a place for you to write down all those secret wishes, dreams, and goals that you have.

It’s a great idea to do a “brain dump” about twice a year; I usually do it in the middle of summer, when I’m on vacation, and at the end of the year, just before Christmas.

I find it’s really useful to get those ideas on paper, and I’ve found that it helps to keep me sane and healthy. You can check out the next action worksheet and the lesson page, and I’ll add more useful resources for you there, to help you get moving with that.

### The analogue versus the digital workstation

Of course, you could also use digital tools to do your “brain dumps” and record your thoughts and feelings.

I just prefer to use pen and paper, because that way I can doodle and write with different colours and it just really helps to awaken that inner child. It makes the whole experience a lot more fun, and that’s really important for me.

But this is something you really want to experiment with.

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I'm all for technology, but sometimes technology over-complicates things, and makes us freeze. It also tends to bring out that "perfection voice" in most of us. It wakes up Ursula and the lizard brain, and we don't want that because it keeps us from moving forward.

Cartoonist and NYT bestselling author Austin Kleon has a great way to look at this.

He uses an analogue and a digital workstation. For his analogue workstation, he only allows pen, paper, scissors, crayons and all that good stuff. Yeah, I know, it's like the desk of a 5-year-old. Very creative. He doesn't even allow his phone to be on that table, that's how important the analogue workstation is for him.

You can try to create an analogue space for yourself. I really do believe it helps you to plan for the road ahead. Stay away from social media and the internet when you're trying to reflect on your life and plan for the future.

### Remind yourself that you live in an edited world

The main reason why you'll want to stay away from the online world when you work on yourself, is that it's noisy and crowded.

I know it's hard to compare yourself to yourself, especially online, where we see everyone else and how happy they are. This can cause us a great deal of harm and we often compare ourselves to others without even being aware of it.

At this time, I'd like to remind you that we only see edited versions of others online – we don't get to see their whole lives, **just glimpses of it, and these glimpses, they choose for themselves.**

It's never a good idea to solely compare yourself to others online. It is unhealthy and causes a great deal of stress and anxiety for our own confidence and self-esteem.

We don't do that. Your journal is where you compare yourself to yourself: it's where your journey begins, and ends.

### The road not taken

I want to finish with a short story about what taking the road less travelled has meant for me. I'm not telling you this so I can brag, but rather give you an idea of how important it is to follow your own path.

So, we need to go back a few years. I was twelve years old, and very bored. I was going to a Swedish school, where they basically teach you to fit in. For most kids my age, the road ahead was pretty clear: next year, they'd cross the schoolyard, and begin junior high.

I was already the class nerd because I cared about getting a good education, about getting good grades. And I got them.

But there was a major problem. I didn't feel challenged, didn't feel inspired.

**And I was scared, scared I wasn't living up to my potential. The path was too easy.** And I was afraid that it wouldn't take me where I wanted to go.

Then, my aunt called. She saw this ad in the newspaper about an English school opening up. I did the application test, convinced I wouldn't get in.

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I remember feeling ecstatic. I had been challenged. I felt like a 5-year-old solving a hard puzzle for the first time, and I couldn't get enough of it.

Turns out they needed every student they could get. I got in.

And that's where I really started taking the road less travelled and as Robert Frost points out in his poem *The Road Not Taken*:

*Two roads diverged in a wood, and I –  
I took the one less traveled by,  
And that has made all the difference.*

I want you to explore roads that challenge and motivate you. That's the biggest drive and the very reason behind why I created this course.

Paths that make you want to go further. When you protect your well-being by building a loving and caring relationship with yourself, you will become more resilient and willing to follow your own path.

Life is the sum of your choices. It's never too late to decide to follow a new path.

What will you choose?

The journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step. Put one foot in front of the other, and get on your way!

Thanks for listening all the way to the end. This is Olle Lindholm with *Take the Road Less Travelled*.