

# People who were never encouraged to follow their dreams often display these 8 behaviors as adults.

by Mia Zhang June 9, 2024

It's a tough thing to swallow, but it's true:

Some of us were never given that push, that nudge in the direction of our dreams when we were younger.

We did our best to fit in, to go along with what was expected of us, but there was always that nagging feeling of something missing.

Sometimes it was subtle, just a whisper in the back of our minds.

Other times, it was a deafening roar that we had to work hard to ignore.

In this article, we'll dive into the common behaviors often displayed by adults who were never encouraged to follow their dreams.

It's not about placing blame or fostering regret; it's about understanding and maybe even finding a way forward.

## 1) Fear of chasing aspirations

This is a big one, and it's Those who were never encouraged to chase after their dreams often develop a deep-seated fear of doing so as adults.

It's like an invisible barrier they can't break through, no matter how much they want to.

They might have grand visions and brilliant ideas, but there's always that voice in the back of their mind telling them it's not possible.

Not because they're not capable or talented enough, but simply because they've never been told they could.

They might wonder, if it's not them who finally makes the leap, then who will? But fear often keeps them rooted in place.

## 2) Self-doubt becomes a constant companion

Growing up without that encouragement to chase after my dreams, I've found that self-doubt has become a sort of constant companion in my life.

hard to miss. It's not just about doubting whether I can achieve my dreams, it's doubting whether I even have the right to dream at all.

Do I deserve success? [Am I good enough?](#) These are questions I've asked myself more times than I care to admit.

And it's not just in the big things, it's in the small everyday moments too. That nagging feeling of doubt can creep into every decision, every choice.

This is a common behavior among adults who were never encouraged to follow their dreams. But knowing it's a common behavior doesn't make it any less difficult to deal with.

### **3) Staying in the comfort zone becomes the norm**

I remember when I was offered a promotion at work. It was an exciting opportunity, a chance to step up and take on more responsibilities.

But instead of feeling excited, I felt terrified.

I realized then that I had become so comfortable in my current position that the thought of stepping out of my comfort zone filled me with dread.

I wondered if this was normal, if everyone felt this way when faced with an opportunity. But then it hit me: this was another behavior stemming from not being encouraged to chase after my dreams.

Instead of embracing new opportunities, I found myself instinctively shrinking back, preferring to stay in the safety of what was familiar.

This tendency to [stay within our comfort zones](#) is another common behavior among adults who were never encouraged to follow their dreams.

### **4) They often have a hard time making decisions**

Decision-making can be a real struggle for those of us who were never encouraged to follow our dreams.

You'd think it would be simple, right? Just pick a path and go with it. But when you've spent your life being unsure of your dreams and aspirations, every choice can seem monumental.

Those who were not encouraged to pursue their dreams in their youth often struggle with decision-making as adults.

This is because they're used to having their choices made for them or falling into what's expected rather than forging their own path.

This can lead to a pattern of indecisiveness and second-guessing that can be challenging to overcome.

### **5) They may struggle with expressing their true selves**

I've noticed something else about myself and others who were never really nudged towards our dreams.

We often have a difficult time [expressing our true selves](#).

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It's like we've become masterful at wearing masks, presenting a version of ourselves that we think will be accepted or approved of by others.

And while everyone does this to some extent, it can be particularly pronounced in those of us who never felt that our dreams, our true passions, were valued.

We can get so good at playing roles that we forget who we really are underneath.

This struggle with authenticity is another common behavior among adults who were never encouraged to follow their dreams.

## **6) They often feel a lack of fulfillment**

You know that feeling of satisfaction you get when you achieve something you've been striving for?

Well, for those of us who were never encouraged to pursue our dreams, that feeling can be elusive.

We might have a good job, a comfortable life, or even a loving family, but there's always this nagging sense of something missing, a void that we can't quite put our finger on.

This [lack of fulfillment](#) isn't about being ungrateful or discontent with what we have, but rather the missing piece of pursuing what truly sparks joy in us.

Living without pursuing our dreams can leave us feeling incomplete. It's like we're constantly searching for something, but we're not quite sure what that something is.

## **7) They may experience envy towards those who are living their dreams**

Have you ever watched someone living their dream and felt a twinge of envy?

It's not that we begrudge them their happiness or success. It's just that seeing them live their dream can be a stark reminder of what we feel we're missing out on.

This isn't about wanting what someone else has, but rather about longing for the freedom to pursue our own dreams.

It can be painful to watch others live out their passions while we feel stuck in our own lives.

This [feeling of envy](#) is another common behavior among adults who were never encouraged to follow their dreams. It's not about resentment, but a clear signal that something in our own lives needs to change.

Recognizing this feeling can be a powerful motivator to start pursuing our own dreams.

### **8) They often neglect their own needs and wants**

This might be the most important yet hardest to recognize behavior.

Those of us who were never encouraged to follow our dreams often put ourselves last.

We're so used to not prioritizing our desires that we often neglect our own needs and wants.

We might pour all our energy into our jobs, our families, and our responsibilities, often at the expense of our own happiness.

It's not that these things aren't important, but when we constantly put others' needs above our own, we can end up feeling depleted and unfulfilled.

This habit of [neglecting our own needs](#) is a common behavior among adults who were never encouraged to follow their dreams.

Recognizing this behavior is crucial because taking care of ourselves is the first step towards pursuing our dreams.

The closing thoughts

If you see yourself in these signs, know that you're not alone.

Many of us who were never really pushed to follow our dreams carry these behaviors into adulthood. But recognizing them is the first crucial step towards change.

Having self-awareness is key. Start by acknowledging these patterns in your life. Reflect on moments when you've held yourself back or prioritized others' needs over your own.

Once you're conscious of these behaviors, it's easier to catch yourself in the act and start breaking these habits.

Consider – does this decision align with my dreams? Am I putting others' needs before my own? Am I being true to myself?

Transforming these behaviors won't happen overnight, but the journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step, as [Lao Tzu](#) once said.

Be patient and kind to yourself as you navigate this path.

One step at a time, one day at a time, you can reclaim your dreams and start living a life that's true to who you are.

So, take a moment to reflect. Think about what steps you can take today to start listening to your dreams and prioritizing your needs.