

A.C. Hoge's

VIP

Member Program



Confident Speaking, Confident Leadership

Comfort Zone Video Text

Hi it's A.J. and welcome. You are now a permanent member of the VIP Program. Yeah! Congratulations. I'm so happy to have you. So, here is your next lesson set. And, of course, right now this is your video lesson for the next lesson.

In this video lesson I'm going to talk and I want to teach you something that's very simple, but very important. You know so often the most important things are simple, simply but not necessarily easy. And the problem is a lot of us know some of these things, but we don't do them, so you need to hear them again and again. I will be telling you something that you might know already, but maybe you're not doing it or maybe you're not doing it in every part of your life.

So I want you to think about this today, what I teach you, then use it and do it. If you don't use it, if you don't do it, nothing happens. Just listening is not enough when it comes to being more confident and being a better leader. You actually have to do things. You have to take action.

So today's topic is the "Comfort Zone", the comfort zone. Now what is that? That's a common phrase in English, the comfort zone. And when we talk about our comfort zone it means the places, the people, the things that we feel comfortable with or comfortable doing. So, for example, right now teaching an English class that is in my comfort zone because, you know, I'm comfortable doing that. I have done it many, many, many times, so I'm not nervous about teaching an English class. I'm not shy about teaching an English class. So that's in my comfort zone. It means it's comfortable for me to do that.

However, teaching a business seminar is not in my comfort zone. I have never done it. I have some business lessons that I recorded, but I've never stood in front of a large group of people and talked business before. It's not in my comfort zone. If I did that I would probably feel nervous, maybe a little shy, especially in the beginning. I know business, I feel confident in my own business ability, but teaching it to other people, you know, ah, I don't know. I might feel a little uncomfortable about doing that, just because I've never done it before, so you can see that.

Now we have social situations that can be in our comfort zone or not in our comfort zone. So we like to be around certain people and we're comfortable being around a certain kind of person, someone about the same education level as us, maybe someone from the same culture as us, someone who has the same interests as us. We feel comfortable with those people. We understand them, we think they understand us; they are in our comfort zone.

But there are also people outside our comfort zone. You know maybe, for example, people who are very, very rich and successful. If you're not rich and successful, very rich and successful, then maybe you might feel nervous relaxing with Bill Gates and Steve Jobs and Warren Buffett and all these super, super rich people. If you met them the first time maybe you would feel a little nervous. They're not in your comfort zone, right? They are outside the comfort zone.

So, you know, maybe I would feel that way. I don't know. I don't usually feel so nervous around rich people, actually. I don't know why, but I don't. But some people feel the opposite. They maybe have a good education, they have some money. For example, my father I think is like this, but he's uncomfortable around very poor people. Maybe around homeless people he might feel uncomfortable. They are not in his comfort zone.

Again for me that's no problem. I used to be a social worker. I worked with homeless people all the time, so... Maybe because, you know, I worked in an emergency room in a hospital for a while and I saw all kinds of people and, of course, they were all having different kinds of emergencies, so I kind of learned to relax about all of that. But, you know, there are certain situations outside my comfort zone. I mentioned teaching business to a group of people, for example.

So we all have this, right? We all have a comfort zone, what we are used to, what we normally do each day, the people we normally talk to, the situations we feel comfortable in, the actions we usually do or take, right? We all have this and, you know, that's good, it's fine. It's good to feel comfortable, because when you feel comfortable you also feel more confident, right? If you are in your comfort zone you usually feel confident. You know what's going to happen, you know what to do. You know you can do what you need to do.

But here is the problem. If we want to grow, if we want to be better leaders, if we want more success in our lives, if we want more confidence in more situations, we must go outside our comfort zone. We must push outside our comfort zone. In other words, to grow we must be uncomfortable. If you are growing you are uncomfortable, I promise you.

Let me give you a story from my own life and then I will recommend some steps for you. So in my own life many years ago...let me think, 41 now, 31, I don't know about 15, almost 20 years ago, actually, I was very shy about speaking to a group of people, very, very nervous to speak in front of a group of people. I got very, very scared, uncomfortable, shy and nervous about speaking to people. I really, really, really did not like it. I was very uncomfortable. It was outside my comfort zone.

So at that time in my life I had two choices. I could remain comfortable, but never grow. Meaning I would never learn how to speak to a group of people. I could just do what felt safe, what felt comfortable always and if I had done that today I still would not speak to large groups of people.

So I decided, however, that I want to speak to people. I want to feel more confident when I speak and if I could speak to a large group of people that would help. I would really have a lot more confidence and it would help me have more success in my life. Because I knew to be a leader, to be more successful, at some time I had to speak in front of people.

So, now, what did I do? Did I immediately go and speak in front of 100 people? No, of course not, right? Ah, that would have been too much. So to grow we must be uncomfortable, but not too uncomfortable, right? We want to be a little uncomfortable not terrified, okay? Not super, super, super stressed, okay? So I knew I needed to take small steps. I knew that I needed to become a little uncomfortable and then grow a little bit and then become a little more uncomfortable and then grow a little bit more and that's the process.

So what did I do? Well the first thing I did is that I joined a public speaking course by the Dale Carnegie Company and it was excellent. And let me tell you a little bit about what they did. How did they teach us? On the first day of the class do you think they made us come up alone, stand in front of the group and give a speech? No, of course not, right? That would be too much. That would be more than uncomfortable. That would be terrifying for a lot of people, certainly for me. That would have scared me a lot.

So do you know what they did and I thought this was a great idea? What they did is they let us come up in small groups, so five people came to the front of the class at the same time. So you were not alone you're standing with four other people and then you introduced yourself. You just said "Hi, my name is A.J. I want to learn to speak better. Thank you. I look forward to this class." You know, just something very short. And then the person next to me they introduced themselves and everybody in the little small group would introduce themselves to the whole group.

Now this was a small step, right? It was a little uncomfortable. I still felt a little nervous about that, but I was not terrified because I had other people and it was very short and it was easy, just to say my name and where I was from and that's about all. So that was great. What did they do? They helped us become a little uncomfortable, do something a little uncomfortable, but not too much.

So then what did we do next? Well next we had to do a little speech in front of small groups; this was the next week. So they divided the class into small groups, maybe 10

people in each group. And the next week we had to stand up alone this time, alone, but we stood up and, again, we told a short story about ourselves. It was like one minute or something, very, very short and not to the whole class, just to a small group of 10 people.

So, again, I felt nervous about that. It was not easy, but I was not terrified. It was uncomfortable, but not terrifying. So I felt a little more confident after that, right? Oh, I did that. You know I was nervous and I made some mistakes, but you know it was not terrible.

So then what did they do the next time? Well the next time they taught us a little speech formula for a three minute speech. And what did we do? We just told a story about our own life. We did not memorize something. We told a story about our life, something we already knew very, very well. And we had to get up in front of the whole class the next time and tell our story.

Now I was quite nervous about this, but, again, the good thing is it was very short, just three minutes and it was about a topic I knew very well. I could choose any topic I wanted, just any story about my life from my past. So I was like okay, well that's easy. I don't need to memorize something, I can just tell my own story and it's very short. And, so, guess what? I did it. I was nervous at the end, oh my God, but I did it and I felt better.

And here's another secret. At the end of my speech the teacher did not talk about my mistakes, not one time, never. In fact, at the Dale Carnegie class they never correct mistakes, never. What did he do instead? The teacher he caught me doing something right. We've already talked about this, right? What did he do? He focused on the things I did well. He gave me real, sincere compliments. He said "A.J., you were very energetic. You had a lot of energy when you were speaking. That was great and I liked your story. Your story was very interesting." So he told me two or three specific good things that I did.

Did I make mistakes in that first speech? Of course I did. Yes, I did. I made a lot of mistakes. I was nervous, but he didn't talk about the mistakes he only talked about the good things. Guess what happened? I felt better. I felt a little more confident when I heard him tell me these good things. I felt a little more comfortable. Oh, okay and I started to think maybe I can do this. Maybe I can improve.

So now you understand the process, right? Of course. Each week we did a little bit more, a little more. Every week the teacher only told us good things. So what happened? I became more and more and more confident. Now this might not surprise you, but one thing the teacher always told me was "A.J. you have a lot of energy. A.J. you have a lot of enthusiasm. That's great. I love that."

So guess what happened? I began to hear this every week and I began to think in my mind oh, I have a lot of energy. I have a lot of enthusiasm. I am an energetic speaker. I am an enthusiastic speaker, right? This was repeated to me again and again. And so what happened? I did, I became more energetic and more enthusiastic every week. Yes, every week I was a little uncomfortable still, but my confidence began to grow more and more and more and in my mind I became more comfortable and more confident.

But every week I had to do a little more. I had to become a little bit uncomfortable, because if I stopped, if I became comfortable and then I stopped again, I would stop growing. So always I had to push a little more, push a little more, a little uncomfortable, a little uncomfortable.

And so I have continued to do this now every year, year after year. When I became a teacher I did this. In the beginning I was nervous about teaching English. I didn't know what I was doing. And then I used textbooks and oh, it wasn't working, so I started to try new lessons, new techniques. I was a little nervous about it, especially sometimes the new lessons failed. The students hated them and they didn't work, okay?

I felt bad on those days. I felt very uncomfortable, but I decided you know what most teachers do is they do the same thing again and again and again. They use the textbooks because they're safe and comfortable. They do what other teachers do because it's safe and it's comfortable. The students expect that, the other teachers do the same thing. It doesn't work very well, it's not powerful, but it is comfortable and it is safe. That's why most teachers really never grow very much. They don't improve very much. After 10 years they're still doing the same thing. After 20 years of teaching they're doing the same thing. It's because they want to be comfortable instead of growing.

So, of course, now, you know what? I love it. I love to stand in front of a group of people. I love to give speeches. Now I'm not nervous I'm excited. I'm excited about speaking to a group of people. Very excited, I love it. I get more energy, more enthusiasm. It's like a rock concert for me, I love to do it. It's very, very exciting.

But, of course, you know if I stop here, if I just do the same thing and be comfortable I'll stop growing. So you know what? Guess what I have to do? I have to push myself more to grow and to be uncomfortable again. So now I'm trying to do bigger workshops and bigger seminars. And I'm trying to do new things in the seminars, new things in the workshops; try a new technique, try a new method, try a new lesson, try some new, fun, crazy activity.

And that makes me a little uncomfortable again because I have never done it. Maybe the students will hate it. Maybe they'll laugh at me. You know all these crazy ideas in

our head we get worried about and we're afraid, but that's okay. You know that fear is not a bad thing. Being nervous is not bad it's actually a good sign. It means you're a little uncomfortable, which means you're growing.

Okay, so, woo. So that's my story, right? That's how I went from being shy to being a very confident, energetic speaker who loves, absolutely loves to speak to groups of people. What does this mean for you? Well this is both a good and a challenging message for you. What it means is you cannot be comfortable all the time. So maybe you joined the VIP Program thinking it's gonna' be a lot of fun and great and learn all these positive things and that's true. But guess what? I have to be honest with you. If you really want to improve, if you really want to be a super confident English speaker, if you really want to be very successful in all parts of your life, if you really want to help other people and be a great leader you can't be comfortable all the time. You are going to have to feel nervous sometimes. You must feel a little shy sometimes. You must be afraid a little bit sometimes. It's necessary for growing.

If you're not a little bit afraid sometimes, if you're not a little shy, if you're not a little nervous you are not growing. So what does that mean? It means you need to push a little more. You have to go outside your comfort zone. Do something that's a little bit uncomfortable.

So let's get specific step by step. Let me give you some examples. For some of you writing on the forums makes you feel shy or nervous. You're a little afraid to do it, right, on the VIP social site or on our general member forums, either one? A lot of you have not written anything and I understand. I know why. You feel nervous. You're afraid. Maybe I'll make a mistake. Maybe you're thinking my English writing is so bad and I make mistakes all the time and that makes you afraid. You put something there and the English is bad. Maybe you're afraid people will say something bad or you just feel embarrassed. You feel uncomfortable about doing it. Well, you need to do it anyway.

If you want to grow, if you want to become more successful, more confident, you must do what is uncomfortable. For a lot of you that means you need to get on the forums or on the VIP site and you need to start writing every week, every day or maybe just one time in the beginning. You need to write something and the first time you will feel a little nervous. Yeah, it's okay. That's a good sign, not a bad sign. Some people think being nervous is bad or some people think fear is a bad thing or a bad sign. It's not. It's a good sign. It's a sign that you are growing. You feel the fear, you feel nervous, but then you still take action. A small action is fine, but you must take some kind of action that makes you feel uncomfortable.

So that's the first thing I recommend. Write on the forums. Write on the VIP site. Introduce yourself. Tell us what you are doing that's interesting or tell us what you're afraid of. Tell us what you're nervous about. Just share something honest with us. I

promise you, our VIP members are special, you are special and people are going to be very nice to you. Just like my speech teacher, we're going to tell you good things. But first you must take your small step and be a little uncomfortable, okay?

So that's the first thing you can do is you can start writing on the forums. Do it one time. If you have done it one time then you need to do it again, you need to do it more often. Some of you that's your step. Okay, maybe you already did it one time, but then you didn't do it again. You felt a little uncomfortable still, so maybe for you, you need to do it every week. Once a week write something on the VIP site or the forums.

Maybe you need to do it more often and you need to do it once every day. That makes you feel a little uncomfortable, but it will help you grow. Okay? So that's what I want you to do. That's your first homework, I guess, to push outside your comfort zone. Do something a little uncomfortable.

Now here's another thing you can do that might feel uncomfortable. You can start to show your appreciation and gratitude for other people. Again you can do this in your life, with anyone in your life, but you can also do this in our club on the forums, on the VIP site.

So, first, maybe you write about yourself. That feels a little uncomfortable, but after you do it for a while you start to feel better. You feel more confident, more comfortable each time. So, next, you have to push a little more. So maybe next you write to some other person and you say "Thank you for doing this. I think you are a very nice person or I think you're a very intelligent person." And you write a sincere compliment to that person. You tell them why you appreciate them.

Now for some people that's not uncomfortable that's easy to do, but for a lot of people that makes you feel uncomfortable. That means you need to do it, okay? You have to keep pushing, pushing, pushing, always pushing a little bit. You know this is what successful people do. Successful people do things that other people don't.

Normal people avoid feeling nervous. Normal people avoid fear. Normal people avoid feeling uncomfortable. They don't like those feelings and they avoid doing things that make them feel those emotions. That's what normal people do. That's why normal people don't grow very much. That's why normal people have average success. That's why normal people are not leaders. I mean that's the simple truth.

What do successful people do that's different? What do leaders do that's different? They do things that are uncomfortable consistently. Every day they do something that makes them feel a little uncomfortable, that makes them feel a little nervous, that makes them feel a little bit afraid.

Think of any great successful person. You know I always talk about Tony Robbins, for example. He wasn't always super confident, okay? At some point in his life he felt fear too, but every day he pushed himself to feel uncomfortable, to do something a little new, a little different, a little difficult. And each day he did that, every week he did that, every month he did that and that's why he has this incredible success now. Any successful person, they did this.

Pick a sports person. Tiger Woods was not always a great golfer. At some time in his life he was terrible and he probably felt frustrated many times. He probably felt angry many times. Maybe he felt embarrassed many times, but he continued to keep pushing and practicing. He did not quit and he did not just stop and feel comfortable he's always pushing. He's still doing it.

So this is a very simple message, but it's so, so important and I hope you realize it. Because what happens is a lot of people will listen to these lessons and they say "Oh, that's a great idea. A.J. you're so positive. That's great." And they like the ideas, but they forget the final step. They don't take action, because they are afraid a little bit, nervous a little bit or uncomfortable. They think it should always feel easy and always feel comfortable, but that's not true, not true at all.

You know I'm uncomfortable with this VIP Program. When I started it, I'll be honest with you, I felt nervous. I still feel a little nervous about it. Do you know why? Because you are very special, you are not normal people. I know that you want something special from me. I know you expect me to give you, you know, great teaching and great ideas and to give you all of my energy and passion and I feel nervous about it sometimes.

I realize okay, A.J., you must do a good job. You know you must really push and do a great job for these VIPs, so I felt nervous about it. I felt a little uncomfortable about it. And you know we've had some problems. We've had computer problems with different computer errors and there was some confusion about the payment process and of course I felt bad about that. I felt uncomfortable about that. So should I stop, you know? A lot of people would just stop and quit or just do the same old thing, but I know I can't do that. I want to continue to grow.

So, you know I feel uncomfortable, I feel nervous, I feel frustrated sometimes, but I keep pushing and I say A.J. you must do it anyway. If you want to grow you must feel this. Sometimes you'll feel frustrated, sometimes you'll feel uncomfortable, in fact, it's required.

Okay, so, that's it. I've said this about 10 different ways, because it's so, so important. So here's the message for you, the final message. You know what to do now. You already have some lessons from me about gratitude and appreciation, about catching other people doing the right thing or doing good things, about writing on the forums,

about writing on the VIP site, about doing just the best you can. You don't need to be perfect. You already have these great ideas, this great information, now you must actually do something.

If you only think about it you will not grow more confident. You will not become more successful. You will not become a leader. You must take this final step. It's vital. It is so important. You must push outside your comfort zone a little bit, not a lot, but a little bit every day, every week, every month, every year, all of your life, in fact. That is the number one secret for success in everything.

So that's what I challenge you to do right now, today. After you watch this video turn it off and immediately I want you to go to the forums, either the VIP site or the general forums or both and I want you to write something, something that makes you feel a little uncomfortable. So maybe you give a compliment to somebody. Maybe you ask a question you never asked before. Maybe you write a long story about your own life. Maybe you write about your fears or what you're nervous about. Or maybe if this is your first time you just write something short and don't worry about the mistakes. Don't spend two hours writing it, write it quickly and submit it and it's okay if you have mistakes, just do the best you can.

So that's what I want you to do. Go outside your comfort zone today and then you do it again tomorrow and you do it the next day and you continue to do it every single day. Do this and I promise you, I promise you, you will become a super confident English speaker, you will have amazing success in your life, more than you ever dreamed was possible, I promise you and you will become a truly great leader for your family, your friends, your job, your work, in all of your life.

Okay, thank you so much. Push outside your comfort zone today. Do something to grow that feels a little uncomfortable, but that will make you grow. I will see again. Thank you so much. You are so special to me, because you are a VIP member. I will see you again. Have a great day, bye-bye.

Comfort Zone Mini-Story Text

Hello, this is AJ. Welcome to the mini-story for the “Comfort Zone” first, permanent VIP lesson. Welcome! Woo-who! I’m so, so happy you are a VIP member. Together we will become more confident English speakers. You will speak English more confidently. You will become more successful in all parts of your life. You will help other people by becoming a true global leader.

Let’s start with the lesson. Now this mini-story lesson is about George the dog.

* * * * *

George the dog is a poor dog. George is not rich. George, in fact, has no money himself, none of his own money.

So what kind of dog is George?

He is a poor dog. Obviously, George is a poor dog.

However, George likes to imagine a better future. He likes to dream about being rich and often he says “If I were rich, if I was rich, I would first buy an airplane.

Now if he was rich what would he buy first?

An airplane. George would by an airplane, if he was rich or if he were rich.

So, what would he buy?

He would buy an airplane first if he was rich.

Who would by an airplane first if he was rich?

Well George. If he was rich, if he became rich, he would first buy an airplane.

Now George has a friend. His friend is named Stinky. Stinky is a cat.

What is the cat’s name?

The cat’s name is Stinky.

What is Stinky?

A cat. Stinky is a cat.

Now does Stinky smell good or does Stinky smell bad?

Well his name is Stinky, so of course Stinky smells bad. Stinky is a stinky cat.

Is Stinky a good smelling cat or is Stinky stinky?

Stinky is stinky. Stinky smells bad. Stinky does not smell good.

But Stinky also likes to dream about a better future. And Stinky often will say “If I smelled good I would kiss every girl cat I saw.”

Who would Stinky kiss if he smelled good?

Well he would kiss every girl cat that he saw.

Would George the dog kiss every girl cat he saw?

No, no, he wouldn't, not George the dog.

What would George the dog do if he were rich, if he was rich?

Well George the dog would buy an airplane first. The first thing he would do is buy an airplane.

What would Stinky the cat do if he smelled good?

He would kiss every girl cat he saw.

What would he do?

He would kiss every girl cat he saw.

Now does Stinky the cat smell good?

No, no, he doesn't. He actually does not smell good, but if he smelled good then he would kiss every girl cat he saw.

Now Stinky also has a friend. Stinky has a friend named Willy.

What is Willy? Is Willy a cat?

No, Willy is not a cat. Willy is a rat. Yes, Stinky and Willy are good, good friends. Why are Stinky and Willy good friends?

Well because Willy likes bad smells. Yeah, Willy likes garbage. He likes bad smells, so he likes Stinky the cat, of course, obviously.

Now Willy the rat also wants something. Willy the rat does not have a car, unfortunately. He has to walk everywhere. Every time he wants to go somewhere he must walk, but he wants a car. And he likes to dream and he likes to imagine a better future. He often says “If I had a car I would drive to New Orleans.”

Where would he drive?

He would drive to New Orleans.

So does Willy the cat drive to New Orleans usually?

No, no, he doesn't. He doesn't because he actually does not have a car. He doesn't really have a car, so he can't drive to New Orleans. But if he had a car then he would drive to New Orleans.

Now why would he drive to New Orleans?

Well because he loves to eat crawfish. Yeah, Willy the rat loves to eat crawfish.

Crawfish are like little lobsters kind of. Like little lobsters from a river and they're very popular in New Orleans, crawfish. So Willy loves crawfish.

Now where does Willy live, Willy the rat?

Willy the rat lives in Texas. Willie the rat lives in Texas.

Now does he eat crawfish in Texas?

No, no, he doesn't. He doesn't eat crawfish in Texas.

Why not?

Because they don't have good crawfish in Texas, obviously. Everybody knows that, right? You should. Okay, so Willy the rat does not eat crawfish every day, but he would eat crawfish if he could drive to New Orleans and he would drive to New Orleans if he had a car.

Does he eat crawfish every day?

No, he doesn't.

Why not?

Because he lives in Texas and he doesn't have a car. He can't drive to New Orleans. So he would do it if he had a car, but he doesn't have a car, so he doesn't.

Now who would kiss every girl cat if he could?

Stinky the cat would. Stinky the cat would kiss every girl cat if he smelled good.

And who would buy an airplane?

George the dog. George the dog would buy an airplane if he was rich, but of course he's not rich.

So does he have an airplane?

No, he doesn't. George the dog does not have an airplane. But if he was rich, if he became rich, then he would buy an airplane immediately.

Well one day Willy the rat was walking, walking, walking, walking and he found a casino. He found a casino in Texas.

So what did he do?

He went into the casino.

Where did Willy the rat go?

Willy the rat went into a casino and in the casino he played black jack and he won \$70 million, \$70 million. Willy the rat won \$70 million and he was very, very, very happy.

So, of course, now Willy the rat is super rich. He is super rich and one day he goes to his friend Stinky the cat. He says "Stinky, I'm so happy. I'm rich now."

And, of course, what did he buy when he became rich?

Willy the rat buys a car when he become rich, of course. Immediately he goes and he buys a car.

And then where does he drive?

He drives to New Orleans.

And immediately he eats...?

Crawfish. That's right. Willy the rat becomes rich, he gets \$70 million and immediately he drives to New Orleans and he eats crawfish. And he is so happy, very, very happy.

Now later he drives to visit his friend Stinky the cat and he gives Stinky the cat \$25 million. And Stinky the cat is super, super happy.

Now, what does Stinky the cat want?

Stinky the cat wants to smell good.

If he smelled good what would Stinky the cat do?

Well, of course, he would kiss every girl cat he saw. If he smelled good he would kiss every girl cat he saw and he suddenly gets \$25 million from his friend Willy the rat.

So where does Stinky the cat go?

He goes to a spa. Immediately Stinky the cat goes to a spa. At the spa they clean his hair, his fur.

When an animal has hair we call it fur, f-u-r, fur. Fur is animal hair. So at the spa they clean Stinky's fur. They give him a bath. They wash his fur. They brush his teeth. He spends one full day at the spa.

How does Stinky smell at the end of the day?

He smells fantastic. He smells great. At the end of the day Stinky smells great.

Who smells great at the end of the day?

Stinky. Stinky the cat smells great at the end of the day.

Now if he smelled good what would Stinky the cat do?

He would kiss every girl cat he saw.

Well, he does smell great now, so what does he do immediately after leaving the spa?

Well he chases every girl cat he sees and tries to kiss them mawha, mawha, mawha, mawha, mawha.

What do the girl cats do? Do they run away?

Oh, no, they don't.

Why don't the girl cats run away from Stinky?

Well because, of course, because he smells so good. The girl cats also kiss Stinky, mawha, mawha. You smell so good, mawah!

Well, of course, Stinky is very, very, very happy. So next he goes to visit his good friend George the dog. He says "George, I'm so happy. I smell good now! Now I love to kiss every girl cat I see." And so he so happy he gives George the dog \$10 million, \$10 million!

Now if George was rich what would he do?

Well if George was rich he would immediately buy an airplane.

Why would he buy an airplane?

Well, of course, because he wants to fly to Rio de Janeiro in Brazil.

Why does George want to fly to Rio?

Ah, because he loves to dance the samba. George, of course, is an excellent samba dancer. He loves to dance and he loves, loves, loves Brazilian music.

So George wants to fly to Rio in his own airplane. He would love to fly to Rio in his own airplane so he could dance the samba if he was rich. Well, of course, Stinky gives him \$10 million and suddenly George the dog is rich.

So what does he do?

Well, of course, immediately he runs to the airplane store and he buys an airplane. He buys his own airplane. Now he's rich, so immediately he buys an airplane and immediately he flies to Rio, he joins a big samba party and he dances and he dances all day and all night.

How does George the dog feel?

Well, of course, George the dog is super happy. He's so happy. Finally he's rich, he has an airplane, he's in Rio and he's dancing.

How does Stinky the cat feel?

Well, of course, Stinky the cat feels great, because finally Stinky the cat smells wonderful, all the girl cats like him and every day he kisses, he kisses, and he kisses so many beautiful girl cats, mawha, mawha, ma-ma-ma- mawha!

And how does Willy the rat feel?

Well Willy the rat feels fantastic too, because now Willy has a car and he drives to New Orleans every day and he eats wonderful, delicious crawfish, yum-yummy. Willy becomes a happy fat rat.

* * * * *

And that is the end of our mini-story for the Comfort Zone lesson. Welcome to you, you are now a permanent VIP member. I am so happy for you and I hope that you will feel fantastic and wonderful. I hope you will have great success in your life. I hope you will grow more and more confident every day, every week, every month, every year.

And, finally, as you become more confident, as you become more successful, I hope you will share your success with other people. I hope you will help other people. I hope you will become a true leader.

So have a great day. Now remember today, keep your shoulders back, put your head up. Big smile when you listen to this lesson again. Big smile, shoulders back, chest up, every time you walk around, every time you speak English, every time you listen to English.

And, finally, remember deep learning. Listen to this lesson every day for at least two weeks. More is better, but at least two weeks would be great. You're a VIP, so do a little more than normal. Be a little uncomfortable. Push a little more. Listen to this lesson, listen to the video and listen to the point-of-view stories every day for 14 days or more. That's deep learning; it's so powerful, so important.

Thank you my special VIP member. Have a great day. I'm so happy that you are a member of the VIP Program. I'll see you again soon. I will see you on the VIP member forums. You'll get an invitation for that probably tomorrow actually, so see you there.

Bye-bye.

Comfort Zone POV Text

Hello, this is A.J. and welcome to the point-of-view story lessons for “**Comfort Zone**”.

Now we had a little story before, remember, a story about George the dog, Stinky the cat and Willy the rat. In that story, maybe you noticed, I changed in the middle to the past tense a little bit and then I came back to the present again. So I just want to show you that it is possible to mix these different tenses.

One problem in textbooks is that you usually learn one verb tense, for example, independently, alone. But, in fact, of course we can mix them and we switch from one to another and sometimes it changes the meaning a little bit, sometimes it changes the meaning a lot.

In that mini-story it did not change the meaning very much, just a little bit. I’m just changing my point of view, if you understand it; you imagine my point of view. I’m the story teller, so when I change the past I imagine myself looking back as if some of that happened in the past.

For example, when Willy the rat went to the casino I was kind of imagining in my mind that it happened a little bit before and then I came back to the present and said now he’s rich and then he goes to Stinky the cat and he goes to George the dog.

So the reason I could kind of jump between past and present past and present is because me, the story teller, I was imagining that all of that story, everything in the story, happened very recently. So if I was talking about the past I was talking about the very recent past or sometimes I used the present, because I feel like it’s kind of happening now or very, very recently.

So sometimes if something’s happening very recently or it happened already, but very recently, we might mix present and past sometimes. So you saw that in that story, but now I’m going to tell a short version of the story again this time just with the past. So let’s imagine this happened far back in the past, farther back in the past.

* * * * *

So there was a dog named George and George was a poor dog. He wanted to be rich, but he was not rich. However, every day he would imagine being rich and he would say “Oh, if I became rich I would immediately buy an airplane.” But, of course, he continued to be poor.

And he had a friend named Stinky the cat. Stinky the cat smelled very bad. That's why they called him Stinky. Stinky the cat smelled bad, but of course he wanted to smell good. And every day he would imagine smelling good and he would say "Oh, if I smelled good I would kiss every girl cat I saw." But, of course, he still smelled bad.

And Stinky the cat had a good friend named Willy, Willy the rat. And Willy the rat wanted a car. He had to walk everywhere. But, of course, he didn't have a car, but he would imagine every day having a car and he would say "If I had a car I would drive to New Orleans and eat crawfish."

Well one day Willy the rat walked into a casino, played black jack and he won \$70 million. Wow! And what did he do? Of course, he went and he bought a brand new car. He immediately drove to New Orleans and he ate crawfish and he was so happy. He wanted to share his happiness, so next he drove to Stinky the cat's house and he gave Stinky the cat...how much did he give? I can't remember. He gave Stinky the cat like \$25 million.

Stinky the cat was very happy. Stinky the cat immediately went to a spa and they washed his fur and they cleaned him and they brushed his teeth and Stinky smelled good. So Stinky ran out into the street chasing pretty girl cats kissing them all, mawha, mawha, mawha. He was so happy! And he wanted to share his happiness, so he went to George the dog his good friend and he gave George the dog \$10 million.

And George the dog was happy. George the dog immediately went and bought an airplane and he flew to Rio de Janeiro and he danced the samba all day and all night long.

And, so, George, Stinky and Willy were all very, very happy.

* * * * *

All right, very good, so that was the past. That was happening in the far past. Now let's imagine that this kind of started in the past and then something changed a little bit later, okay? So here we go again.

* * * * *

George the dog has always wanted to be rich. All his life he has wanted to be rich. Since he was a baby he has wanted to be rich. Since he was a teenager dog he has wanted to be rich. Until, you know recently, he has wanted to be rich. And every day he has imagined being rich and he has said "If I was rich I would buy an airplane and fly to Brazil."

Well, George, of course, had a good friend Stinky. And Stinky the cat has always wanted to smell good. Unfortunately, Stinky has been stinky all his life, almost all his life. Since he was a small cat, a kitten, he has been stinky. And since he was a small kitten he has wanted to smell good. And every day he has dreamed about smelling good and he has said "If I smelled good I would kiss every girl cat I met."

And Stinky the cat had a good friend Willy the rat. Since he was little Willy has always wanted to have a car. He has wanted a car for a long, long time. He has dreamed about wanting a car. He has dreamed about having a car every day for a long time. And every day he would dream and imagine if he had a car and he would say "If I had a car I would drive to New Orleans and eat crawfish."

Well one day Willy the rat went to a casino and he won \$70 million. Immediately he bought a car, drove to New Orleans and ate crawfish and he was so happy. He wanted to share his happiness, so he drove to see his friend Stinky. He gave Stinky \$25 million and Stinky went to a spa and they cleaned his fur and they washed his fur and they brushed his teeth. And Stinky smelled good and he immediately ran into the street and started to kiss pretty cats, mawah, mawah, mawah, mawah, mawah, mawah.

He was so happy that he went to his friend George and he gave George \$10 million. And George immediately bought an airplane and George flew to Brazil, to Rio, in fact, and he danced the samba all day and all night.

And, of course, George the dog, Stinky the cat and Willy the rat were all very, very happy.

* * * * *

All right. And of course you'll notice that when I said "one day" I changed, right? And it becomes past. You don't need to think about the grammar, just notice how things change, notice the phrases.

One more, let's imagine to the future. Let's imagine all this is going to happen in the future. We're imagining it. We're dreaming it. We're seeing into the future.

* * * * *

So one day there will be a dog named George and George will want to be rich. He won't be rich, but he'll want to be rich and every day he'll dream about being rich. He will dream about being rich. Listen for the "ll" sound "he'll, he'll". He'll dream about being rich and he'll say "Oh, if I become rich I will be so happy. In fact if I was rich I would immediately buy an airplane."

And, of course, he's going to have a friend named Stinky the cat. Stinky the cat will want to smell good. He'll be a very stinky cat, but he'll want to smell good. And he'll dream every day and he'll say "You know if I was rich, if I was good-smelling, if I was clean and I smelled good I would kiss every pretty...in fact, I would kiss every girl cat if they were pretty or if they were not pretty. I'd kiss them all!"

And Stinky will have a great friend named Willy the rat and Willy the rat is gonna' wanna' have a car. He's gonna' want a car. Of course "gonna" means going to, right? "Gonna" means going to, its future, "gonna". We say 'gonna' a lot in real conversations.

So Willy is gonna' want a car. He's gonna' dream about having a car. Why? Because in the future he's gonna' want to drive to New Orleans every day and eat crawfish. And every day he's gonna' dream and imagine and he's gonna' say "If I had a car I would drive to New Orleans and I would eat crawfish every day."

Now one day, in the future, Willy is gonna' walk into a casino and win \$70 million. He's gonna' be so happy! And, of course, immediately he's gonna' buy a car, drive to New Orleans and eat crawfish. And he'll be so super happy that next, in the future, he'll drive to see Stinky the cat. He'll give Stinky the cat \$25 million.

Now Stinky the cat, of course, is immediately gonna' go to go to spa. They're gonna' clean his fur, they're gonna' wash him, they're gonna' brush his teeth and he's gonna' smell great. He's gonna' smell incredible. And after he smells incredible, of course, he's gonna' go into the street and kiss every girl cat he sees.

And he'll be so, so happy that immediately he will run to see his friend George the dog and he'll give George the dog \$10 million. And, of course, George the dog is gonna' be super happy. George the dog is gonna' buy an airplane, he's gonna' fly down to Brazil to Rio, he's gonna' dance the samba all day and all night.

George the dog is gonna' be super happy, Stinky the cat is gonna' be super happy and Willy the rat is gonna' be super happy. In the future they will all be super, super happy.

* * * * *

And that is the end of our point-of-view stories for "Comfort Zone", your first VIP, permanent VIP member lessons. I'm so happy. Of course you will get these lessons every month.

Listen to this every day for 14 days or more. Don't think about the grammar. You know you don't need to think about the grammar rules or the grammar terms, just notice the phrases. Notice how they change when I change the point of view, the time. I change



the time and some things change. Notice the changes, but don't think about grammar rules.

Okay, I'll see you again. Thank you my special VIP members. See you again. Bye-bye.

Comfort Zone Commentary

Hello, this is A.J., welcome to the commentary for “Comfort Zone.” So I want to talk more about this topic, this topic of the comfort zone and, specifically, I want to talk to you today about things you can do, give you some actual actions to take to push your comfort zone so that you can grow. So that you can grow more confident when you speak English, so that you can grow more successful in different parts of your life, so that you can grow into a true leader, a global leader who helps a lot of people in all different areas of your life.

So let’s talk about this. You understand the idea now, you watched the video, so the question is what can you do in your life with this idea to help you grow and grow and grow constantly? And remember that’s the secret, constant growth. You can just grow a little bit each day and then in one year, two years, wow, you will have incredible growth.

So here’s the first thing I want you to do now. You can pause right now and find a piece of paper and a pen. So get a piece of paper and a pen and pause for a second then come back.

Okay, do you have your paper and pen? I want you to write something down. Okay, you’ve got it now. Here’s what I want you to do. First, I want you to think. I want you to be honest. You really need to be honest with yourself right now. And it’s okay. Don’t judge yourself. Don’t say bad things about yourself, just be honest.

I want you to think about what parts of your life are you too comfortable in? You know, where are you just too comfortable? You’re not really growing. You’re not really trying to improve. Maybe things are good, maybe things are bad, but, generally, you’re just comfortable. You’re comfortable, but you don’t feel like you’re growing very much.

Now you can think about, specifically, areas with your English, your English speaking and listening, certainly and how you use English. Not just vocabulary and grammar, but I mean, for example, do you try to speak to other people in English? Do you write on the forums every day in English? Do you try to meet people in other countries so you can send emails and communicate with English in many different ways or are you comfortable at home with the same people all the time doing the same things?

So think about English and write down where are you too comfortable, honestly, you’re just not growing. Just take a minute and write that down. Pause and write that down. Did you do it? Okay, remember, pause this, write it down then come back.

Okay, good. So you wrote down in the topic, in the area of English were you are too comfortable, where you're just not pushing the comfort zone. You're not trying to go out there, you're not growing really. That's okay, just be honest about it. You don't need to say "Oh, I'm bad." You're not bad, just be honest. You need to see where you are now, be really truthful about it.

But let's not stop with just English. Let's look at success in all parts of your life. So I want you to think about your job or your career or your business or just your money, your finances. Think about that part of your life and write down in that area of your life where are you not really growing. Where are you just too comfortable? You're being too safe. You're not trying new things. You're not growing. You're not pushing the comfort zone. Pause and write that down.

Did you write it down? Pause and write it down. Where are you being too safe with your money, job, career, finances?

All right, you're getting the idea, right? Let's do it again with another topic. This topic is your social life. You know the people you meet, the people you talk to every day, friends, family, etc. I want you to write down where are you being too safe. Are you trying to meet new people or do you just see the same exact people every day?

Now I'll be honest, this is an area that I need to work on. I'm a little too comfortable in my social life. I have some very good friends, of course my wife, Tamoia, my family and I'm very comfortable with them. I like them very much and I probably need to push more to meet new people, make new friends. I need to make that effort. I'm too comfortable in that area.

What about you? On your job, in your social life, in your family, with people in general, in all parts of your life, where are you being too comfortable? Write that down.

All right, I assume you wrote that down. There's one final one I want to talk about, that is with your energy and your health. To be great leaders, to be successful, we must have energy. If you're tired all the time everything is difficult, right? It's very difficult to do anything if you're tired.

So, I want you to really think about this in your life with what you eat, with walking or exercising, with your psychology, mentally, what you think about. General health, physical and mental health, where are you too comfortable, doing the same thing, not pushing forward, not growing a little bit each day? Write that down.

Okay now, if you did this...or if you didn't do it, pause right now, go back and do it. But after you do this you will have a few things in each part of your life that, to be honest, you're just being too comfortable, you're not growing.

There's a great phrase, Tony Robbins says it a lot, a lot of people say it, if you're not growing you are decaying or you are dying. I like to say you're decaying. It means if you're not going forward you're not growing and getting better. And probably you're starting to get a little worse, a little worse, very slowly maybe, but that's usually what happens. It's very important, we must keep growing. That is life. Life is growth.

So look at these areas and see where you are not growing and I want you to really think about these areas of your life. What do you really want in your life in these areas? I mean if you could dream and have anything you wanted what would you want with English? What's your big, big, I mean really big dream with English?

Do you want to speak powerfully to a large group of people and feel confident and they understand you, they respect you, they listen to you? Or maybe just on your job you want to speak English and be very powerful and persuasive. Or maybe you want to travel to different countries and use English very fluently, very well, very confidently, so you can explore and meet new people. Maybe you want to study in another country where you must speak English in the school.

I don't know. You have your own dreams, so think about that. Write that down. What's your big, big dream in this area? And then do it for all the other areas too. What's your big, big dream for your health? What's your big, big dream for your money, career or finances? Write those down and then pause and then come back.

Okay, did you do it? If you didn't do it, I'm serious, do it. Remember, to be successful you've got to take action. That's the difference between normal people and people who are successful. Successful people do things; do things that feel a little uncomfortable. They do things that might feel a little boring. They do things that might feel a little difficult. Normal people just do what's comfortable. So pause and go back and do it if you haven't already.

Okay, so now what do you have? Well, now you've got a very interesting thing. You've got a list of kind of where you are now, where you are too comfortable in these different areas. And you're just being very honest with yourself. Okay, you know, I'm being too comfortable with this. I'm not growing in these areas, in this way. And then the second list you have is your big, big, super, incredible dreams that you want.

Now look at those two and you'll see something. There is a gap, right? There's a gap between where you are now, very comfortable, but not growing and where you want to be, your big success, your big, big dreams. And there's a gap, right? There's a space between those. You have to get from one to the other.

Maybe it's a small gap for you in some areas. Maybe it's a large gap for you in some areas. Maybe it's a huge gap for you in some areas or maybe in all of the areas if you think oh, my God, I'm here and my dream is so big. It's a huge difference. It doesn't matter if it's small or big, because you have to do the exact same thing; to close the gap, to reach your dream. It's not about taking one big action.

This is another problem people have. They have a dream and they think they must take a big, huge action today or tomorrow or for one week or for one month. Like in English I see this all the time. People email me. "A.J. next month I need to speak perfect English. What do I need to do? I will study English every day for 15 hours." And they think that in one month they can take a lot of action and they will totally succeed.

That's a nice thought, but what's the problem? Well the problem is before this month they didn't do very much, they were just comfortable. And what's the other problem? Well after one month they will improve, certainly, if they study very hard 15 hours a day, but they won't be perfect. They will not become perfect. So what will happen? With a lot of people they become discouraged. They say "Oh, I didn't succeed. I'm not perfect." And then what do they do? They go back to being comfortable again. They stop trying, they kind of give up. They just do what's comfortable and they don't continue to go.

So, this is the problem, people are very inconsistent. Normal people are inconsistent, but you are not a normal person you're special. You're a VIP member and so what you are going to do is consistently grow. You are consistently going to do uncomfortable things, but just a little bit uncomfortable.

When I say consistently I mean that every day and every week you grow a little bit. Consistency, consistency is so, so important. It's doing things every day and every week that will bring you success, that will bring you confidence that will bring you leadership, true leadership skills. It's not just doing a lot one month. I mean that's great, you can do that also, but not instead of consistent action, little actions.

So, now you know what to do. You've got your list of things you're too comfortable with and you have your list of things that you really, really want; your big dreams and there's a gap between them. So here's what I want you to do. This is your homework, I guess. I just want you to think of one or two small actions, small steps in each category; with your speaking, with your health and energy, you know, with your social relationships.

In your different categories I want you to think about what's one small thing you could do to improve, to feel just a little uncomfortable. You don't need to feel pain, you don't need to feel terrified, you just need to feel a little bit uncomfortable, a little nervous, a little afraid, a little shy, just a little bit. So a small step and I want you to write down that small step for each area of your life. And I'll pause now, pause, and write down a small

step you can do this week in each of those areas. Do it now. I'll pause right now... pause your iPod.

Okay, I'm back. Did you do it? Did you write down a small action you can take in each area to feel just a little uncomfortable? If you didn't do it, please do it now.

Well that's your action plan for next week, this week. Starting today for the next seven days that's your action plan, what you wrote down, those little steps to feel just a little uncomfortable. So I want you to do that. You identified those actions now you must do them. That's the power. That's the powerful thing, right? Doing them is the powerful thing.

All right, so, here's the thing, guess what you're going to do? Every week you will do the same thing. You'll look at your comfort list and you might change it a little bit as you grow. And you'll look at your big dream list and you know sometimes you might change that. As you reach your goals you might make an even bigger dream. And then each week what you're going to do is you're going to write down your small steps, your little bit of discomfort for the following week and then you're going to do those things. That's your consistent plan and it's so, so powerful.

Again, the actions can be small. Consistency is more important than huge, big actions. So many people think they have to do something super painful or super difficult or super uncomfortable and it's not true. You don't need to do something huge. What you need to do are small things consistently, a little bit uncomfortable, but doing them week after week after week every single week and really, ideally, every single day doing these things that are just a little bit uncomfortable.

Okay, so you just created your own action plan and you're going to do this each and every week. Now, of course, I have my own special challenge for you, a little bit of extra homework. You made your list, but I'm going to add something to it. I already mentioned it in the video a little bit, but here's what I want you to do. I want you to go to our VIP forums and/or our general member forums, you can do both if you want, and I want you to write something at least each week, at least once a week. Every day would be great, but let's say, as a minimum, once a week.

I want you to write on the VIP social site and/or the general member site. You can do both or you can do just one it's your choice, but I want you to get on there and just write anything. Don't try to be perfect, just write. Now you might first introduce yourself, write about yourself. What are you doing that's interesting? What are you excited about? What do you love to do? Write about that. That's a great topic to write about first.

Next you could comment for other people. You can give them appreciation or gratitude. You can thank them. You can notice something they did that was interesting or useful or

friendly and you can thank them specifically. You can thank them. You can give them a specific compliment. Maybe you'll share information if you know about a good video or an interesting book or an interesting strategy for leadership. You could do that also, but each week I just want you to write. It doesn't need to be perfect, it doesn't need to be incredibly powerful, just write something.

All right that's it. That's your simple homework, just a little, tiny, uncomfortable thing each week and then the next week and then the next week, always doing something a little bit uncomfortable so that you always are growing. And, finally, let me end by sharing with you a very positive and exciting secret about this.

After you do this for a long time something interesting happens. You will begin to like that feeling of discomfort, I promise you. You will actually miss it if you don't have it because you will connect that feeling of a little bit of discomfort. You'll connect that with all the positive great things about growing and growth.

So I feel this. What happens with me is if I don't feel a little bit of discomfort frequently I'll start feeling bored and restless. I start feeling bored and restless because I just realize...I can feel it. I'm not growing. I feel ah, I'm not growing. Something's wrong. I need that little bit of nervousness in me to know that I'm growing, to know that I'm being challenged and if I don't have it I miss it a lot.

It's kind of like people who exercise a lot, right? When you start running a lot or going to the gym in the beginning, yeah, it's painful, it's uncomfortable, but what happens is when you continue going again and again and again eventually you miss it. You miss that feeling of pushing your muscles and you miss that feeling of being tired, that great, healthy feeling of being tired, physically tired. You miss that discomfort of pushing against a heavy weight or running a little bit harder and a little bit faster, because what you really miss is growth. You miss growing.

What is natural is growth. Growth is natural. What I'm talking about in this topic, in this lesson, is what is totally natural for us as human beings. Being comfortable all the time is not natural it's totally unnatural. In nature, in the natural world, no being, no creature, not a dog, not a cat, not an insect, nothing, is always comfortable all the time and in a normal natural state human beings are not comfortable all the time. We're not meant to be comfortable all the time, it's not natural. We are meant to grow.

And if you really want that feeling of excitement and incredible energy and incredible passion and feeling totally alive, if you want those feelings then you have to grow. Those feelings come from growing, from always knowing that you're growing. That you are becoming more and more all the time. You're always learning and learning more.

You're contributing more and more and more. That's where those feelings come from; feeling alive, feeling passionate, feeling energetic, feeling more and more confident and strong.

If you don't have those feelings in your life you need to be honest with yourself and you need to ask yourself, am I really growing or have I become too comfortable? Just be honest. Whatever the answer is you know what to do. You know what you need to do. The good news is it's never too late. It doesn't matter how old you are, it doesn't matter your past, the past is not important. All that matters is right now you're honest with yourself and then you do what you know you need to do, which is grow a little bit each day, each week, each month, each year.

All right, that's all. I know you believe me because you are a VIP. Because you're a VIP you're already special. I already know that you want to grow. That's the reason you joined the VIP Program, because you are focused on growing all the time. You're focused on growing. You're focused on contributing more and more and more all the time.

So, I know, I'm telling you what you already know, but you know sometimes it's good to hear it again. Sometimes it's good to be reminded of this.

So, thank you very much. I will see you on our VIP social site and thank you so much again for joining the VIP Program. I'm so, so happy that you are a VIP member.

I'll see you again soon, bye-bye.