

I Am Not My Gremlin!™ Steps 5 & 6 Video Transcript

Note: Please take care of yourself. While this information is intended for general educational purpose and is not therapy, some of this content may or may not be triggering for you. If that occurs please feel free to pause the material, walk away, and/or seek support. Some support resources can be found [here](#).

Steps 5 & 6 Video: Standing up to your Gremlin

The Short & Sweet: Voice it & Challenge it

By now you've created something that captures how your gremlin shows up for you, what it's reminds you of, and how it looks for you. This is a really important step that you've completed. Well done!

So now that you've got something that represents your gremlin, it's time to sit down with it and have a talk. It's time to identify and write down what your gremlin is actually saying to you and decide how you want to handle that.

A really good way of knowing that your gremlin is talking is if you feel bad. Some emotions that can go with feeling bad are that you feel ashamed, angry, anxious, scared, fearful, or worried. If you feel hopeless or helpless or alone, these are all the ways that we can tell that the gremlin is saying something. So even if it's hard to know what it's saying at the beginning, just stop and notice how you feel and really focus on that feeling and get quiet and pay attention.

Remember our cat and mousehole analogy? Be the cat watching the mousehole again. Pay attention to those thoughts coming out of your mind mousehole that go with that feeling you have that feels bad. Our gremlins talk in blacks and whites, in absolutes. It likes to make broad sweeping statements about you and who you are and what you are or are not capable of, etc., so really listen for and pay particular attention to the thoughts that include absolute statements like YOU ARE or I AM. When you have that you've zeroed in on what your gremlin is saying. If the gremlin is saying I AM, even if your gremlin looks like you, I would encourage you to turn the statement into a YOU ARE to help yourself.

Remember that the gremlin can sometimes look like you, but we know it isn't you because many of the things that the gremlin says to you, you would never dream of saying to somebody in your life. So once you're clear on what the gremlin is saying, then we need to stop for a moment and imagine that somebody was actually saying those things to you out loud. As yourself, how would you challenge them? How would you defend yourself?

Remember, not responding to or challenging our gremlin results in our gremlin getting stronger and bigger through repetition, so not responding here isn't really an option if we want to feel different or see new options available to us.

Here's how I went through this process, challenged my gremlin and in the process changed my relationship to it. Your journey and story may be different.

When it finally sank in that I would be failing my second year, and as a result would be dismissed from the University, I was in a panic - extremely anxious, depressed, and hopeless. The voice in my head, the one I'd heard for most of the last two years, kept repeating the same phrases over and over: You have failed. You failed your family. You are un-loveable because you failed them. And you are a failure.

Now while it was true that I had indeed failed, it was in my gremlin's words that I was a failure that I began to ask myself, wait, so what does that mean? It began to dawn on me that under this message, this cruel taunt, my gremlin was saying "You are not good enough". Now this was not a new message for me I realized. This was a belief that had existed before I failed out, long before I even started university. I recognized it as something that had always been there. And When I recognized it I got angry. At the things it had cost me. At what I'd given up and lost because of it. What I'd never even allowed myself to reach for because of it. How I'd wasted my time hiding and avoiding.

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And then, perhaps for the first time ever, I looked my Gremlin square in the face and spoke up and defended myself. I said to my Gremlin, "I'll be damned if I let you set me up to prove this to be true to my family and myself!", "I'll be damned if I let you get away with convincing me that I am not good enough!", and "shut up about the pizza!"

I thought of the person I wanted to be, the life I wanted to live, the dreams I had for myself. I thought of the people in my life that I had helped along the way. Those I had been kind to and compassionate with, and the people in my life that I cared about and who cared about me.

I yelled at my Gremlin, "You are #*&%ing with me!" (this the PG version), "and it stops now!", "This will not be my story!" Then I began to take steps to change my story. Some of those steps involved reaching out for help. I pulled in backup and allies where I needed them to help me challenge my Gremlin. And then... my story began to change.

And some of those steps involved discovering and challenging another negative belief my Gremlin was trying to sneak past me - that there was something wrong with me as I was.

Confronting this led me to revisit and examine my degree program to see if it was actually a fit for me and my interests – which turned out it was not. I faced the little ways that I had kept the Gremlin alive and in power through my avoidance. I gave myself permission to explore and try using study methods that felt right for me. All these steps gathered together to give me more energy, and to make me feel more motivated, especially when I started to see changes resulting from taking those actions. Small as they were at the time, they culminated into a huge shift for me in terms of my perception of my ability to tackle my gremlin. In a sense what it actually did was it firmly relocated the gremlin from the driver seat of my life to the passenger seat, which it put me squarely back in control of the steering wheel and the choices that I was making to move my life in the direction that I wanted it to go.

So now let's talk about some suggestions of how you can begin your journey of shifting your relationship with your gremlin. Let's unpack some different ways that you can engage with your gremlin to help you experience being able to confront and challenge it and to defend yourself in the hopes that you too can experience a reclaiming of the driver seat of your life.

If you already know what your Gremlin is saying and you can't wait to challenge it and give it a good talking to, then by all means jump right in and do that. For others, setting up the art you've created that captures your Gremlin will help in that process and allow you to look at it "literally" in the face as you give it a piece of your mind! For some others though, getting started can feel a bit daunting and so I've got a few creative suggestions of different ways to help you take this step. They involve a courtroom and video game combat. Curious? Let's explore them together to see which one works best for you.

If you're a fan of or have ever seen a legal drama on TV or in the movies you know how these things go. The prosecutor tries to do everything in their power to put what they believe to be the guilty party away. They will stop at nothing to tear down the very character of the accused in order to get a conviction. Then enter the Defense attorney for the accused. They defend the accused of every accusation made by the prosecution. They block, they argue, they provide evidence. Their job is to stand between the prosecution and the accused and ensure that whatever the prosecution says is overturned somehow.

So let yourself imagine a court room. And in it the prosecutor is your Gremlin, leveling accusations at you and making a case against you, working with one sole goal - to convict you of all of the egregious deficits that your gremlin has decided that you are guilty of. See your Gremlin as clearly as you can in this setting.

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Now see yourself as a top notch Defense attorney and your job is to defend yourself against these negative claims being made against you by your Gremlin by arguing and rebutting the claims your Gremlin makes, particularly those most damaging ones that are about your character and your person. Leave no stone unturned as a Defense Attorney. Be thorough. Provide evidence where you can. And at all costs protect yourself.

How does it feel to stand up to your Gremlin?

How does it feel to not back down?

What do you notice happens to your Gremlin when you respond this way?

Let's try a different one.

Those of you who love gaming have likely battled a nemesis or two in your gaming experience. Winning the battle takes you to another level. Losing leaves you stuck where you are, going down a level, or at worst starting from scratch. Take a moment to picture your favorite video game. Now mentally load your avatar of your Gremlin. See it clearly. Then mentally load your avatar of yourself. The scene is set, You face each other, readying for battle. You know you cannot get past this level unless you defeat your nemesis, your Gremlin. Your Gremlin is ready to do whatever it takes to win and take control of the game. You are poised, waiting to hear what your Gremlin has to say. Ready to protect yourself, ready to do whatever it takes to live on.

The battle begins. Your Gremlin slings words at you that wound and hurt. You fight back. For each thing your Gremlin hurls at you, you block, you duck, you defend yourself. With everything you have in you. You will not let this Gremlin win! You will do whatever it takes to live on. To get to the next level.

What do you notice happens to your energy as you take this role?

What do you notice happens to your Gremlin as you stand and fight?

What do you feel when you commit to do whatever it takes to defend yourself?

These are just a few different ways you can explore beginning to challenge your Gremlin and shift your relationship to it. There could be many more ways to do this. It's really limited only insofar as your imagination. If you want to do this in a living room in your mind, you can. If you want to do this standing up and talking to an empty chair, you can. If it's hard to do in your mind and you want to literally get up to do this, you can. All these are just creative ways we can use our imagination and the art images that you've created to help you can stand up and look your Gremlin in the face, to make it easier for you to take that first step of reclaiming your rightful place in control of your mind and your life.

For some of us challenging our gremlins looks different. It looks like thanking our gremlin for what it's doing to try to keep us safe, based on an outdated survival strategy that cares nothing for our happiness or sense of peace. Truly honouring our gremlin for its efforts to protect us, even when they cause suffering is an alternative way to challenge our gremlins. Indeed our gremlins can sometimes get louder when challenged, and so the option exists to sincerely thank it for trying to keep you safe. The way you would thank anyone who was doing what they could to keep you safe, even if their methods make no sense to you now. I guarantee you they did when your gremlin was born. You can learn more about thanking your gremlin and how to deepen this by visiting wiwik.org.

For me, my gremlin still sometimes comes to visit. We still have ongoing conversations. Sometimes they stay longer than I like or hide in the shadows evading my awareness for a while. But I no longer fear my gremlin. I no longer take for granted what my Gremlin says as true. My conversations with it have evolved through my own continued work on it. I am no longer at the mercy of what it says about me. I now know that I am not my Gremlin!

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Thank you for taking part in this I Am Not My Gremlin!™ not-for-profit mental health initiative. Thank you for listening to these videos, and for being willing to take a step in the direction of learning about gremlin. By your doing that you are right now changing the world. When you are willing to name and shift their relationship with their gremlin, you have already moved things in our world for the better.

My sincere hope is that this process has been helpful to you. Perhaps you've even shared it with a friend or two. My deepest gratitude for your role in helping to reduce the shame and stigma from the experience of struggling in any way with anything that affects our mental health. For helping to change the conversation not only within you, but in our society about mental health.

My vision is that one day, stigma will no longer exist, and we will live in a world where it is our shared humanness and shared suffering, hope and dreams that will bring us to a place of knowing that we are not alone. None of us.

On behalf of myself, Dr. Easter Yassa, the I Am Not My Gremlin!™ mental health initiative, the World in Wonder Integrity and Kindness non-profit organization, and my courageous partners in bringing this initiative to you, my deepest gratitude.

Thank you.

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