

WHY DO I AVOID EVERYTHING? (LOLA, Your Trauma Voice)

The Deep Dive Worksheet: Rewriting the Trailer

This worksheet goes with the blog. It has 7 short activities. Each one tells you exactly what to do, and shows you a filled-in example first, so you always know what your answer should look like.

Take your time. There are no wrong answers here.

1. THIS WEEK'S AVOIDANCE LOG

Instructions: *This week, catch yourself avoiding something, big or small. As soon as you notice it, come back and log it: the task, the trailer LOLA played about it, and what avoiding it actually cost you.*

EXAMPLE ENTRY

The task I avoided: *Booking my dentist appointment.*

The trailer LOLA played: *"They're going to find something bad, and I won't be able to handle it."*

How long I've been avoiding it: *Two months.*

What avoiding it has actually cost me: *A dull, low-level dread every single time I open my calendar app for anything else.*

How do you usually know LOLA has started playing the trailer? (check all that apply)

- ☐ A heavy feeling in my chest or stomach
- ☐ Sudden tiredness or a need to "do something else first"
- ☐ One specific dreaded thought, playing on a loop
- ☐ Getting irritable or snappy about something unrelated
- ☐ Other: _____

ENTRY 1

The task I avoided: _____

The trailer LOLA played: _____

How long I've been avoiding it: _____

What avoiding it has actually cost me: _____

ENTRY 2

The task I avoided: _____

The trailer LOLA played: _____

How long I've been avoiding it: _____

What avoiding it has actually cost me: _____

ENTRY 3

The task I avoided: _____

The trailer LOLA played: _____

How long I've been avoiding it: _____

What avoiding it has actually cost me: _____

2. RATE THE FORECAST

Instructions: Pick one task you're avoiding right now. Rate how sure you actually are that LOLA's trailer is accurate, then check it against the real evidence, not the feeling.

EXAMPLE

Task: Asking my boss for feedback on my project.

LOLA's trailer: "She's going to tell me it's bad, and I'll feel humiliated."

Circled: Somewhat sure.

Evidence for the trailer: One time in college, a professor was harsh about my work.

Evidence against the trailer: My boss has given me neutral or good feedback the last four times I asked.

Task I'm avoiding right now, and the trailer LOLA is playing about it:

How sure am I that this is exactly what will happen?

VERY SURE SOMEWHAT SURE NOT REALLY SURE NO IDEA, HONESTLY

Evidence for the trailer:

Evidence against the trailer:

What does this tell you about how accurate the trailer actually is?

3. WHERE THE HELPLESSNESS WAS LEARNED

Instructions: LOLA didn't invent this pattern from nothing. Somewhere, effort really did fail to change an outcome, more than once. This activity traces it back, so you can see the lesson for what it is: something you learned, not a fact about you.

EXAMPLE

Where effort didn't change the outcome: *I tried for years to keep the peace at home by being extra good, extra quiet, extra easy. It never stopped the chaos.*

What I concluded from it: *"Trying doesn't change anything. It's safer to just brace for it."*

About how old I was: *Around 9 or 10.*

Where I'm still applying that lesson today: *At work, where I stopped suggesting ideas in meetings because one got dismissed a while back.*

Where did you first learn that effort didn't change the outcome, no matter how hard you tried?

About how old were you?

What did you conclude from it, in your own words?

Where in your life today are you still applying that same conclusion, even though the situation is different now?

4. NAME YOUR BRACE

Instructions: When LOLA starts playing the trailer, you default to one of two moves: avoiding completely, or doing the thing anyway while pre-living the worst case the whole time. Circle the one you reach for most.

I AVOID IT COMPLETELY

I DO IT WHILE BRACING FOR THE WORST

EXAMPLE

Circled: *I avoid it completely.*

What this move protects me from: *The specific moment of finding out something went wrong.*

What it's actually cost me: *A backlog of small tasks that's grown so large it stresses me out just to look at the list.*

One thing I might do differently if I dropped it for a day: *Pick just one thing off the list and do it without checking how bad it might be first.*

What is this move trying to protect you from?

What has it actually cost you? (time, peace of mind, an opportunity, sleep)

What's one thing you might do differently if you dropped this move, just for a day?

5. THE EFFORT-WORKED FILE

Instructions: LOLA is convinced that effort doesn't pay off. This activity builds a file of proof against her: real times, big or small, when trying actually did change how something turned out.

EXAMPLE

"I was dreading a hard conversation with my sister for weeks. I finally had it. It didn't fix everything overnight, but it was better than the silence, and we still talk now."

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Tip: keep this list somewhere you'll see it again, and add to it every time effort actually pays off, even a little.

6. A LETTER FROM AKO TO LOLA

Instructions: AKO is your higher self, the part of you that can tell the difference between an old prediction and a new possibility. In this activity, AKO writes LOLA a short letter, thanking her for trying to spare you disappointment, and telling her what's changed since she started playing this particular trailer.

EXAMPLE

"Dear LOLA, thank you for trying to protect me from getting hurt again. I know you learned that trying didn't work, and back then, you were right. But some of the people and situations around me now aren't the ones

that taught you that lesson. I can handle a disappointing outcome better than you think I can. Let me find that out for myself."

Now write your own letter, in your own words.

Dear LOLA,

7. THIS WEEK'S ELEVEN SECONDS

Instructions: *Pick the avoided task from Activity 1 or 2. Before you touch it, decide on the smallest possible first step, something so small it feels almost silly. Predict what you think will happen. Then do just that one step, and come back and write what actually happened.*

EXAMPLE

Smallest first step I'll try: Open the scheduling app and just look at available appointment times. Not book anything, just look.

I predict: *I'll feel a spike of dread the second I open the app, and want to close it immediately.*

What actually happened: *The dread lasted about ten seconds, and then it was just a normal app with a list of times. I ended up booking it.*

Smallest first step I'll try this week:

I predict:

What actually happened, after I tried it:

CLOSING LINE

Nothing here proves the fear was pointless, or that you were wrong to protect yourself. It proves the trailer is old, and old trailers can be replaced with new footage, eleven seconds at a time.

You got this! Nobody is coming to save you... you have to save yourself!

HAPPYISH HUMANS

