

Your name: Rian Dowridge

Are you afraid of failure? Have you ever been afraid to do something you're good at after failing once? Growing up in Brooklyn, New York, summertime was my favorite time of year. Staying in the house was not an option according to my mother. Whether it was riding my bike, playing basketball in the park, or exploring the city, I was outside everyday enjoying my childhood.

Now imagine one avoidable event being the sole reason you avoid one of your favorite activities. Yeah, I was scarred back then. Every time I hear the gears of a bike I'm reminded of the incident that scarred me for years. A regular summer day in August turned into a day I'd never forget. Whenever I rode my bike, my mom always had one rule: "As long as I can see you, you can ride as fast and as far as you want." For some reason, this day that one rule absolutely slipped my mind. As we were on our way home, the sun was beginning to go down. I wanted to feel the wind on my face , so I decided to pedal faster and further away from my mom. Of course as a result, my mom yelled out for me to slow down. I didn't fully hear her, so without a thought I looked back absolutely forgetting that I was riding a bike. As I turned back around I came face to face with a metal pole. I collided with the pole so hard that a brown mark inside my right eye was left. As I laid on the ground in pain, I could hear the wheels and gears of my bike spinning. I vowed to never ride a bike again. In my mind, there was no way I was ever going to experience that pain again. Thus, my fear of riding bikes was born.

Three years after that incident, I had no choice but to overcome my fear. I was spending time with my three cousins in Canada and they suggested we go chill around the neighborhood. We had two bikes and two skateboards. I wasn't comfortable skateboarding and I definitely was not going to be the only one walking/running. Plus, I wasn't going to let my cousins know I had an ongoing fear of riding a bike. I didn't want them to look at me like some kind of wimp, so I was left with two choices. Either tell them I was afraid and be the laughingstock of the day or tackle my fear head on and jump on a bike. During the first couple of minutes, I was wobbly and unable to keep up with my cousins. Eventually, I got back into the rhythm and I was able to keep up while enjoying the scenery of suburban Canada.

Currently, I don't ride bikes often. However, whenever I have the chance to do it, it doesn't feel like my heart wants to jump out of my chest anymore. I'm glad I was able to overcome the trauma of that incident. Sometimes, unexpected events happen or you fail at something you usually excel at. Don't let one bad event or failure stop you from doing something you enjoy.