



Recovery from Setbacks

- Reflection builds understanding
- Envisioning success sets expectations
- Planning sets you up for success
- Do it now
- Return on Investment is your reward

Developed by
Judy Judy
Institute for Transformational Synergism
and
Roger Sanders
Sanders Consulting Service
in collaboration with
Waubonsee Works



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Recognize setback as something you want to change.

Explore what happened and what control you have in making changes.

Challenges must to be addressed for success.

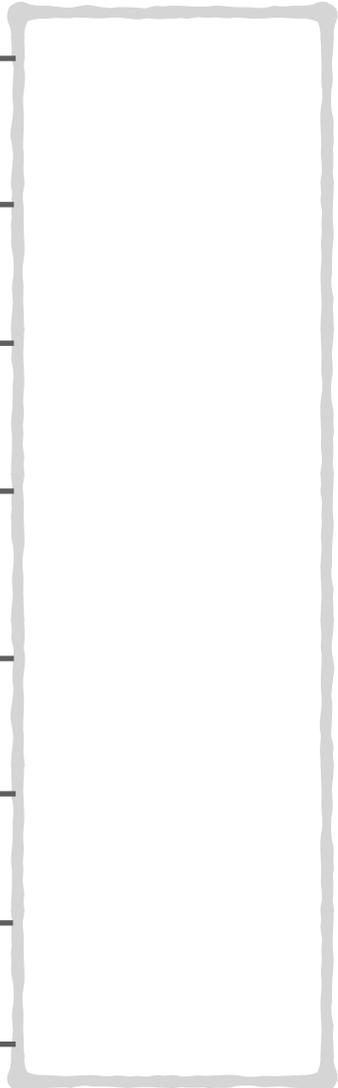
Others who will be supportive, give honest feedback, and who will help you be successful.

Voice is yours.
Take responsibility. Be able to articulate your plan of action.

Excitement comes with small steps. Celebrate.

Reset to new habits of thinking; focus on mastery.

Your reward is success.



Essential Guide for Recovering from Failure

by Guy Winch, [Psychology Today](#), July 16, 2013

Failure is painful, disappointing, and demoralizing. But in addition to these obvious emotional bruises, failure can impact us on an unconscious level as well, and leave wounds that are far more psychologically devastating. Recognizing the various psychological injuries we sustain when we fail and learning how to treat them will help you recover more rapidly and more fully, both psychologically and emotionally, and increase your chances of success in the future.

Recognizing the Wounds Failure Inflicts

1. **Failure makes our goals seem tougher.** Failure impacts our unconscious perceptions such that our goals seem further and more out of reach. This causes another unconscious distortion:
2. **Failure makes our abilities seem weaker.** Once we fail we not only see our goals as harder to reach, we perceive ourselves as less capable of reaching them.

These are not accurate assessments but natural distortions that occur on an unconscious level. These two distortions have an additional impact:
3. **Failure damages our motivation.** Whether we believe we will succeed or fail has a direct impact on how much effort we invest in reaching our goal. When we fear we are unlikely to succeed, we unconsciously invest less effort, and consequently, we are less likely to attain our goal.
4. **Failure makes us risk adverse.** The less confident we are and the more worried we are about failing, the less likely we are to take risks. Ironically, once we fail at a more conventional approach, finding a 'riskier' solution might be the best avenue for us to pursue. But once we're hesitant to take risks, we are less likely to consider them because:
5. **Failure limited our ability to think outside the box.** It impacts our ability to think more creatively and to find solutions that are "outside the box." Since this is largely unconscious, we often don't recognize how our thinking has been impacted and instead believe we've simply run out of new approaches and ideas. Which is why:
6. **Failure makes us feel helpless.** Once failure sets in, you can feel to helpless to really try even though you are capable of success. Failure often makes us feel helpless even though we are not, because:
7. **Failure leads us to make incorrect and damaging generalizations.** When we fail we often generalize the experience in sweeping and self-punitive ways, and draw incorrect conclusions about our general intelligence, abilities, capacities, and even about our 'luck in life' or what was or wasn't 'meant to be.' The only thing we can conclude for sure after a failure is that we were unsuccessful at that particular task, in that particular time, in those particular circumstances.

How to Treat the Wounds Failure Inflicts

1. **Fight the distortions.** Recognize that failure distorts your perceptions about the task itself and about your capabilities. Don't 'but' that you are incapable. Adopt a mindset of persistence and optimism and refuse to give up.
2. **Revive your self worth.** Try to ignore your recent failure for a moment and make a list of the qualities and capacities you possess that should (at least on paper) make it possible for you to succeed. If you have trouble coming up with a list, ask a friend.
3. **Remind yourself of what success would mean to you.** Recharge your motivation by reconnecting to the reasons you began pursuing your goal in the first place. Consider how you would feel if you succeeded, especially after having failed at a previous attempt.
4. **Take calculated risks.** Recognize that it is natural to feel anxious when considering less conventional options, but that it might be essential to do so. Create a list of all the various approaches you can think of, rank them according to the risks they entail, and make informed and calm choices about which to pursue first.
5. **Reengage your creativity.** Brainstorm new approaches by following these two steps: First, list every approach you can think of while completely ignoring whether it is realistic or possible. Do not limit your ideas at all in this stage. Then, when you have a complete and 'crazy' list, go through it and think about what is or isn't viable.
6. **Focus on factors in your control.** Most failures are related to inadequate planning, poor preparation, and insufficient effort. Figure out what was lacking in your planning, how you can be better prepared in the future, and how and where you can invest more effort.
7. **Reframe the failure as a single incident.** Make a list of the specifics of the situation that might be different when you approach the task the next time. Include items such as circumstances, factors related to other people involved, your mood, the weather, your general frame of mind, how you slept, and as many others as you can. Then check off the many factors that might be different again.