

**10 COPING STRATEGIES  
WHEN YOU ARE REELING  
FROM FAILURE**

**Checklist**

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# Introduction

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Failure is a fact of life. It's impossible for anyone to go through existence succeeding at every turn. In fact, many of history's most famous success stories have come about after first having failed. The important thing is learning from the experience.

Failures can be small and insignificant, completely life altering and everything in between but learning to cope with the inevitable is important. When you fail to reach an important goal, you can be left feeling depressed, demoralized, and often stressed out as to what this loss now means.

# 10 Coping Strategies When Reeling From Failure

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## Embrace Your Emotions In A Healthy Way

In the immediate aftermath of a big failure emotions are raw and painful. An individual can be wracked with self-doubt, depression, and anger. It is important at this stage to acknowledge to yourself how this failure is making you feel.

- ✓ Do not deny the emotions.
- ✓ Accept that the failure causes sadness and anger, talk to friends and family about how you feel if they want to help.
- ✓ It will take some time for the emotions to settle but don't try to suppress how you feel.

## Don't Medicate With Food And Alcohol

When people feel sad or down, they often look for a distraction, something that can make them feel better and forget how they feel. This can often take the shape of overeating bad foods or drinking alcohol to excess.

- ✓ Stress eating as it is sometimes called can often be an almost unconscious decision to eat or drink more than you normally would. Before you sit down to eat you first should assess how you are feeling emotionally and if you are really hungry.
- ✓ Acknowledge if you feel sad and realize that the food or drink will only make you feel better for a short time at best.
- ✓ Alcohol should never be used as a coping strategy especially when feelings of depression are already in play. The thought of being drunk and forgetting for a while may seem logical but ultimately alcohol is a depressant the feelings will come back once you're sober.

## **Practice Simple Coping Skills**

- ✓ Focus on all the small things in life that are good and positive helps to counterbalance the feelings of loss and disappointment caused by the lack of success.
- ✓ Something as simple as taking a walk in the fresh air maybe with a dog or some friends can lift emotions. Carve out time to read a good book or to take a shower or bath to give a feeling of rejuvenation.
- ✓ Choose things that help you relax and bring some joy in times of distress. Focus on those things and to avoid dwelling on the failure.
- ✓ Exercise.
- ✓ Spend time with friends.
- ✓ Indulge in a hobby.
- ✓ Spend time with a pet.
- ✓ Volunteer at a charity.

## **Understand What The Failure Means**

The literal definition of failure is a lack of success and this can be such a broad interpretation because of the many levels of failure. Placing it in perspective and realizing how significant or insignificant the failure really is can be the key to moving on.

- ✓ Assess what the failure actually means. Is it really a huge life destroying setback? Does it make you any less that you did not succeed in this instance?
- ✓ Create a list of what you actually lost or missed out on due to this failure. Creating a visual representation of the true impact may make it more clear that the situation isn't actually as bad as once thought.

## **Reframe The Failure**

The immediate reaction to a failure is a slew of negative emotions because something that was wanted has now been taken away. A great way to deal with this is to reframe the situation by a literal refocusing of the failure to see the positives that can come from it.

- ✓ Shift the focus that something has gone wrong and consider what this failure can actually teach.
- ✓ Assess what may have caused the failure and what could have been done differently.
- ✓ Consider what can be learned from the situation to ensure success in the future?
- ✓ Consider what opportunities have been created from the failure?
- ✓ Consider what is an alternative route.
- ✓ Consider What personal growth opportunities exist from this failure?
- ✓ Consider all the silver linings.

## **Place Responsibility Appropriately**

So much can go into the success or failure of any venture no matter the size so when things do not go as planned something or someone is to blame. It is important when analyzing the mechanics that went into the failure to not overlook the facts and to not allow emotion to play a part.

- ✓ List the facts of the failure? What went wrong?
- ✓ Consider what could have been done differently?
- ✓ Consider what was under your control?
- ✓ Consider what was beyond your control?
- ✓ Create a list of all the things that may have contributed to the failure and be as honest as you can.

## **Find Inspiration From Those Who Have Failed On Their Way To Success**

The hardest part of coping with failure is a feeling that success will never be achieved. This is a false assumption because almost everyone who has ever been massively successful stumbled along the way and faced failure.

- ✓ Do some research into famous people who have failed time again before succeeding. There are plenty of them to be found. Look up Colonel Sanders, Michael Jordan and Tomas Edison.
- ✓ Use the stories of those who have faced adversity and won to inspire a recovery from personal disappointment.

## **Reassess**

After all the soul searching that has taken place to analyze the failure, make time to reassess what is most important in life.

- ✓ Make a list of all the good and bad things in your life.
- ✓ Assess how important certain things are to you whether life would be better or worse without them. If the thing that you failed at still looks worth pursuing prepare to carry on and make an alternate plan to achieve it.

## **Make A Plan To Move On**

Once the failure has been analyzed and relived over and over to come to terms with it, the next step is to move on.

- ✓ Dwelling on what cannot be changed is not a healthy use of time but planning for the future can be reinvigorating.
- ✓ It's time to make a new plan.
- ✓ Take all of the lessons of failure along with a new found drive to succeed this time and forge forward.

## Conquer Your Fear Of Failure

Once that first big failure has happened and been successfully navigated, coping strategies will hopefully have you prepared going forward.

- ✓ Understand and accept that failure is inevitable and it may well happen again before success has been reached.
- ✓ When entering into something that may not succeed the first step, assess all the possible outcomes to reduce or eliminate potential shock if things don't work out.
- ✓ Work on positive thinking both with regards to the chance of success and how well you are now equipped to deal with failure.
- ✓ Make sure the worst-case scenario is understood. What is the worst that can possibly happen if this attempt is failed?
- ✓ Have a backup plan, something that can act as a landing pad should this latest attempt not work out.