Lessons Learned On The Self Improvement Journey And Their Action Steps

LEARN FROM YOUR PAST, THEN LET IT GO

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The Past

Your past. Two little words loaded with all kinds of ramifications. Did you know that one of the key lessons learned on the self-improvement journey involves the past. Specifically – learn from your past and then let it go.

You have probably heard this a million times before, but releasing the past is an important step in life. At least, it is if you want to keep moving forward.

When you look back on your life thus far you can see an endless stream of experiences and events that you have lived through. Some of them have been joyous while some have been anxiety-inducing or heartrending. You know how it feels to look back on those happy memories. You can feel it again just by thinking about that moment. The same goes for those memories tinged by negativity.

If you concentrated hard enough, you could conjure up all of the pain you felt when you lost your first love. I want you to learn from your past and I want you to let it go. The next time you hear a song that's tinged with bad memories, I want you to have let go so hard that you're strong enough to change your feelings about the song.

You cannot get through life without experiencing negativity. To be human is to experience the gamut of emotions. The problem is that we tether ourselves to those emotions in an unhealthy way.

Don't Overlook The Gifts

We are often guilty of tethering ourselves to the negative emotions and overlooking all of the positive emotions. If you want to truly experience the

happy moments moving forward then you have to let go of the tethers to your past. You have to ready. You have to be willing. You have to live in the moment and take life as it comes.

We all reach a point where we have to take stock of things and since you're here on a self-improvement journey, I'm going to assume you are in the right place to move forward. It is at this point where you start to consider how tethered you are to your past. What was the tipping point? For a lot of people, it's walking through an extremely upsetting situation and looking at how much it changed you.

For example, anyone who has been in a bad relationship knows that no one walks away unscathed. When you finally end it and walk away you realize how much distance there is between you and your friends and family. You realize how much of your life was put on the back burner because you were caught up in a battle with yourself and that person.

Your past is that bad relationship. If it's still weighing you down, you have to cut those ties. Like the end of a relationship, you enter a questioning stage. You start to get to know yourself again and you explore the world through different eyes. You think about what traits you're looking for in a partner, you think about what you want from someone.

This is the same thing you do when you think about how you'd like your life to unfold. You can find those lessons in your past, but once you do you have to let it go.

Internal Questioning Is Part Of The Healing Process

Up until this point, there's a good chance you have gotten caught up in thinking about what you don't want rather than focusing on what you do want.

Your *do not want* list may have been shaped by your experiences, but it's a negative way to view things. It's not going to help you improve yourself, but it will hold you back.

As a child, you learn through repetition. You learn how to walk, talk, and tie your shoelaces by doing it over and over until you figure it out. The first time you picked up a spoon you didn't get it in your mouth. It took practice.

You didn't walk the first time you took a step. It's part of the learning process. Neither were you born with the impulse to judge yourself. That also came with practice. For some reason, our perception shifted from viewing *attempts* as mistakes or full-blown failures.

Society talks about allowing people the space to learn from their mistakes, but that's empty talk when no one has the room to make mistakes and learn from them. If you repeat the same mistakes… you're in even deeper trouble according to society.

We all feel judged, the last thing we need is to deal with self-judgment. It's difficult to let go of those mistakes and pain when others want to cast them up to you constantly. However, self-acceptance is a necessary part of the self-improvement journey. Self-acceptance will help you learn and release the past so you can move forward.

When you reach a place where you consciously desire to deal with old experiences and let go of them, what is happening is that you recognize that

you aren't comfortable with what happened, for whatever reason, and you want to forget about it.

The problem is that a lot of people mean *pretend it never happened*. That's not what self-acceptance is. So, let's flip the script.

Instead of thinking you want to let it go and forget about it, try *I might not be happy with it, but I accept that it happened, but it is over now and I trust myself to relegate it to the past where it belongs*.

It's about taking those thoughts and putting the spin of self-acceptance on them. You can't learn from the past or bounce back from your mistakes if you constantly beat yourself up about it or try to stuff it down and pretend it didn't happen.

You have to accept what has happened, whether it was down to someone else's bad behavior, your bad behavior, or it was out of your control entirely.

Let's begin taking the steps into the present right now.

Action Steps

Identify Lessons The Past Has Taught You

The past can be your greatest teacher if you are willing to take its lessons. Your past may be littered with a long list of accomplishments, but there's a good chance it is also mingled with negative experiences. That's life. By this point, I would hope you have learned or are willing to learn the following lessons.

You Can't Always Win

If you spend too much time analyzing or being self-conscious about your behavior and your actions, then you fall into a trap. The trap of downplaying what you have accomplished. There's a difference between taking lessons from the past and getting mired in it.

You have to know you can't and won't always win. In fact, taking it a step further, no matter how hard you try you won't always do well. Look at failure for what it is, an opportunity to gather yourself and do better. You can still move forward knowing that you tried the best you could at that particular moment in time.

Not Every Loss Is A Real Loss

This might be one of the most difficult things to accept. When you experience loss, whether it be an opportunity or a friendship, it hurts. It's a blow to your pride. It's upsetting. But not every loss is a real loss. Not every opportunity was meant for you and not every friendship was made to last.

You are constantly growing, you are constantly changing, it's normal to leave people behind. Not everyone can update to maximum compatibility as you grow and practice self-improvement.

You Can Handle It

Perhaps the biggest lesson that the past can and will teach you is that no matter what happens you are strong enough to handle it. You must be because here you are. You made it this far, what else could possibly stand in your way? There is no need to lose self-confidence. There is no need to worry about your future. Stop disregarding the hurdles you've jumped. Stop forgetting the obstacles you have made it through. Appreciate what your past self has come through. Acknowledge the path you have walked. Give yourself credit for everything you have achieved or attempted. Be confident in yourself. Don't be afraid to bet on you.

Recognize Your Power

The success you have achieved thus far is not down to chance. You put in hard work. You dedicated yourself to it. You put in the effort. And you may have had luck here and there, we all need it from time to time. But it wasn't down to chance. You attract what you're interested in, it doesn't simply appear. You might not realize that you search it out, but you do. Don't underestimate your power to make things happen.

Don't Fall Into Misunderstanding

You don't know what other people are thinking or feeling, so don't convince yourself otherwise. When you jump into these assumptions you set yourself up for an endless stream of misunderstandings. Work on building strong communication skills and if you find yourself reading (or, trying to) people's minds, remind yourself you have to communicate openly.

Take these tips with you as you embark on your self-improvement journey and endeavor to learn from your past and let it go.

- Embrace diversity – we're all different and it doesn't have to be a bad thing.
- Stand up and be counted – whether you're standing up for what you believe in or supporting the voiceless, don't be afraid to stand up for yourself and others.
- Embrace the ordinary – you might not feel like the little things are worth it, but you will find profound joy in the ordinary parts of life if you slow down and take time to enjoy them.
- Explore – whether it's food, language, culture, movies, or music, don't be afraid to color outside the lines and try new things. You can't know what you like until you've tried everything.
- Be flexible – with everything, the stress just isn't worth it.
- Open your mind – don't close yourself to new experiences, embrace them at every opportunity.

Realize That You Can Face And Deal With Whatever Life Puts In Front Of You

Everyone experiences ups and downs in life, no matter how rich they are, no matter how happy they might seem. The human experience is a rollercoaster. As long as you experience feelings and interact with people and society, you are going to experience challenges. It's just the nature of life.

When good things happen, you feel good. When bad things happen, you feel bad. As life tosses banana peels in your path, you may manage to avoid them today and tomorrow you may slip and fall. These colorful experiences help you

appreciate the good times. And the bad times give you the strength to navigate the worse times. The bad times can creep up on you and it's important that you build your mental health to ensure that you *can* face and deal with whatever life puts in front of you.

Your self-face journey starts now and it will play an important role in what is to come.

Consumption

Be more aware of what you're putting into your body. How much water are you drinking? What does breakfast look like? What do you snack on? How are your portions? Nutrition makes a massive difference in how you feel both mentally and physically. Do not underestimate the power of a balanced diet.

Plan Ahead

An action plan might sound trite, but the reality is that it's something you can follow and use as a guide even when you *don't* feel at your best. Sometimes that's exactly what you need to make it through life's most difficult passages. Be kind to yourself, remind yourself of those times you have already made it through, and remember things will get better.

Get Moving

And I don't just mean in terms of taking action on your plan. Get up and get outside and go for a walk. You get exercise and you can enjoy some sunlight while you're at it, two birds with one stone.

Make Time To Meditate

Meditation is something that can help you battle against anxiety in the moment, but it's also a useful proactive step to ward it off. When life gets too much, when

your thoughts are overwhelming, when everything is so busy… a moment of meditation can help you get it back under control. Pay attention to your breath, pay attention to the tension in your body, and refresh yourself.

Talk About It

We all need someone to rely on, and hopefully, your social circle is wide enough to provide you with support when you need it. As overwhelming as life can be, you need people you can speak to when you run into obstacles and experience difficulty. There's a temptation to insulate yourself when you're going through a difficult time, you have to resist that impulse and reach out instead.

There's nothing world-changing about these tips, at least not on their own. However, when you put all of them into action and use them on a self-improvement journey, they can change *your* world. And that's what we're working toward.

As impossibly difficult as life can be, you are strong enough to handle whatever it throws at you.

Identify How Failures Led To Successes

We have a societal problem when it comes to failure. The problem being we view failure through a negative lens and ignore the power that comes from it. While getting an F on a test in your school days was cause for concern, in the real world, failure can be a guiding light.

Some of the most successful people on earth are open about the many failures they endured before finally reaching the dizzying heights of success. It isn't failure that defines you, it is how you respond to failure that will define you. If you try and try again and fail every time you may give up, but what if you were

to succeed the very next time you tried? That's what must keep driving you forward.

Of course, failure is also a great ego test. There's nothing better than failure to knock you back down to earth when you have gotten too big for your britches. You don't know everything, you can't, and recognizing that is important.

You have to recognize your limitations. Part of that means seeking out new ideas and searching for answers. When you fail you *should* seek out the lessons in it and learn new things.

Positive Change

When you experience failure, it's going to sting. There are different levels of failure and being laid off will certainly feel like the end of the world more-so than making a wrong turn in an escape room. You can talk about it until you are blue in the face, but you have to take action to use it as a positive change. If you were laid off, look at it as an opportunity to make a change in your life. You're out of your comfort zone now, but what will you do about it?

New Perspective

With failure comes a new perspective. Or, perhaps more importantly the *proper* perspective in terms of viewing your success. Because every single success comes from a broken path littered with defeat, rejection, and bungles. Those failures feed the success you find, never forget it.

Resilience Building

It isn't the act of failure in and of itself that results in success. It's the part of failure where you get back up, dust yourself off, and try again that results in

success. Bouncing back after a failure teaches you resilience and *that* is what you need to make success.

It's A Teacher

What you want… what you don't want… failure teaches both. It's like a flashlight that illuminates every part of your soul. It forces you to get to grips with what you really want from life and what you really don't want. There is no substitute. Stop looking at failure how you have been conditioned to and view each one as a lesson instead. It's how you respond that will define you.

Use The Setbacks And Challenges You Have Overcome To Realize How Strong And Resilient You Are

An important part of embracing failure is acknowledging the pain and fear it brings. Those are natural responses and the feelings are normal. If you *don't* do this you are merely producing gold-plated resistance. It might look pretty on the outside, but it won't stand up to too much pressure.

There are real consequences for failure. And the emotional result of failure is important and it's important to use that to build resilience. Embracing failure without doing the emotional work is reducing your resilience but working through those emotions is contributing to it.

When we discuss resilience, the most likely image you have is bouncing back after dealing with difficultly. That isn't entirely incorrect. If I asked you to describe a resilient person you would likely tell me that it's someone who bounces back quickly after going through a difficult time, someone who easily goes back to the person they were before the trouble started. Again, that's not strictly wrong. It just glazes over a whole lot of emotional pain.

After you experience profound hardship, you cannot bounce back. At least, you can't be who you were before. That doesn't mean you can't be better, though. Hardship is transformative. It will change you. The fear and the hurt that you experience in hardship forever change your outlook on life and your perspective.

So, resilience isn't about being unaffected by hardships or failure. It isn't about standing unvanquished through adversity. It's finding a way to traverse a challenging emotional landscape, to integrate the hardship and the lessons it brought, and move forward in healthily and positively.

Everyone has their own journey through life. What struggle and hardship you face may look different from the struggle and hardship your neighbor experiences. It's isn't a competition and there is no need for comparison.

No one will walk the same path, even four siblings raised in the same home will watch their lives unfold in radically different ways. Failure impacts us each in different ways as does our response to it. Your response to failure will help you carve out your own path.

When you experience failure, when you run into hardship, you will not be the same person you were before. You can rebuild yourself into a stronger, more resilient person, though.

Practice makes just about perfect so you mustn't don't allow failure to deter you from your path. You have to get up and go again and when you do, you will come out stronger at the other end. As you continue making your way forward your new failures won't slow you down as much. You'll learn to take them in your stride.

- Resilient people aren't afraid to make tough decisions.
- Resilient people aren't scared of putting it all on the to risk rejection. And when faced with failure or rejection, they don't stop.
- Resilient people have high standards and that's because they know that despite their flaws, they are always capable of more.
- Resilient people aren't afraid to take responsibility when it comes to problem-solving and managing failure and hardship. There's no need to make excuses because there's always a solution to be found.
- Resilient people understand that life is a process and they find joy in following it. This is why resilient people are courageous enough to push the limits and *their* limits. There's always a safe option, but there is no risk of failure in that and sometimes, you have to risk failure to move forward.
- Finally, resilient people know their purpose and they make decisions to move closer to it every day until they are living it consistently.

However, your life unfolds, there is never a straight path to your destination. You can't follow someone else's path. You can't recreate someone else's success. This is your journey and it's up to you to take responsibility for it.

Identify The Regrets And Turn Them Into Action In The Present

Regret is so complicated. On the one hand, it would be great to live entirely without regret and there's a case to be made for that. Because every choice you have made, every decision you take in this life has brought you to this very moment right here.

And, as you look back on your life there are likely a lot of things you love about the life you lead. The idea that you could go back and correct some of your

mistakes could change your current position is scary because what if you did and then you woke up tomorrow and your family was gone? What if you were living out the premise of a Hallmark Christmas movie?

That's the argument against regret.

But it shows a distinct lack of understanding when it comes to *correcting* things. It's impossible to live life without regrets. As humans, we are bound to make mistakes and we will hurt other people. It doesn't matter how hard you try. At some point, you have hurt someone's feelings.

You probably had a breakup you didn't handle well. As nice as it would be to answer for those things, it's too late. What isn't too late, however, is identifying your biggest regrets and turning them into action points right now.

You can't go back and take back those nasty words you hurled as your ex walked out the front door for the last time. But you can identify that as a regret and you can take steps right now to ensure you never make that mistake again. You lashed out because you were hurt.

You didn't have control of your emotions and your poor emotional management let those words spill from your mouth. There is nothing you can do to take them back. Even if you got the chance to apologize, you might still have regret.

It's important to remember that hindsight is 20/20. You're a fallible human being and you don't need to keep beating yourself up for the things that past you did when you can do better instead. It's a destructive pattern.

If you're guilty of dwelling on regrets, I want you to pay close attention.

- You need to trust that you made the best possible decision for you at that moment.
- As tempting as it might be, you cannot romanticize the road not taken. The more you dwell on your regrets, the unhappier you will be with where you are now. The likelihood of your ex being the one that got away, your dream job being the step you missed on your career path, or the one open mic night you missed being the moment you were discovered is low. Don't get caught in that trap.
- You only get one chance to live life. You can't spend it wallowing in the regrets of your past. You have to make peace with your regrets and find a way to use them to propel you forward. There's a romantic aspect to daydreaming about what could have, should have, or might have been. However, that won't get you where you're going.
- If you are plagued by sincere regret it isn't too late to refocus that energy. Stop dwelling on it and ask yourself what is so compelling about the alternative to you. A happier relationship? A fulfilling career? A loss of opportunity to travel? You can't rewind, you can only take steps to act in the present. It isn't too late to enjoy life.

Let Go Of The Past

Sometimes it doesn't matter how hard you try it feels as though you will never be able to let go of the past and move on. It's like being crushed under the heavy burden that no one asked you to carry.

That's exactly what it is… a burden that *you* put on your shoulders and decided you had to carry. You hamstrung yourself a long time ago and you wonder why you can't let go? Your friends keep telling you to, but as simple as it sounds it feels impossible.

Whether you're holding onto the pain that came from betrayal, a grudge that fuels your anger, or the hope of a breakup reversing itself… it's not doing you any favors.

It doesn't matter how badly you want to, you cannot change the past and you have to let go of the idea that you can. By holding onto the past, you in essence continue to try to control it.

Your brain processes both positive and negative experiences, but it does so very differently. In terms of negative experiences, they require a deeper level of thinking so they are naturally processed more thoroughly than positive ones. We are essentially conditioned to hold on to adverse events. In doing so, you effectively turn yourself into a sad hamster on an ever-spinning wheel of misery.

Unfortunately, there's no way to change the way your brain works. However, you *can* train yourself to dive out of that ever-spinning hamster wheel of misery. It begins by severing the emotional attachment you have created with the negative experiences of your past.

The line between losing yourself in the past and honoring it is a fine one. There is only one way to acknowledge your past, learn from it, and let go, forgive yourself.

- While you might be the hero in your own story, you have to stop painting yourself as such. No one is a hero, we're all just damaged people trying to do better.
- You are the only person who can truly define who you are. Don't blame others when you lose control and don't let others paint you into a corner or define the terms by which you live. It's on you.
- When something goes awry, we are quick to blame ourselves, but it's difficult to accept that we erred, especially when there are perfectionist tendencies afoot. Everyone makes mistakes. It doesn't make you a failure. You have to forgive yourself. You can correct an error. A mistake is merely a stepping stone in your bigger journey. You learn from it and you keep going.
- Your problems do not define you, you are not the sum of your failure. Your stories and experiences are not what defines your identity, it's how you react to them that defines you.

Learn From Your Past, Then Let It Go Action Steps

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Identify Lessons The Past Has Taught You

- ✓ You Can't Always Win- If you spend too much time analyzing or being self-conscious about your behavior and your actions, then you fall into a trap. The trap of downplaying what you have accomplished. There's a difference between taking lessons from the past and getting mired in it.

- ✓ Not Every Loss Is A Real Loss- Not every opportunity was meant for you and not every friendship was made to last.

- ✓ You are constantly growing, you are constantly changing, it's normal to leave people behind. Not everyone can update to maximum compatibility as you grow and practice self-improvement.

- ✓ You Can Handle It- Stop disregarding the hurdles you've jumped. Stop forgetting the obstacles you have made it through. Appreciate what your past self has come through. Acknowledge the path you have walked. Give yourself credit for everything you have achieved or attempted. Be confident in yourself. Don't be afraid to bet on you.

- ✓ Recognize Your Power- The success you have achieved thus far is not down to chance. You put in hard work. You dedicated yourself to it. You put in the effort. And you may have had luck here and there, we all need it from time to time. But it wasn't down to chance. You attract what you're interested in, it doesn't simply appear. Don't underestimate your power to make things happen.

- ✓ Don't Fall Into Misunderstanding- You don't know what other people are thinking or feeling, so don't convince yourself otherwise. When you jump into these assumptions you set yourself up for an endless stream of misunderstandings. Work on building strong communication skills and if you find yourself reading trying to read people's minds, remind yourself you have to communicate openly.

- ✓ Take these tips with you as you embark on your self-improvement journey and endeavor to learn from your past and let it go.

    - Embrace diversity – we're all different and it doesn't have to be a bad thing.

- Stand up and be counted – whether you're standing up for what you believe in or supporting the voiceless, don't be afraid to stand up for yourself and others.
- Embrace the ordinary – you might not feel like the little things are worth it, but you will find profound joy in the ordinary parts of life if you slow down and take time to enjoy them.
- Explore – whether it's food, language, culture, movies, or music, don't be afraid to color outside the lines and try new things. You can't know what you like until you've tried everything.
- Be flexible – with everything, the stress just isn't worth it.
- Open your mind – don't close yourself to new experiences, embrace them at every opportunity.

Realize That You Can Face And Deal With Whatever Life Puts In Front Of You

- ✓ Realize that as long as you experience feelings and interact with people and society, you are going to experience challenges. It's just the nature of life.

- ✓ Realize that bad times give you the strength to navigate the worse times. The bad times can creep up on you and it's important that you build your mental health to ensure that you can face and deal with whatever life puts in front of you.

- ✓ Your self-face journey starts now and it will play an important role in what is to come.

- ✓ Consumption- Be more aware of what you're putting into your body. How much water are you drinking? What does breakfast look like? What do you snack on? How are your portions? Nutrition makes a massive difference in how you feel both mentally and physically. Do not underestimate the power of a balanced diet.

- ✓ Plan Ahead- Be kind to yourself, remind yourself of those times you have already made it through, and remember things will get better.

- ✓ Get Moving – Not just in terms of taking action on your plan. Get up and get outside and go for a walk. You get exercise and you can enjoy some sunlight while you're at it, two birds with one stone.

- ✓ Make Time To Meditate

- ✓ Talk About It

- ✓ Realize that as impossibly difficult as life can be, you are strong enough to handle whatever it throws at you.

Identify How Failures Led To Successes

- ✓ It isn't failure that defines you, it is how you respond to failure that will define you. If you try and try again and fail every time you may give up, but what if you were to succeed the very next time you tried? That's what must keep driving you forward.

- ✓ You have to recognize your limitations. Part of that means seeking out new ideas and searching for answers. When you fail you should seek out the lessons in it and learn new things.

- ✓ Positive Change - You can talk about it until you are blue in the face, but you have to take action to use it as a positive change. If you were laid off, look at it as an opportunity to make a change in your life. You're out of your comfort zone now, but what will you do about it?

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- ✓ It's A Teacher – Learn from failure. Stop looking at failure how you have been conditioned to and view each one as a lesson instead. It's how you respond that will define you.

Use The Setbacks And Challenges You Have Overcome To Realize How Strong And Resilient You Are

- ✓ The emotional result of failure is important and it's important to use that to build resilience. Embracing failure without doing the emotional work is reducing your resilience but working through those emotions is contributing to it.

- ✓ After you experience profound hardship, you cannot bounce back. At least, you can't be who you were before. That doesn't mean you can't be better, though. Hardship is transformative. It will change you. The fear and the hurt that you experience in hardship forever change your outlook on life and your perspective.

- ✓ Realize that resilience isn't about being unaffected by hardships or failure. It isn't about standing unvanquished through adversity. It's finding a way to traverse a challenging emotional landscape, to integrate the hardship and the lessons it brought, and move forward in healthily and positively.

- ✓ When you experience failure, when you run into hardship, you will not be the same person you were before. You can rebuild yourself into a stronger, more resilient person, though.

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- Resilient people understand that life is a process and they find joy in following it. This is why resilient people are courageous enough to push the limits and *their* limits. There's always a safe option, but there is no risk of failure in that and sometimes, you have to risk failure to move forward.
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- ✓ You only get one chance to live life. You can't spend it wallowing in the regrets of your past. You have to make peace with your regrets and find a way to use them to propel you forward. There's a romantic aspect to daydreaming about what could have, should have, or might have been. However, that won't get you where you're going.
- ✓ If you are plagued by sincere regret it isn't too late to refocus that energy. Stop dwelling on it and ask yourself what is so compelling about the alternative to you. A happier relationship? A fulfilling career? A loss of opportunity to travel? You can't rewind, you can only take steps to act in the present. It isn't too late to enjoy life.

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- ✓ It doesn't matter how badly you want to, you cannot change the past and you have to let go of the idea that you can. By holding onto the past, you in essence continue to try to control it.

- ✓ The line between losing yourself in the past and honoring it is a fine one. There is only one way to acknowledge your past, learn from it, and let go, forgive yourself.

- ✓ While you might be the hero in your own story, you have to stop painting yourself as such. No one is a hero, we're all just damaged people trying to do better.

- ✓ You are the only person who can truly define who you are. Don't blame others when you lose control and don't let others paint you into a corner or define the terms by which you live. It's on you.

- ✓ When something goes awry, we are quick to blame ourselves, but it's difficult to accept that we erred, especially when there are perfectionist tendencies afoot. Everyone makes mistakes. It doesn't make you a failure. You have to forgive yourself. You can correct an error. A mistake is merely a stepping stone in your bigger journey. You learn from it and you keep going.

- ✓ Your problems do not define you, you are not the sum of your failure. Your stories and experiences are not what defines your identity, it's how you react to them that defines you.

Learn From Your Past, Then Let It Go Action Steps

Workbook

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Identify Lessons The Past Has Taught You

You won't learn any lesson from past mistakes if you can't first accept and admit that you made a mistake. This is your opportunity to own your mistakes and take the lesson.

Analyzing A Past Issue

I want you to think about some of your biggest, or most impactful, mistakes. Who was involved? Is there anyone you need to apologize to? Is there still time to find a solution? Or, to resolve the problem? Work through it below.

What Did You Learn

It takes courage to apologize when you have done wrong and it's always better to own up to your mistakes than to try to hide them or worse still, blame someone else for them. Ultimately, people will remember you were courageous enough to be accountable to yourself. Perhaps more importantly, you will respect yourself more for being honest and dealing with the situation like an adult.

Now that you have taken time to reckon with mistakes of your past it's time to reframe it. How you view mistakes will determine how you react and respond to them. It will dictate your next steps. Seeing it through a negative lens is normal, but let's work on reframing it.

By reframing mistakes as opportunities, you change the conversation. It moves you from a place of woe to a place of motivation, reframing will help you become more resilient. Think about the mistake you chose above and consider how you could handle it now. What lessons did the past mistake teach you that could help you prevent a recurrence?

Sometimes, mistakes are due to reckless behavior and sometimes it's a freak instance that could have happened to anyone. Either way, a bit of analysis is necessary. You should review your mistakes objectively and honestly. You can do so by asking the following questions.

What was I attempting to accomplish when I made this mistake?

Where did it go wrong?

When and why did it go wrong?

What lessons has this taught you?

At this point, you can put your lessons into practice. How can you apply these lessons moving forward?

Realize That You Can Face And Deal With Whatever Life Puts In Front Of You

Just as you can learn lessons from your mistakes to ensure you do not repeat them, you can also use your past to realize just what you are capable of. Reflecting on past experiences, particularly adverse situations, can help you appreciate just how much resilience you already possess.

Through self-awareness and reflection, you can recognize the qualities that brought you through difficult times. It can also highlight approaches that worked, what didn't work, and ultimately, highlight the skills you may want to develop further. This exercise is two parts.

Part 1

I want you to think about a challenge or a difficult point in your life.
A situation where you struggled heavily. It may be an ongoing event or an isolated incident. Choose something that was incredibly emotionally taxing. Make a note of the situation below.

Now, what was the most challenging or difficult aspect of this situation you detailed above?

How did you manage it at the time?

How did you overcome the challenges you faced to conquer it?

Though you successfully navigated the situation, is there something you wish you could change about how you handled it then?

Because you successfully navigated the situation, what did you do well that you can carry forward for future challenges?

Part 2

I want you to use the answers from part one as your guide to answer the following questions.

At the time, what was your objective?

And what was the outcome?

What challenges did you overcome to successfully navigate the situation?

What difficult emotions and thoughts did you deal with?

Was there someone who offered external support? Who was it and how did they help?

What skills did you develop?

What mindset assisted you?

What qualities, strengths, or skills assisted you?

Which of those did you uncover only because of the situation you found yourself in?

Based on your experience, what advice would you offer to someone who is experiencing a similar situation?

What does this tell you about your resilience level and your ability to learn from your past, improve yourself, and let it go?

Identify How Failures Led To Successes

The setbacks you have experienced and the challenges that you have overcome have led you to this point right now. This has brought you to the successes you have enjoyed. Every failure you experience helps you do better the next time. How can you set yourself up for success?

Write A Letter To Yourself

Write a letter to yourself detailing how one of your biggest failures eventually led to success. Detail the failure itself, how it influenced you at the time, how you feel about it now, what you learned from it, how it influenced you, and what you know now looking back.

Use The Setbacks And Challenges You Have Overcome To Realize How Strong And Resilient You Are

Write A Letter To Yourself

I want you to write another letter to yourself. This is a type of love letter. It's a letter to encourage you, it's a letter to motivate you, it's a letter that you should return to and read as often as you like, especially when you need to remember just how strong and resilient you are. I want you to reflect on everything that you have completed in this workbook so far and I want you to think about how all of those setbacks, challenges, failures, and complications have made you a stronger person today. I want you to use that knowledge to write yourself a letter of empowerment.

Identify The Regrets And Turn Them Into Action In The Present

You don't have to keep looking backward to determine your future. If you look in the rearview mirror for too long, your eyes will be off the road and you'll be driving aimlessly… possibly right into a tree. Too much time spent in reflection can distract you from where you are going.

Sit down and visualize your future. What do you see?

How can you ensure that visualization becomes a reality?

Resolve Lingering Regret

There is nothing you can do to fix the past, you can only take the lessons you have learned and move forward with them. If you feel lingering regret from your past, then you need to take action to remedy that. So, what can you do to resolve the issue or the lingering regret you have?

Identify a regret you have been holding onto, something you can resolve (like a friend you lost touch with that you can reach out to). Forget unchangeable regrets, this is about taking action to resolve something you regret. In the space below, write down the regret you have and the action you will take to resolve it. When you take that action, return to this section to write about how you feel now that it has been resolved.

Now, let's imagine something you regret *not* doing. The aim is to limit its benefits rather than imagining it having a boundless positive impact on your life.

I should have_____.

Now visualize yourself building a fence around it. Build a fence around what might have been. Visualize the benefits and contain them within the fence. It's not yours. There's nothing you can do about it now so there is no point concerning yourself with what might have been.

Of course, if there something you regret not doing but you can still do… take steps to do it! How are you going to tackle it?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Don’t think about the positives or the benefits of what might have been. I want you to think of the consequences that may have come from the road you could have taken.

Think about a decision you regret. What is it?

_____.

Write out three negative consequences to *not* making the decision you did.

1.

2.

3.

Now write out three benefits of the situation you find yourself in as a result of making the decision you did.

1.

2.

3.

For example, you had two job offers and you always wondered about the job opportunity that you did not take. You know the person who took the role and they make more money than you and have enjoyed a more successful career. However, had you made that decision you would not have met your partner who happens to work on the third floor in your office. If you hadn't met your partner, you wouldn't live in the house you do now, you wouldn't have had the three children you have, and you wouldn't be the parent you are.

Let Go Of The Past

Forgive yourself and give yourself the permission you need to let go of the past and move on. Forgive others who may have wronged you and helped set the course for the life you have now. Let all that go and know you have full control of the present, and you can plan for your future.

Say Goodbye To The Past Letter

Write a statement for yourself to that effect. Say goodbye to the past.

Free Journal