Reframing Setbacks

Before you read

This guide is about motivation and everyday setbacks. New or worsening symptoms after starting a treatment or supplement should not be dismissed as a “healing crisis” or proof that treatment is working. Contact our team to review those symptoms; seek urgent care for severe symptoms.

Reference: https://www.nccih.nih.gov/health/are-you-considering-a-complementary-health-approach



Reframing Setbacks *Guide*

MINDSET TOOLS TO SHIFT YOUR PERSPECTIVE

INTRO TO SETBACKS

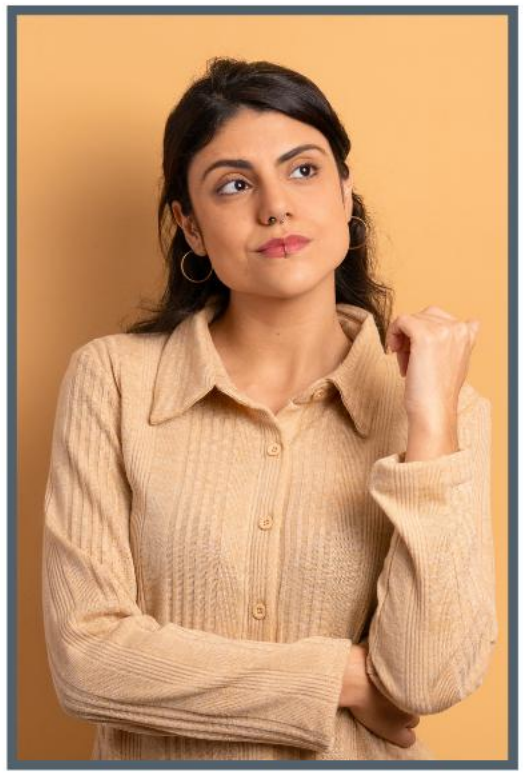
Why they happen

The road to any health goal is rarely smooth sailing. There are always bumps, twists, and turns along the way. Whether it's a weight loss plateau, an unexpected health challenge, or life stress, setbacks happen. These struggles can either act as a springboard or derail your progress altogether. It all depends on how you look at them. In this guide, we'll share tools to help you build a *resilient* mindset - so setbacks don't steer you off course.

Why Setbacks Happen

Health plateaus and challenges can pop up for many reasons. Sometimes metabolic adaptation is to blame, which means that **your body is adjusting to your new diet and exercise routine.**

Other times, **stress, lack of sleep, or hormone imbalances** could be the culprit. Symptoms can also temporarily worsen when starting new supplements or treatments. This is often referred to as a "healing crisis." No matter the reason, the important thing to remember is that setbacks are *temporary.*



Setbacks vs. Long-Term Failure

Setbacks are challenges you encounter as you progress toward a goal. They're simply bumps in the road, and they're normal and part of the process. While frustrating, setbacks are opportunities to course-correct and build resilience - as long as you keep moving forward.

Failure, on the other hand, is when we never reach our destination. Setbacks only turn into long-term failures when we give up entirely.

MINDSET SHIFTS
for growth

How you view setbacks impacts your ability to overcome them. Setbacks can seem like impossible roadblocks, but they rarely are. Often they're learning opportunities in disguise. By shifting your perspective on setbacks, you can transform them into stepping stones.

Steps for Reframing Setbacks

1. **Acknowledge your feelings.** Facing challenges can bring on a wave of emotions. You might feel disappointed, frustrated, sad, or even angry. Give yourself permission to "feel the feels," but try not to dwell on them. Acknowledge your emotions and then pivot and move forward.

2. **Practice self-compassion.** It's easy to become your own worst critic when setbacks strike. But the more you blame or judge yourself, the longer you stay stuck. Instead of criticizing yourself, practice self-compassion. Speak to yourself with kindness - the same way you would to a friend or loved one. The more self-compassion becomes the norm, the easier it is to bounce back.

3. **Look for the lesson.** Setbacks are often seen as negative. Obstacles, though, often have important buried lessons.

   When setbacks happen, try shifting your focus from what went wrong to **what you can learn** from the experience. If this feels hard, don't worry - the next page will walk you through this.

   Remember: we *all* stumble from time to time. So you might as well pick up something while you're down there!

Setbacks can help:

- Build resilience
- Foster self-reflection
- Push you out of your comfort zone
- Spark creativity
- Improve problem solving
- Reevaluate your goals
- Develop a growth mindset

SELF-REFLECTION EXERCISE

Reframing setbacks

The following exercise helps you shift your mindset and see setbacks for what they really are: *opportunities in disguise*. Writing has a way of helping us gain clarity. So to get the most out of this exercise, don't just *think* about the answers, write them down! You can do the exercise right on this page, or grab a notebook or journal.

Find a quiet spot where you won't be disturbed and take a few slow, deep breaths. Think of a setback you're facing and reflect on the following prompts. Don't overthink this - just jot down whatever comes to mind.

1. What can I learn from this challenge?

2. How might this setback help me grow as a person?

3. What can I adjust or refine as I move forward?

RESILIENCE EXERCISE

Shift your perspective

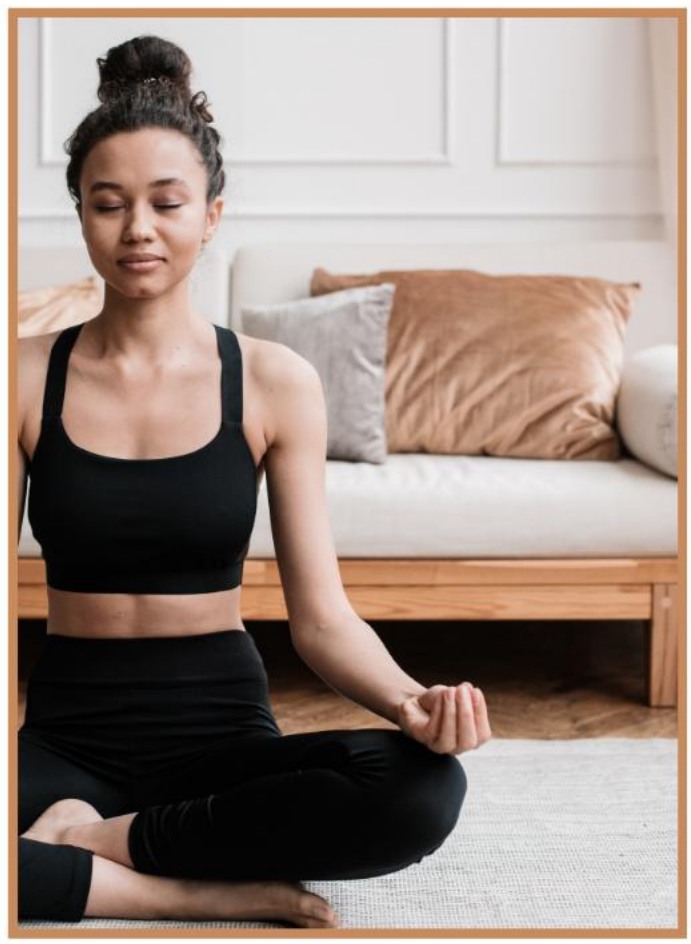
This exercise is a quick way to tap into a resilient mindset. Use it anytime setbacks arise to help you reset:

1. **Center yourself.** Sit still and close your eyes. Consider placing your hand on your heart or belly if it feels right. Take a few slow, deep breaths, breathing in for a count of four. Hold for two counts. Then exhale slowly for a count of six.

2. **Recite a personal mantra.** Choose a positive affirmation that helps you connect with how you want to show up in the world. It could be "I am resilient and can overcome any obstacle," "I believe in myself," "I trust my journey," or anything that feels uplifting for you. Repeat your affirmation 3-5 times.

3. **Replay your personal highlight reel.** For a minute or so, visualize a few of your proudest or most positive moments. It could be meaningful memories, successes, accomplishments, or any other significant events that help you tune into positivity.

4. **Close out your practice.** Repeat your mantra one more time. Then finish off with a few more slow, deep breaths - inhaling for four counts, holding for two, and exhaling for six.



How do you feel? Lighter? Brighter? More positive? It's amazing what a few minutes of centering can do, huh?

Repeat this exercise anytime you hit a setback to build your resilience and help you shift to a more positive outlook.

PRACTICAL TOOLS
To stay on track

Here are a few other tools that can help you regain momentum after a setback:

1. **Reconnect with your why.** One of the best ways to reignite your motivation is to remind yourself *why* you set a goal in the first place. What are the deep-rooted reasons you want to achieve it? If you've lost sight of your why, take some time to reconnect with it. Consider posting it on a sticky note on your bathroom mirror to keep it top of mind.

2. **Celebrate small wins.** To rebuild momentum after a setback, look for wins to celebrate. No victory is too small. Whether it's carving out time for self-care, lifting a heavier weight, or trying a new healthy recipe - celebrate it all! Consider recording your wins in a victory log. This can help you stay motivated and push through tough moments down the line.

3. **Seek support.** Turning a setback into a comeback is much easier when you have support. Try to surround yourself with positive influences who uplift and encourage you. Whether it's an accountability partner, coach, friend, or mentor, having people in your corner can be a game-changer for motivation.

4. **Review your goals.** Sometimes setbacks highlight that our goal needs an adjustment. Take some time to reflect on your goal. Does it need tweaking? Try using the SMART goals framework to keep goals realistic and achievable.

5. **Refine your action plan.** Don't let setbacks paralyze you. Map out your next steps - and take action! Whether it's experimenting with new workouts, getting support from an accountability partner, or committing to a consistent sleep routine, create a game plan to help you rebuild momentum.



MINDSET RESET
Checklist

If you hit a setback or your motivation dips, these steps can help you shift to a more positive mindset:

- **Start with self-compassion.** Instead of being hard on yourself, practice self-compassion. Speak to yourself like you would to a friend. Gently remind yourself that setbacks are normal and part of the process.

- **Look for the lesson.** Reframe obstacles as learning opportunities. What can you learn from this challenge? And how might it help you grow as a person? (Revisit the exercise on page 4)

- **Remember your why.** Reflect on the reasons you set this goal in the first place. How will achieving this goal change or improve your life? Post your whys somewhere you'll see them often to fuel your motivation for the journey ahead.

- **Celebrate your progress.** Instead of dwelling on missteps, celebrate all the progress you've made so far. Keep a victory log to record all your wins - big and small. This trains your mind to notice your progress and makes it easier to stay on track.

- **Plan your next steps.** Consider if your goal or action plan needs an adjustment. If so, make those tweaks. Then map out your next steps so you have a game plan moving forward.