



WHAT TO DO WHEN THERE IS A SETBACK:

1 – First, define, explain and try to better understand the setback: In order to start the process of working toward overcoming setbacks, it is important to define and explain exactly what has happened. Tell the “story” of the setback and be detailed including not only what happened but also your thoughts and feelings where relevant.

2 - Review Risk and Need for Treatment: Safety should always be first. When there was a setback, what potential harm or risks are present? Are you at risk for harm if you don’t get increased professional help? Always consider safety factors such as overdose (or potential overdose), suicidal thoughts, plans or attempts, aggression or violence associated with the setback, life threatening decisions related to the setback (such as intoxicated driving), health risks (such as a heart conditions) as well as potential harm to others (especially children). The greater the risk and safety issue, the more serious the setback. For any life-threatening situations, always seek professional help immediately.

3- When you are ready to specifically get to work on the setback itself, then start by completing the following:

The Setback Motivation Guide – Where to Focus When Experiencing Setback:

The following exercise can guide you to start thinking about some of the reasons why you may be experiencing setbacks. Perhaps you have already been through this exercise in the past and you had another setback so you are back at this point again. Below are some common answers to the pivotal and at times elusive question of “Why did I experience a setback”. Place an X next to the answers that may apply to you below. The key to using this exercise is to try to focus on quality over quantity. In other words, try to focus more on just the one, two or three issues listed below that really stand out as relevant to your current situation as opposed to checking a lot of different areas that may seem to apply.

- 1. I still don’t even fully believe that I need to change
- 2. When I really get honest with myself, I have to admit, I just don’t want to stop or change right now
- 3. My desire for the feeling or the fun right now is stronger than my desire to stop
- 4. There seems to be no rhyme or reason for why setbacks keep occurring and they happen quite often.
- 5. My environment is a significant factor when it comes to setbacks
- 6. A lot of the time when I mess up and use again it’s because I get around the wrong people or places.



- ___7. Certain events in my life are a big struggle for me when it comes to avoiding setbacks.
- ___8. My mental health issues get in the way. When they get worse, I am more likely to use.
- ___9. There are issues within my own mind that get me started down the wrong path towards setbacks
- ___10. There are certain conditions (like health problems) that flare up and I end up using again
- ___11. I make decisions without thinking that can results in setbacks
- ___12. I have setbacks when my emotions get the best of me
- ___13. When it comes down to it, sometimes I feel like I deserve to use
- ___14. I sometimes convince myself I will be OK if I just use one more time
- ___15. Sometimes I forget about the consequences or just push them out of my mind
- ___16. Sometimes I have setbacks because I lack patience
- ___17. I need to learn more self-control
- ___18. I would do better if I could just learn to say no
- ___19. I get discouraged sometimes, which can lead to setbacks
- ___20. Certain situations or people get me down and it can lead to setbacks
- ___21. I can be doing well for a while but then I tell myself “just this once”
- ___22. When it comes down to it, every now and then I give in because I convince myself it won’t be that bad
- ___23. I make excuses why I can still use
- ___24. I believe that my setbacks are linked to emptiness in my life
- ___25. I believe I could do better if life felt more meaningful
- ___26. I would do better if I felt an increased sense of purpose
- ___27. I wish I could better understand exactly where & when things are going wrong in my efforts to change
- ___28. It would help if I could take a closer look at what is going on with my life when it comes to setbacks
- ___29. Sometimes I lose sight of my priorities which can lead to setbacks
- ___30. If I could get a better handle on what is important in my life I could overcome setbacks
- ___31. I need to improve my ability to set and stick with goals
- ___32. I let myself get overwhelmed with some of my thoughts about changing
- ___33. I get bored of the change process
- ___34. I end up switching from one bad habit to another
- ___35. I experience setbacks when I stop taking care of myself whether that is physically or emotionally
- ___36. I just need to look at the areas of my life that I may be neglecting.



SCORING – Follow the directions based on which areas you checked:

- If you checked off any of the points from 1-4 then then see the following:
Activity 0 - Getting Honest (Principle Zero)
- If you checked off points from 5-7 then see the following:
Activity 1a - External Setback Factors
- If you checked off points from 8-12 then see the following:
Activity 1b - Internal Setback Factors
- If you checked off points from 13-15 then see the following:
Activity 2 – Examining the Cushion
- If you checked off points from 16-18 then see the following:
Activity 3 – Working Out Your Self Control Muscles
- If you checked off points from 19-20 then see the following:
Activity 4 – Courage and Discouragement
- If you checked off points from 21-23 then see the following:
Activity 5 – Crushing Compromise
- If you checked off points from 24-26 then see the following:
Activity 6 - Setbacks and Spirituality
- If you checked off points from 27-28 then see the following:
Activity 7 – Timeline Analysis
- If you checked off points from 29-30 then see the following:
Activity 8 – Getting Back to Values and Priorities
- If you checked off points from 31-34 then see the following:
Activity 9 – Strengthening Commitment
- If you checked off points from 35-36 then see the following:
Activity 10 – Self Care Review

DISCUSS – BASED ON THIS, WHICH AREAS DO YOU NEED TO WORK ON?

Life is a series of experiences, each one of which makes us bigger...and we must learn that the setbacks...which we endure help us in our marching onward. – Henry Ford