# **Self-Sabotage and Limiting Beliefs**

Self-sabotage is “*the process by which we hinder our own success and/or wellbeing by undermining our goals and values either consciously or unconsciously.”* It’s insidious, profound and universal.

It can show up in your behaviours for example:

* Avoidance/procrastination and putting things off until the last minute
* Poor time management/being disorganised
* Going to sleep late/waking up late
* Perfectionism and spending too much time on a project
* Overworking and neglecting self-care
* Not delegating
* Negative self-talk and comparison
* Impostor syndrome – declining opportunities and playing small

**Reflect on your self-sabotage behaviours**  
Use the space below to reflect on your self-sabotage behaviours:

* Which of the self-sabotaging behaviours do you tend towards?
* How does it harm your business?
* What triggers the behaviour?
* What do *you gain* from doing the behaviour?

## 

How might you address these behaviours at a behavioural or environmental level?

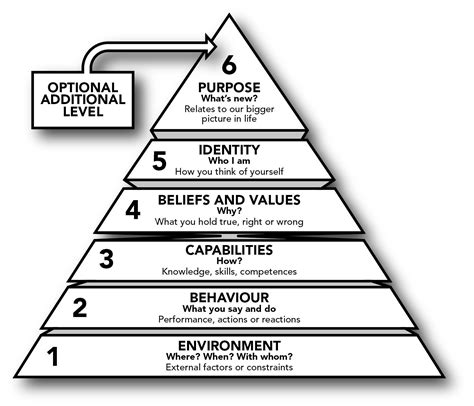
It’s not realistic to never self-sabotage again, instead we can:

1) Identify early on when we are about to self-sabotage or self-sabotaging

2) Minimise any negative effects

3) Keep moving forward

4) Aim for alignment



Robert Dilts – Neurological levels of change

**Self-limiting beliefs**Self-limiting beliefs are often negative and self-defeating. They lead you to underestimate your abilities, limit your ambitions, or hinder your personal growth.

Common self-limiting beliefs are:

* I’m not good enough to do X
* I’m doing X but I’m going to be found out I’m not good enough soon!!! (Impostor syndrome). e.g. *“I got lucky with my YouTube success but I’ll be found out soon”*
* I’m not allowed to have success because…
* Success is too good to be true
* I don’t have enough time to do X. e.g. *“I can’t do it all, there’s not enough time in the day”*
* I’m not allowed to have the money I want to have because… e.g. *“I already have so many wonderful things, it’s unfair and greedy that I should also have a profitable business when others are not as fortunate.”*
* I’m not the type of person who… e.g. *“I need to take care of others before I take care of myself, I’m not a selfish person.”*

**Reflect on your self-limiting beliefs**What beliefs do you have that hold you back in relation to:

* Your skills/abilities – are you good enough?
* Your deservedness – what are you allowed to have?
* Money – what do you think about money?
* Success – what scares/concerns you about being successful?
* Yourself in general?

Using the table below, write out at least one self-limiting belief you have for each of the above categories in column 1 below.

**Turning self-limiting beliefs into self-enhancing beliefs**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| 1. Old Belief | 1. New Belief | 1. Evidence to Support New Belief |
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| --- | --- | --- |
| 1. Old Belief | 1. New Belief | 1. Evidence to Support New Belief |
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Pick one or two of the most impactful self-limiting beliefs you have, in the space below write out:

* What has it cost you in the past?
* What does it cost you now?
* What will it cost you in the future if you don’t address it?

**Forming new self-enhancing beliefs**  
You can form new authentic and empowering beliefs.

**Top tips:**

* Define any woolly words like “enough”. What is actually enough? - What would it take for you to be “enough”?
* In what other areas of your life could you learn/borrow from?
* Do you believe you can learn to develop your capabilities?
* What evidence do you have to disprove the current belief? (Get rid of the table legs!)
* What evidence do you have to support the new authentic belief? (Add new table legs!)

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Old belief | New belief | Evidence to support new belief |
| Achieving success feels too good to be true. | I can receive success | I have no problem with accepting other  things that feel too good to be true, e.g.,  the love of my partner. I can open my  heart to receive this too. |
| I don’t know anyone  else who has done this. Can I really be the first? | I can be a pioneer | I’ve done many things that others around  me haven’t done.  I can get support from other people who are successful |

**New authentic empowering belief checklist**

Is it:

* True?
* Positive/optimistic?
* Helpful? – Does it help you to act in line with your goals?

In the table on page 4, write out a new authentic empowering belief for each of your former self-limiting beliefs (column 2) and at least one piece of evidence to support your new empowering belief (column 3).

**Integrating your new beliefs**Some beliefs will be easy to integrate straight away, others may require active effort and monitoring before they feel like second nature. Here are some ideas to help you:

* Remember your belief – write it down! Use symbols
* Create a new “soundtrack”…e.g. “If I want to help others, I have to help myself first”
* Catch yourself when your old limiting beliefs pop up
* Repetition – practice makes progress
* Consciously allow yourself to experience more good things

**Entrepreneurial skills audit – 12 months**

*0= No skills, 1= Very limited skills, 2= Some skills 3= Satisfactory skills, 4= Good skills, 5= Excellent skills*

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Skills/Experience | Description | Goal  Level | Level Now | Gap | Action Plan |
| Value creation | How much can you help your customers with their problems? | 3 | 2 | 1 | E.g. Read book |
| Marketing | How well do your customers know/like/trust you? |  |  |  | E.g. Complete course |
| Sales | How good are you at making sales? |  |  |  | E.g. Personal challenge |
| Value delivery | How well can you deliver your product/service? Experience/ logistics? |  |  |  | E.g. Collect feedback |
| Finance | How good are your finance skills? |  |  |  |  |
| Networking | How much do you leverage your network? |  |  |  |  |
| Risk taking | How willing are you to fail?  On what? |  |  |  |  |
| Time management | How well do you prioritise important things? |  |  |  |  |

**Session reflection and next steps**

In the space below, reflect on:

* What has been the biggest insight for you?
* What are you going to do differently?
* How will you continue your learning?

# **Exploring the Fear of Failure**

Failure is something that we have all experienced in our lives, and most of us have in some way been affected negatively by the fear of failure.

In the box below, please give some thought as to what the experience of fearing failure entails. You might consider:

* What **thoughts** were associated with the fear of failure?
* What **feelings** or emotions accompanied the fear of failure?
* How did you **act** in response to the fear of failure?
* What were the **consequences** of fearing failure?

To what extent do you believe your fear of failure has had or could have a negative impact on the success of your business?

Completely

Not at all

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

# **Failure Gratitude Exercise**

Failure has been there for us our entire lives, providing us with valuable information and motivation along every step of the way! Yet we rarely take the time to express gratitude for the failures we’ve encountered along the way.

In this activity, we invite you to reflect on a time you faced failure — specifically, a failure you wouldn't change if given the chance. You might want to consider the following prompts:

* **Why was it a failure?**

*Describe the failure and what made it challenging or difficult at the time.*

* **What did you learn from the failure?**

*Identify the key lessons or insights you gained from the failure. What new knowledge, skills, motivation or perspective did you acquire?*

* **What were the positive consequences?**

*Consider the positive outcomes or unexpected benefits that resulted from the failure.*

* **How does the failure fit within your bigger picture?**

*With the benefit of hindsight, how does the failure fit within your bigger story?*

# **Mindsets for Failure**

A mindset can be defined as:

*“A person's pattern of thinking, beliefs, attitudes, and cognitive frameworks that shape their perception, interpretation, and response to various situations and challenges”.*

Most of us have experienced the immense power of useful mindsets - positive mindsets help us overcome adversity, identify solutions to problems, and cultivate a sense of motivation and direction.

The successful American entrepreneur, Jim Rohn, captured the value of positive mindsets with this great quote:

*“If I were stranded on a desert island and could choose what skills I had to take with me,* ***I would choose the right mindset over any other skills****. With the right mindset, I could learn anything I needed to survive.*

*But without the right mindset, I would be lost.”*

**Activity**

Think of a time that you experienced a painful episode of failure.

Now consider how each of the following mindsets could have been utilised to either avoid the painful experience, or help you get past it as quickly as possible.

***The Experimental Mindset***

*Rather than pressuring yourself to know everything and get perfect results, what if you saw your business behaviour as an experiment. Build trial and error in to your process, and know that you can update your goals based on the evidence.*

***“Fail fast, fail cheap”***

*Once you accept failure is a natural part of any business journey, rather than avoid it at all costs, it can be useful to ask “how can I fail as quickly and as cheaply as possible”. By cheaply, you can consider limiting the costs, or you can also consider how you might benefit from potential failure.*

***The 5-minute Rule***

*Failure can suck, it can be painful - there’s definitely a time to wallow. But as with every other failure you’ve experienced, you’ll have to get over it eventually. So, give yourself 5 minutes (or as long as you need) to feel bad, and then… behave as if you’re over it already. You might be amazed how powerful that decision can be!*

***The Least Worst Mindset***

*When we fail at something, we can often get stuck wallowing, and we often adopt a ‘in for a penny, in for a pound’ mentality where we get stuck on the failure. Try reframing the situation and ask yourself: what is the least worst response to this I can take?*

# **Goal Setting for Failure:**

**Be Bold and Be Smart**

Our fear of failure can often lead us to avoid setting goals in a way that is optimal or even useful. As a result of our fear of failure, we might set goals that are:

* Safe and too easily achieveable
* Vague and Imprecise
* Unfalsifiable
* Focus on avoiding mistakes

However, if we are going to embrace failure, we need to make sure our goals align with our ambitions of future business success. That means that we need to create goals that we can fail.

Of course, we aren’t setting goals with the intention of failing them!

But by setting goals that don’t shy away from failure, we can construct the goals in such a way that the goals themselves will increase the chance of success (and avoiding failure):

When it comes to goals, we advocate making them **SMART-AH**:

**SPECIFIC:** *What is the goal, precisely?*

**MEASURABLE:** *Can you track your goal to know once you have achieved it?*

**ATTAINABLE:** *Is the goal hard enough to attain that it is an achievement, but not so difficult to attain such that you won’t be able to achieve it?*

**RELEVANT:** *How does this goal take you closer to achieving your broader goals?*

**TIMELY:** *How long do you have to achieve this goal?*

**ACCOUNTABILTIY:** *How can you create accountability around this goal?*

**HURDLES:** *What are the main hurdles or challenges you anticipate?*

In the space below, apply the SMART-AH framework to create as concrete goals for your business as possible:

**PRE-MORTEM**

Just as a post-mortem is an examination of what killed something after it has died, a pre-mortem is an examination of what might have killed something conducted prior to its death.

Imagine that your business was an absolute failure – that your perfect vision of success was killed during execution. Knowing what you know about your current situation, think of as many causes of death for your business as you can think of given the time constraints.

From the causes of death that you’ve identified above, select three things you could start to address within the next 1-4 weeks.

1. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

# **Overcoming Overwhelm**

There are many definitions of overwhelm, at The One Life School we prefer an empowering definition: “To be affected by something very strongly *and* you don’t know how to deal with it…yet”

There are many things that can lead to entrepreneurs feeling overwhelmed:

* Demands exceed perceived time available
* Pressure of everything being on you
* Loneliness and isolation
* Focusing on things outside of your control
* Uncertainty and risk
* High expectations and pressure to succeed
* Getting out of your comfort zone – doing difficult stuff
* Sensory overload
* Personal life challenges

In the space below, reflect on what overwhelm is like for you:

* What thoughts do you have?
* What emotions do you feel?
* How does your body feel?
* What do you find yourself doing (or not doing?)
* What early warning signs do you have that indicate you’re heading towards overwhelm?

Resilience is the ability to cope with, adapt to, and recover from setbacks.

**Remaining resilient**  
We can improve how quickly we are able to “bounce back” through adopting helpful coping mechanisms.

In the space below reflect on

* What do you need to do proactively to feel and perform at your best?
* What gets in the way of taking this proactive action?

**Three P’s are needed to defeat overwhelm**

1. Prioritise
2. Physiology
3. Positive emotions

**Prioritisation**

**Making sales**

In the space below List all the activities relevant to your business that lead to sales.

* E.g., Ensuring website customer journey is clear
* Capturing referrals from previous customers
* Direct outreach to prospects etc…

Then pick the top 3 things that will - at this point in time if you focus on them - most likely lead to sales.

**The One Thing Question**

In the space below write your answer to this question. “What’s the ONE Thing you can do this week such that by doing it everything else would be easier or unnecessary?”

**What is your Zone of Genius?**

In the space below, answer the following questions to discover your Zone of Genius.

1. What do I most love to do? (I love it so much I can do it for long stretches of time without getting tired or bored.)

2. What work do I do that doesn’t seem like work?

3. In my work, what produces the highest ratio of abundance and satisfaction to amount of time spent? (Even if I do only ten seconds or a few minutes of it, an idea or a deeper connection may spring forth that leads to huge value.)

4. What is my unique ability? (There’s a special skill I’m gifted with. This unique ability, fully realised and put to work, can pr ovide enormous benefits to me and my business.)

In the space below, consider how you can you align your Zone of Genius answer to your other prioritisation answers to help you overcome overwhelm.

**Physiology**

**Energy audit**

1. Please write a Yes in the statements below that are true for you.

**Body**

\_\_ I don’t regularly get at least seven to eight hours of sleep, and I often wake up feeling tired.

\_\_ I frequently skip breakfast, or I settle for something that isn’t nutritious.

\_\_ I don’t work out enough (meaning cardiovascular training at least three times a week and strength training at least once a week).

\_\_ I don’t take regular breaks during the day to truly renew and recharge, or I often eat lunch at my desk, if I eat it at all.

**Emotions**

\_\_ I frequently find myself feeling irritable, impatient, or anxious at work, especially when work is demanding.

\_\_ I don’t have enough time with my family and loved ones, and when I’m with them, I’m not always really with them.

\_\_ I have too little time for the activities that I most deeply enjoy.

\_\_ I don’t stop frequently enough to express my appreciation to others or to savour my accomplishments and blessings.

**Mind**

\_\_ I have difficulty focusing on one thing at a time, and I am easily distracted during the day, especially by e-mail.

\_\_ I spend much of my day reacting to immediate crises and demands rather than focusing on activities with longer-term value and high leverage.

\_\_ I don’t take enough time for reflection, strategizing, and creative thinking.

\_\_ I work in the evenings or on weekends, and I almost never take an e-mail–free vacation.

**Spirit**

\_\_ I don’t spend enough time at work doing what I do best and enjoy most.

\_\_ There are significant gaps between what I say is most important to me in my life and how I actually allocate my time and energy.

\_\_ My decisions at work are more often influenced by external demands than by a strong, clear sense of my own purpose.

\_\_ I don’t invest enough time and energy in making a positive difference to others or to the world.

**2. Rate your overall energy management.**

How many Yes’s did you record in total? \_\_\_\_\_\_

***Guide to scores – your overall energy management***

0–3: Excellent energy management skills

4–6: Reasonable energy management skills

7–10: Significant energy management deficits

11–16: A full-fledged energy management crisis

**3. What area should you focus on first to improve your energy management?**

How many Yes’s did you record for each category?

Body \_\_

Mind \_\_

Emotions \_\_

Spirit \_\_

***Guide to category scores – In what areas do you need to improve most?***

0: Excellent energy management skills

1: Strong energy management skills

2: Significant deficits

3: Poor energy management skills

4: A full-fledged energy crisis

**4. Examples of energy renewing practices to adopt**

**Body**

* Regular cardiovascular and strength training
* Go to bed earlier and get sufficient sleep
* Eat smaller meals and light snacks
* Have regular work breaks and move away from your desk – walk or connect with someone else

**Emotions**

* Defuse negative emotions by practicing deliberate breath. Exhaling for longer than you inhale turns off the fight or flight response and produces relaxation
* Express appreciation to others
* Be aware of the stories you tell yourself. To change a story that isn’t helping you ask yourself:
  + What would another person say?
  + How will I likely view this situation in 6 months?
  + How can I learn and grow from this?

**Mind**

* Work in short, focused bursts, e.g 30 minutes without distractions or interruptions, then take a short break and repeat 3 x times.
* Check your emails/phone only during designated times
* Do the most important priority first each day

**Spirit**

* Intentionally make time to do things you are good at – practice your strengths
* Intentionally make time to do things that matter to you
* Intentionally practice your core values in your everyday behaviour

**5. After completing the energy audit, consider the following:**

* Where are you managing your energy well?
* Where could you improve your energy management skills?
* What new energy habits could you try out?

**Positive Emotions**

**Positive feelings checklist**

Using the list below, consider how much you have felt each of the below emotions in the past 24 hours

0 = Not at all

1 = A little bit

2 = Moderately

3 = Quite a bit

4 = Extremely

1. Grateful/appreciative/thankful \_\_3
2. Awe/wonder/amazement \_\_2
3. Love/closeness/trust \_\_4
4. Amused/fun-loving/silly \_\_3
5. Optimistic/hopeful/encouraged \_\_4
6. Inspired/uplifted/elevated \_\_4
7. Happy/joyful/glad \_\_3
8. Interested/curious \_\_3
9. Serene/content/peaceful \_\_2
10. Proud/confident/self/assured \_\_3

In the space below, consider what could you do to cultivate these feelings more on a daily basis (in or out of work hours).

**Session reflection and next steps**

In the space below, reflect on:

* What has been the biggest insight for you?
* What are you going to do differently?
* How will you continue your learning?

Add everyone to our mailing list

At future workshops, share business info with other attendees.

**Action Planning**

Consider the following prompts to inform your action plan:

* What are some potential warning signs that indicate self-sabotage may be creeping back into your entrepreneurial endeavours? How can you create systems to catch and address these signs early on?
* Moving forward, how will you approach failure differently in your entrepreneurial journey? What specific actions or mindsets will you adopt to view failures as stepping stones to success?
* How you will apply the principle of prioritisation in your entrepreneurial life to avoid becoming overwhelmed by tasks and responsibilities.

Now develop your self-enhancing entrepreneur action plan.

1. **Self-sabotage and self-limiting beliefs**

I will start:

I will stop:

I will continue:

1. **Embracing failure**

I will start:

I will stop:

I will continue:

1. **Overcoming overwhelm**

I will start:

I will stop:

I will continue:

1. **Insights from group coaching**

I will start:

I will stop:

I will continue:

# **Next Steps**

The very next action I will take is:

I will do this by this time/date:

And I will keep myself accountable by:

If you would like to sign up to the One Life School newsletter for coaching tips, events and special offers, please sign up using the link below. You’ll also get a FREE mindful morning journal with 10 quick questions to reflect on first thing to help you cut through the noise and prioritise the most important thing in your day.

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