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Regret - 8 Ways to Move On

Regret, Feeling Stuck and Breaking Free

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Whoopsie! You screwed up royally.

You behaved in a way that [negatively impacted you](#), a situation, or the people you [love](#). You can't let go of the [guilt](#) and self loathing for what you did. You believe you must be a bad person. You're feeling stuck, [undeserving of love and happiness](#), and downright fraudulent. You've convinced yourself you're a monster.

The negative thoughts and feelings that accompany the [memories](#) of that-thing-that-you-did are creating more problems. You're damaging yourself – your low [self worth](#) causes increased [stress](#) and [depression](#). You're damaging your relationships – believing you don't deserve to be loved actually builds walls between you and the people most important in your life – it blocks genuine intimacy. [You're damaging your career, health, spirit, and future happiness by holding onto those negative thoughts, opinions, and judgments about yourself.](#)

So how does it benefit you to continue the daily self deprecation? Well... it doesn't.

Let's hear what [Heather Edwards](#) has to tell us about overcoming regret. We all make mistakes, and it can eat away at us. Consider eight ways to move on.

The Past Impacts the Present and the Future:

Since we can't change the past, we can focus on transforming the present moment and positively impacting the future.

1. **Accept that humans are fallible creatures.** If you are reading this, you are part of the species. You will make mistakes – some big, some small. [Your regret demonstrates that you care](#). This is a good thing. Prolonged regret however, can interfere with all areas of your life – relationships, [career](#), [health](#), etc. Find your mantra. Believe in it. It might sound something like this, “I am a fallible human. I make mistakes. Nevertheless, I am loving and lovable.”
2. **How am I benefitting from self hatred?** If you, the situation, or the people you love are not benefitting from your self-loathing, then stop it. Do something else. What would be better? Consider what you really want – [happiness](#), [love](#), acceptance, achievement, belonging, [generosity](#), [gratitude](#). Focus on that. Stop “should-ing” yourself. Stop rehashing the unchangeable past!
3. **Catch the negative self talk in action!** It can seem so automatic that it's not noticed consciously, at first. Slow down those negative messages. [Hear your internal monologue](#). Do not accept those statements as fact. Deliberately challenge them and change them to positive statements. Perhaps even the opposite thought is closer to the truth. When I say to myself, “I'm an idiot! I never should've done that!” the resulting feeling is [shame](#). When I say, “Whoa, I could've done better. I'll try something else next time.” [The result is empowerment to strive harder in the future.](#)
4. **What triggers those negative thoughts?** Do certain people, situations, or memories trigger the negative self talk? Prepare ahead of time with your mantra and affirming statements so that you are empowered to stay strong when confronted by them. Practice deep breathing, positive imagery, or take a time-out to regroup and rebuild your inner core. “The most common way

people give up their power is by thinking they don't have any." – Alice Walker

5. **How do my thoughts affect my feelings and behaviors?** Buddha, Norman Vincent Peale, Gandhi, Lao Tzu, William Shakespeare, Miles Davis, Steve Jobs, Carl Sagan, and Albert Einstein all recognized the power of thoughts! They shape our intentions, feelings, motivations, and behaviors. [Make your thoughts work FOR you, not against you.](#)
6. **Focus on gratitude.** Start a journal. Write about three things each day that you value and appreciate. Spend more time and energy thinking about the positive than the negative. You'll notice a gradual shift in feeling calmer, freer, and happier.
7. **Who am I and how do I want to be?** [Embrace your positive qualities.](#) Pause and take stock. How did you get to where you are in life? What attracts people to you? What makes you funny, loving, reliable, smart, interesting, or a multitude of other desirable things? Own up to your values and contributions. They exist. [Cherish what makes you special.](#)
8. **Genuinely apologize and forgive yourself.** Regret and resentment keep you a prisoner of negative thoughts and emotions. [Allow yourself the freedom to accept your imperfections, mistakes, and lapses of better judgment.](#) [Apologize to those affected](#) and trust that you will be a stronger, wiser person going forward. "To err is human, to forgive, divine." – Alexander Pope

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Learn Something Useful:

In regards to that-thing-that-you-did... well, [without mistakes](#), you aren't living life. [Without mistakes, you aren't growing, stretching, and changing.](#) Without mistakes, you aren't trying new things and exploring new ideas. There is no perfect human being. [Let it go.](#) Allow it to be part of your past. [Start fresh now.](#) Focus on the future and the life you want!

The Value of Mistakes – Four Teachings:

- "Mistakes are the portals of discovery." – James Joyce
- "Freedom is not worth having if it does not include the freedom to make mistakes." – Mahatma Gandhi
- "We all make mistakes, have struggles, and even regret things in our past. But you are not your mistakes, you are not your struggles, and you are here NOW with the power to shape your day and your future." – Steve Maraboli
- "Good judgment comes from experience, and experience comes from bad judgment." – Rita Mae Brown