



American Heart Association®

Hard Hats with Heart™



Toolbox Talks

Redefining Failure

How to overcome setbacks

Setbacks in life are inevitable, but you can choose to see them as positive lessons instead of demoralizing failures. Learn ways to deal with setbacks and obstacles so you can move forward and achieve your goals. If we practice dealing with setbacks the right way, we can turn our failures into wins.

Here are some do's and don'ts to get over failure

DON'T Dwell on Past Mistakes

- Sometimes when we dwell on our perceived failures, it only makes us more depressed. You don't have time to beat yourself up when you should be figuring out how to keep going. So forgive yourself and move on.

DO Focus on Future Goals

- We may not want to dwell on our failures, but that doesn't mean they don't serve a purpose. A minor setback can actually motivate us to double down and push harder when we're aiming for a long-term achievement.

DON'T Stubbornly "Stick with It" - Instead "Adjust"

- Small setbacks are one thing, but there are times when you need to admit that your plan is not working. Try reframing your setbacks as nothing more than failed experiments, where the number of tries isn't what's important.

Frequently Asked Questions:

How do I not get discouraged from hitting bumps in the road?

Pause and take a new approach. Elon Musk once said "If things aren't failing, you aren't innovating enough".⁷

Discussion Questions:

- What is one setback you've had recently, and how can you reframe it to motivate yourself

⁷Wilkins A. 3 Times Elon Musk Failed So, So, So Badly. Inverse Website. <https://www.inverse.com/article/38615-elon-musk-biggest-failures>. Updated November 22, 2017. Accessed February 22, 2018.