

Befriend Your Failures

Written by Lillian Chebosi
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"It is important to use the past to learn from our mistakes. Or if we have done well in the past, it is time for us to look at why and build on our successes." Johnson Spencer, author of The Present.

Every day offers us opportunities to fail in different areas of life. In spite of all of our good intentions, we are prone to sometimes make bad choices, wrong judgments and lose focus. We don't always get it right in our work, in our relationships and in the general business of our lives. You may have lost money in a bad investment; lost your job or a promotion opportunity; or failed an exam. You may have failed to be there for a friend when he or she needed you most; or said hurtful things in a moment of heated emotions to people you hold dear. We can't help it but get embarrassed and ashamed of ourselves when we fail. However, if handled well, failures can be stepping stones for future successes.

Sometimes we learn from our mistakes, sometimes we don't. In instances where we fail to learn from our failures, we consciously or subconsciously choose one of two options. We either hold on to past mistakes or ignore them. Firstly, when we hold on to the past, we beat ourselves over it and hang on to our past failures as if they define who we are. I realize that the reason we hang on to our past failures is because we do not learn from them. It is hard to let go of the past if we have not learned from it. We deny ourselves the chance to live to our full potential when we hang on to the past. Secondly, when we ignore our failures, we behave in a manner that shows that we don't want to think about the mistake we made and want to move on as though it never happened. By doing this we don't learn from our mistake and enlist ourselves as obvious candidates for making the same or a similar mistake in future. We need to squarely look at the mistake and learn all that there is to learn so that we don't repeat it.

There is something valuable to learn from your failure. Learn from it and then let go of it. Look at a mistake you made and admit how you feel about it. And then realize how you could do things differently now. Admit that you cannot change the past but you can learn from it. When the same situation arises, you can do things differently. When we behave in the same way, we get the same results. But when we behave differently, we get different results. We afford ourselves the possibility to get the results we want.

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The fact is that we are bound to fail from time to time, however elaborate we make out our plans to be. It helps to admit this and choose to befriend our failures rather than let them distract us from our goals. If we have not learnt from the past, we are not ready to create the future we want. When we befriend our failures, it becomes easier to quickly rise up after a fall. Because then we know that our failure does not define us; that despite our shortcomings, we are made for greatness. Choose to live a life that is free of regrets by acknowledging that you have made, and will continue to make mistakes. Get past them by picking out the lessons you need to learn.

Lillian Chebosi