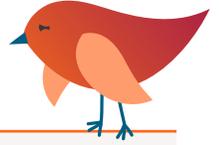


## Handling setbacks without self-blame

This document was developed in partnership with the PNH community and Dr. Guy Winch, psychologist and renowned expert in the science of emotional health.



### The PNH effect

Life throws curveballs, and it's never easy to deal with setbacks, especially while managing life with PNH. You may feel tired or forgetful and blame yourself for the situation. Setbacks can be disappointing and demoralizing, but they also contain a treasure trove of information about ways to improve. So how can you become a 'Failure Detective,' discovering your blind spots and increasing your likelihood of future success? Let's take a look.

### Three steps to make a change

# 1

#### Act like a detective and look for clues

To identify your weaknesses and catch blind spots, you must think like a detective and analyze a setback like a 'crime scene.' This means looking for clues and facts without adding judgment.

By adopting the mindset of 'just the facts please,' you can focus on finding clues and patterns without beating yourself up about them.

- **Choose a recent setback or failure** — preferably one associated with a goal or task you're still working toward, such as communicating something sensitive to your partner, a home project, or a professional ambition. Write it down.

*Example: "I got a negative performance evaluation at work."*

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- **Then, write down your current understanding of why the setback occurred.** Focus on reasons theoretically within your control. For example, you might have missed a work deadline because you were waiting on a vendor. While that piece might not be in your control, whether you use that vendor again is — so include it.

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## 2

### Uncover your blind spots

Now that you have ideas about what went wrong, let's focus on what could be improved. While all people and goals are distinct, there are some 'usual suspects' you should always examine. Below are the most common ones. Consider how each of them might have impacted your recent setback and, even if they didn't, whether tweaking your approach might be helpful going forward.

- **Poor planning:** How much time did you spend planning? Was it enough? Was your objective clear? *Example:* You might not think planning is important when having a conversation with your partner about a sensitive topic. After all, you know what you want to say, so what is there to plan? However, whenever bringing up a sensitive topic, it's best to think about what you're hoping to achieve: do you want them to understand, apologize, or take action? This can help you craft talking points in a more targeted and effective way.
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- **Inadequate preparation:** Were you well prepared? Did you skip steps? Was there any chance these steps could have reduced anxiety?
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- **Weak execution:** How well thought-out was your approach? Were you consistent? Did you track progress? When did the first sign of a problem appear? Did you make adjustments? What can you do to not miss signs in the future?
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## 3

### Work to catch your 'usual suspects'

Once you've answered the above questions, make a list of items you need to pay attention to in the future. Don't assume you'll remember and catch them just because you see them now — blind spots are just that — blind spots. Use your list whenever you pursue goals/tasks, so you can immediately catch and correct your 'usual suspects.'

#### REMEMBER!

Mistakes are a natural part of life, but also an opportunity to learn and grow. Be kind to yourself during the process!



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