



# STOPPING SELF-SABOTAGE

5-Step Strategy to Stop  
Self-Sabotaging Yourself Forever



Winning Ways Within© Publication

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A Publication

By

**WINNING WAYS WITHIN©**

# Intro

How are you getting ahead? Or are you? Is it possible you are self-sabotaging yourself to the point where you cannot possibly succeed?

This is an uncomfortable question and one which requires a hard look at yourself and what you've been doing. Self-sabotage is more common than you think. This can look like something simple, such as procrastination. It can also be incredibly complex, involving many different behaviors all guaranteed to keep you from getting ahead.

To achieve your fullest potential, you're going to need a guide. The good news? You're in luck. What follows is a five-step strategy guaranteed to stop self-sabotage forever.

# Why Are You Doing This?

The first step to dealing with self-sabotage involves understanding why you were trying to hold yourself back, to begin with. For example, is this something that has to do with fear? What are the other, more complex emotions involved?

To get to the bottom of this behavior, start by interviewing yourself. Ask these questions:

- How does my life change if I succeed right now?
- What am I going to have to give up were I to succeed?
- What kind of person do I have to become in order to succeed?
- Who might I lose from my life if I succeed?
- What is the benefit of the status quo?
- What questions or changes can I avoid by staying where I am?

And none of these are comfortable questions. After all, we're supposed to love success. Don't we want to be someone bigger and better than we are right now? Don't we want to accomplish great things with our lives? Isn't success supposed to be the high point of your life?

What you might not realize is, it's not uncommon to fight for the status quo. Staying where you are is comfortable, even when it isn't. This is the reason why many people stay in abusive relationships. While they know the person they are with is not good for them, they at least understand it. Leaving an abuser might mean having to go into a worse situation. In their minds, the risk is not worth the potential outcome, even when they're told their life will be better without the other person.

While this seems like an extreme example, it's not. Success means having more expectations placed on you. It might mean a lifestyle change. It might mean

different problems you don't know how to answer. This is why it's so important to understand why you're self-sabotaging in the first place.

# What's the Alternative?

OK, so we're self-sabotaging because we're frightened. Holding back is filling a need for comfort, security, or something else entirely. By now, you should have a pretty good idea of just what this is. So, ask yourself, what's a better way to fill the same need?

The problem with success is that we're talking about going someplace where we haven't been before. So how do we know what's going to make us feel comfortable in this new world we're venturing into? The answer is pretty simple. You start by talking to other people who've already been there/done that. Find out how they've coped. Ask what helps make them comfortable with the changes in their lives.

If you're having trouble finding people to talk to, there are plenty of resources online. Look up biographies of people who have had similar goals. See how they've dealt with their success.

But the best-case scenario? Find a mentor. Being able to talk to someone personally about these issues can be very helpful.

No matter what you do, it's important to find an alternative that will provide the same needs emotionally so you can feel comfortable with the idea of moving forward.

# What Can Go Wrong?

When you're working through self-sabotage, one of the most important steps is this one: You have to prepare for those times when the self-sabotaging behavior creeps up again. The sad thing? No matter how much you wish otherwise, these behaviors will come back until you establish the new habits to replace them. So, what are you going to do about it?

## **Think it Through**

First, recognize which self-sabotaging behaviors are likely to crop up. Which ones are your go-to? For example, if you know, you're more apt to avoid confrontation when you're tired or stressed, you might want to address these issues when you know you're going into a situation where confrontation is likely to happen.

To continue with this example, if meeting with your boss tends to put you on the defensive and you start apologizing rather than stand up for yourself, you might want to make sure you get enough sleep before your next big meeting with your boss, especially since you know being tired makes you avoid confrontation, which might be necessary for this particular meeting.

This example might seem simplistic, but you get the idea. The key here is the plan for when situations go wrong.

## **Guarantee a Safety Net**

What can you do to offset or mitigate the self-defeating behaviors? Is there research you can do beforehand or some other kind of preparation that will make it impossible to fall back into the world of making excuses or not even trying? In our previous example, making sure you got enough sleep before having that meeting with your boss was the safety net. Self-care should be

at the top of the list of things that will help keep you from most self-defeating behaviors.

### **Create Support**

Sometimes the biggest reason we fall back into self-defeating behaviors is that we don't have enough support around us to help us through making big changes. Enlisting the help of friends and coworkers creates accountability and gives us a team that will help keep us from falling.

# Become Uncomfortable

Sometimes, no matter how much we wish otherwise, we're not going to be able to mitigate the feelings which make us want to hold back. There comes a time when we have to want something enough to be willing to be uncomfortable. In our extreme example of the abusive relationship, frequently, what happens is the abused person only leaves after something has happened, which is so dire and scary they were willing to risk the unknown rather than stay put.

Of course, you don't want to reach this point. So, you start by training yourself to be uncomfortable. You let yourself know it's OK to be uncertain. How do you do this? You pick small challenges that make you uncomfortable.

For example, someone who is afraid of heights might want to go to a high place to get used to them. But for the greatest success, they need to start with small challenges rather than climbing to the top of the highest cliff where they will only terrify themselves. To get used to heights then, they might stand on the balcony of a house. By accepting the uncomfortable feeling of being this high up until they realize they are safe, they challenge themselves and create an opportunity for success, however small. Once they achieve this goal, they might try to visit someplace a little higher, such as riding a Ferris wheel, and so on until heights no longer bother them.

When you do small things which make you uncomfortable, you very quickly learn nothing bad is going to happen from them. Eventually, the uncomfortable feeling goes away, and being uncomfortable becomes part of the process. At this point, the idea of being uncomfortable will no longer bother you at all.

# Decide What You Want

This step is the simplest and probably the most powerful of all of them. To truly get past your self-defeating behaviors, you have to have a clear vision of what it is you want. There can be no muddled goals. You have to know what you believe in, and why this particular dream means so much to you.

Goals are powerful motivators. Passionate people are people who will fight through anything to get to where they want to go regardless of how hard it is. Look at Martin Luther King Junior as an example. If anyone had a reason to cave in and fall into self-defeating behaviors, it was him. Following his dreams meant being uncomfortable constantly. He was arrested more than 20 times and faced outside pressure to quit on a daily basis.

Of course, not all your dreams are as big and grand as fighting for racial equality, but they're important all the same. Why? Simply because these are the dreams which belong to you.

So, what are you fighting for? What is it you want to happen in your life?

As you move forward, remember to keep your dreams foremost in your mind. If you need more of a visual effect presentation, create a vision board or write out your dream on a piece of paper and stick it on the wall in front of your desk. You'll find it easier to keep going when you keep your eyes on the prize.

# A Final Word

By using these five steps regularly, self-defeating behaviors do not stand a chance. The key here is to initially miss repetition. You are creating new habits to replace old ones. This takes time. Be patient with yourself. Eventually, you're going to find moving ahead comes so naturally, you will forget what it was like to hold yourself back.