



**PENNY HOLBURN COACHING**

*It's about You and Results*

## Bounce Back from Setbacks

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We all experience setbacks in life. Many, many times, things will go wrong, not turn out the way we want, or just plain blow up in our faces. The older you are and the more things you have tried the more often you are likely to have had setbacks.

Yet we don't seem to get this. We look at all these successful people who seem to have made it (and some of them have made it) and wonder how it was so easy. Well, it wasn't easy. It took blood, sweat, tears, and ignoring a whole heap of people laughing at them and telling them to quit, before they made it. This is one of the problems I have with short articles (as opposed to biographies and autobiographies of successful people). Short articles make it seem so easy. When you read the life story, you realise how hard life is.

If you read various articles you will find many different pieces of advice on what to do to bounce back. ***I think the number one factor that determines whether you bounce back or not, is the story you tell yourself about why you didn't make it.***



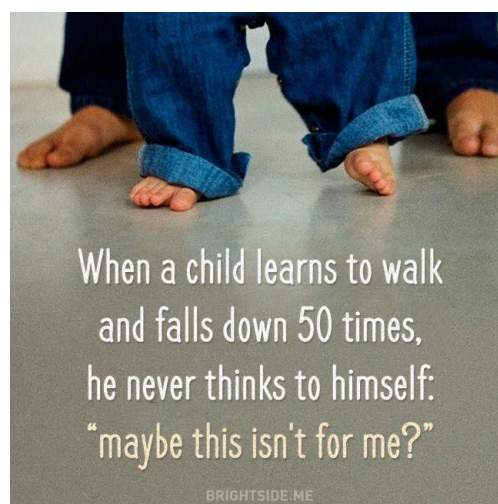
We all have scripts running through our minds, consciously and unconsciously. These are stories we have about how the world works and how we work in the world based on what we have learned from all the people we have interacted with in our lives, all of our interpretations of our observations, and everything we have read and listened to. In particular, what we learned from our childhood is very

strong and shapes what we learn from then on. If you have a script running through your head where you view a setback as a failure, or perhaps proof that this is not what you should be doing, or that there is something wrong with you as a person, it is going to be very difficult to bounce back. Such negative and limiting (and untrue) beliefs will get you to give up as fast as possible because these beliefs lead to a lot of pain for you. If you view setbacks as normal, as part of life, as part of success, and simply feedback that you need to learn more, try a different approach, or get more help and support, then bouncing back will be a lot easier.

So, think about the stories you tell yourself when you experience a setback. Most people who are successful have scripts that lead to them persevering, rather than condemning themselves when setbacks occur.

If you have scripts that look something like the following, then a setback is going to be experienced as a crippling, humiliating experience where you end up labelling yourself as pathetic and a loser.

- "I always mess up. Nothing I try ever works out."
- "Who am I to think that I could do this?"
- "My teachers told me I would amount to nothing and they seem to be right."
- "Clearly this is not for me. I should have got this right the first or second time."
- "If this was meant to be, it would have been easy/ easier. This is hard and so this can't be meant for me."
- "Other people are looking at me and thinking what a failure I am." (The truth is most other people are too wrapped up in their lives to think too much about yours.)
- "I don't have the skills and experience to do this, and I am too old to learn to do it."
- "I just have bad luck all the time. Things will never work out for me."
- "I am a loser."



Then think about how much easier it will be to bounce back with better scripts. Not only will you bounce back and be motivated to bounce back, but you will display the one characteristic most associated with success – perseverance. Rather tell yourself:

- "Almost no one gets it right the first time. The most talented Olympic swimmers did not jump into the pool the first time and swim well. It takes many practice sessions to learn something. And even longer to get good at it."
- "People fail many, many times before they get it right. Often they fail thousands of times before they succeed. This is in fact quite normal and true for most successful people."
- "This time it didn't work out, but I haven't failed. I just have learned a way that doesn't work."
- "Every time I try this I will learn more and more about what to do and what not to do. Then I simply have to get better."
- "Persistence, not perfection, is the key to success."
- "Every setback has within it learnings and opportunities for future success. I just need to find them."
- "Trying things is good. I learn more each time."
- "A setback is not a negative experience. It is telling me that I am making progress forward in my life but am not there yet."
- "The only way to fail in life is to not try."
- "Let me talk to others who have achieved the goals I want to and get their advice and input and suggestions."

Because we learned our past scripts, our stories, we can learn new ones. You are not stuck with your programming, you can change your thinking, and if your thoughts are not giving you the life you want, then you definitely do want to change your thoughts. Next time you feel like you are experiencing setbacks, stop thinking about what is wrong with you, and start thinking about how you need to change your story to one that gives you a leg up, rather than breaks you down. Think about how successful people think, and if you need to, go and ask them. If you change your narrative, you can change your life a lot.