



# From SETBACKS to SEASONS

HOW TO MAKE THE MOST OF  
THE YEAR DESPITE ROUGH PATCHES



# FROM SETBACKS TO SEASONS

Turning challenges into opportunities for a fulfilling year

By

MYRESTARTLIFE

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# To Recover from a Tough Year, Don't Be Too Proud to Ask for Help

If you're finding it difficult to overcome a rough patch, remember that it's okay to ask for help. This is not a sign of weakness like many people think. Can it be difficult to ask for a helping hand? Undoubtedly. That doesn't mean it's the wrong thing to do.

Asking for support means you're being honest about your situation. You've tried everything possible to recover and realize your solo efforts will only take you so far. If you have wonderful people in your life who would be happy to help you overcome some hardship, you're in a situation that some people don't have.

Unfortunately, the world is full of individuals with no one to assist them when needed. Imagine someone who is starving and can't find any food. That's a terrible reality for people around the world.

Then imagine a farmer who finds himself hungry. His crops don't grow, and he has nothing to eat. He doesn't know what to do. Then one day, he looks at his fields and is surprised to see that all the seeds he planted have delivered acres and acres of delicious fruits and vegetables.

But he doesn't eat. He stares at his crops day after day. They eventually wither and die. He's back to having nothing to eat, and his hunger continues.

## Don't Let Available Help Die on the Vine

Don't be like that farmer. Be grateful that there are people and resources to help you overcome your difficulty. Asking for help is a sign of resilience, not weakness. The resilient person who bounces back from adversity quickly uses any tool at her disposal to get her life back on track.

You're going to have tough years. It happens to everyone. Setbacks and hardships are just part of the human condition, whether we like it or not.

So, start cultivating a support team. Be there for others when they need your help. Turn to people with wisdom, knowledge, and experience in the area where you're encountering difficulty. Form a community of people ready to support each other when life inevitably hands them some serious issue they have to deal with.

Bouncing back from a tough week, month, or year sometimes means asking for help. Don't be too proud to let others help you recover from some setback. Then be there for others when they need a helping hand as well.

# Was Your Past Year Difficult? Practicing Gratitude Can Help You Recover

Imagine that you're back in school. You are standing in the cafeteria lunch line. As usual, all the children in front of you receive the same types of food and portions as everyone else. Your classmates just blindly and silently move through the line waiting for the next plop of food onto their plate.

You notice that today the school is serving beef stew. You really like it. It tastes amazing. Whatever they do to it, however, they make it, the beef stew is a wonderfully flavorful experience. So, you hatch a plan to get more than everyone else is receiving.

You know the person doling out the stew is the head cook in the cafeteria. As he dips his ladle, you exclaim that this beef stew is the best you've ever had. You go on and on and praise his abilities as an overseer of the cafeteria. You discover that he actually made the beef stew himself! This is perfect. You lean over the counter and quietly ask him if there's any way you can get some extra since you love it so much.

He returns your lean and, in a calm tone, tells you to come back after everyone else has gone through the line. You head to a table and wipe out the delicious stew.

You meet up with your co-conspirator when all your schoolmates have been served lunch. With a big smile, he pours a huge bowl of stew, and you couldn't be happier. You deliver profuse and heartfelt thanks and learn a very important lesson.

## Being Grateful Has Its Rewards

You expressed gratitude and were rewarded handsomely. You can use this natural law to your advantage if you're trying to get past a difficult year or even a longer period.

**Express gratitude every day. Make it a practice that you schedule rather than just trying to remember to do it.**

Sometimes things really do stink. It's as if life is going out of its way to use you as its doormat. When you think a bad experience is over, here comes something else you have to deal with.

When this happens, it can lead you to believe there's no end in sight. But there really is. And it begins with looking at your life and finding things to be grateful for.

Fortunately, the fickle finger of fate rewards people who practice gratitude regularly. It's like your eyes open up, and you start to see new things. You recognize more and more wonderful aspects of your life. This can help you start the recovery process, making it much easier to bounce back from a rough year.

# Bouncing Back Means Accentuating the Positive and Eliminating the Negative

Bad things happen. You probably know this. You may have had to endure hardship in your life on different occasions. When we cause our own difficulties, it's important to own that fact. Admitting that we were the reason we had to get through a tough time is important so that we learn from that lesson and don't make the same mistakes in the future.

Sometimes though, things are out of our control. Life decides to test us and see what we're made of.

You have a bad day at work. Sometimes your on-the-job experience might be nearly impossible for a week or a month. Then there's that situation you wouldn't wish on your worst enemy, enduring an entire year of setbacks, either on the job or in your personal life.

If you're trying to bounce back from a rough year, we're here to help. You might be in the middle of a difficult time, and you want to start to turn the corner and get your life back on a positive path. The following advice can help you in either of those situations.

## Accentuate the Positive

That's the advice given to you in the title of a popular song from the 1950s. The idea is simple. And though it wasn't written specifically to help someone recover from a tough time, that's exactly what this mindset does.

Look at the problem you're facing or that you've just recovered from. What happened? Answer that question in its simplest form. Make sure you're honest with yourself in case you cause difficulty.

Whether you are at fault or not, what positives can you take away from the experience? You probably did some things that kept the situation from worsening. If you're looking back over an entire year of a less than-enjoyable experience, were there some memorable or positive days?

You should also look at your gifts and the things you do well. Put them to work. Use them. Throw your strengths at a problem if you're still facing it. If something is in your rearview mirror and you're trying to recover mentally and in some other aspect, what strengths and positive character traits do you have that can help you do that?

### **The Negative Has Got to Go**

Now it's time to eliminate negative influences, thoughts, and behaviors. This is the logical flipside to accentuating the positive. If you wake up tired and feeling poorly every morning, is it because of your late-night habits? In other words, stop doing the things that create issues you're trying to put behind you.

When you start thinking negatively, recognize that happening. Give that negative thought a positive spin. If there are people, places, or things that are keeping you from recovering after a difficult time, can you remove them from your life?

If you want to recover from a setback, you can speed up the process by accentuating and recognizing the positive things in your life. Then eliminate and move on from negative influences, thoughts, and behaviors.

# To Bounce Back After a Rough Year, Just Remember This

We all have difficult times. That's a normal part of life. Fortunately, many of the setbacks you encounter will be short-lived. You have a rough day or week, or maybe a month or so. Encountering and overcoming short-term difficulties might deal a blow to your self-confidence, health, or checking account, but it usually doesn't last long.

That's not the case when life gives you an entire year that's tough to deal with.

You may have gone through such a time in 2020. The global pandemic caused by COVID-19 dramatically changed the way we all had to live our daily lives. In 2008 the Global Financial Crisis destroyed the financial health of millions of people worldwide overnight. It was the worst financial crisis since 1929's Great Depression, which triggered a global economic collapse.

Those are just a few examples of events that began a difficult year for many people. Sometimes, it takes many years to bounce back from global, local, or personal difficulties. One thing that can help you recover from a tough year you'd like to forget is to remember these three words.

## **Change Is Possible**

Tell yourself that because it's true. Look at any time when things weren't going so well. They didn't last forever. Every event has a lifespan, both good and bad experiences.

Tell yourself those three words every morning to get back on your feet after a difficult year. Write it down on a small card and keep it in your wallet or purse. Keep this reminder where you can see it frequently, at your workstation, in your vehicle, and in your home.

**Change is possible, and you can make it happen positively.**

Recognize that some things are going to be out of your control. You can't predict, prepare for or stop something like a global health pandemic. For most people, the worldwide financial crashes of 1929 and 2008 happened out of the blue. While a few financial analysts and investors probably saw them coming, most people didn't.

**These things are going to happen. You can't control them. The one thing you can control every minute of every day of your life is how you respond to hardship.**

Begin every day knowing that you can change a tough year and make it the beginning of a wonderful time. When you get knocked down, it's up to you to decide when you will get up and make amazing things happen in your life.

It may look difficult now because of the year you encountered. Just remind yourself of the times in the past when you were resilient, and recovered from a substantial hardship, embrace that mindset, and remember that change is possible.

# A Positive Attitude Can Help You Recover from a Difficult Year

Do you know anyone that always seems to be in a good mood? Sometimes those people have difficult lives. Yet they continue to have genuine smiles on their face. They look at the world in a positive way. Wouldn't it be great to go through life like that?

You can if you want to. Developing a positive attitude is a choice. You choose to be positive and have hope for a wonderful future. Make humor a regular part of your life. They say laughter is the best medicine, and don't you feel better when you're laughing and smiling than when you're crying and frowning?

If you're trying to recover from a tough year, are you trying to overcome a financial situation? Was the problem a health issue, or are you finding it difficult to get over losing a loved one? No matter the situation, having a positive, upbeat outlook is vital for your recovery.

## **Smiling In the Face of Hardship Shows Confidence in Yourself**

Resilient people believe in themselves. They bounce back quickly from life's many difficulties. This is because they believe in their own strengths and know they're capable of conquering future hardships because they've done it before.

When faced with another dose of setbacks, they just smile. They understand that a positive outlook will always give them the best chance at recovery.

Resilience comes from moving past hardship and failure. Maybe the difficult year you are trying to cope with is the first time you've encountered something so devastating. That means you might not have much resilience to lean on. If that's the case, keeping a positive outlook is still important.

Please think of the times you've conquered a problem, big or small because you knew you could handle it. That's thinking positively. Now think of the times you failed to succeed or produce a positive result. What was your mindset? You might have suffered from negative thinking, telling yourself that you'd never be able to recover or that things like this always happen to you.

### **Your Life Reflects Your Thoughts**

Your thoughts lead to your actions. Your actions create your outcome. That outcome is the life you experience. Be careful of negative thoughts. When they pop up, give them a positive slant. This not only helps you recover from difficulties in your past. It prepares your present and future for a healthier, more positive experience.



## MyRestartLife™ Mini Workbook

# Affirmations for Resilience and Renewal

- I am capable of turning every setback into a season of growth.
- I give myself permission to rest without guilt.
- I release what I cannot control and focus on what I can.
- Every day, I choose clarity, balance, and purpose.
- I am worthy of peace, progress, and renewal.

A musical staff consisting of ten horizontal orange lines. To the left of the staff, there are ten empty square boxes, each with a thin orange border. In the center of the staff, there is a large, abstract, light blue and brown blob shape. The blob has a dark brown, wavy, mustache-like shape on its upper part and a large, dark brown, stylized musical note shape (a 'G' clef with a vertical stem and a note head) at the bottom. The blob overlaps the lines of the musical staff.



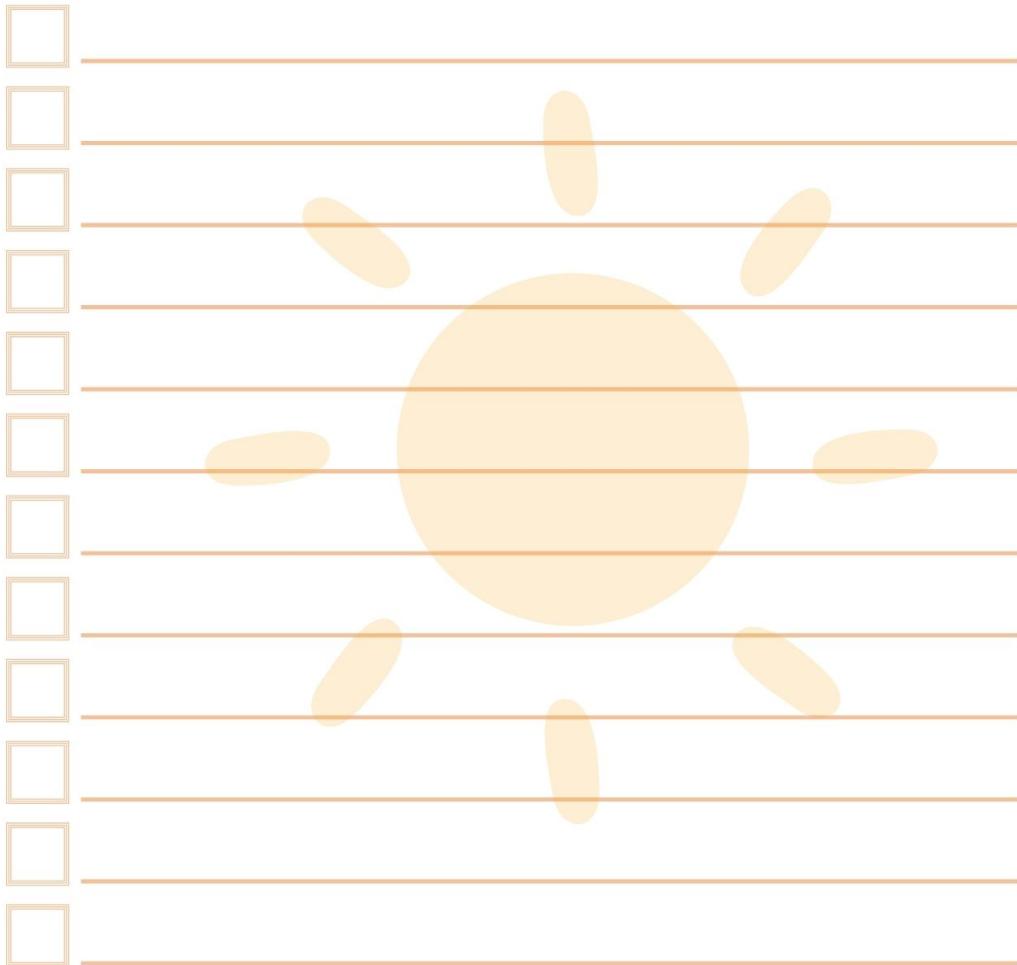
## Reflection Prompts

1. What is one thing stressing me that I can release or set down today?
2. What does a 'balanced day' look like for me right now?
3. Which area of my life is calling for more attention or compassion?
4. How can I create more space for myself this week?
5. What recent challenge taught me something valuable?



## Tips for Stress, Time Management, and Rest

- Break tasks into smaller steps to avoid overwhelm.
- Use a simple 'Top 3' list each day to stay focused.
- Schedule downtime like an appointment—non-negotiable and protected.
- Practice mindful breaks: 2 minutes of breathing resets your system.
- Track your stress signals so you can respond early, not react late.





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