

HOW TO:

# Fail Forward



**HEALING** SPACES



“

I have not failed. I've just found  
ten thousand ways that won't  
work.

THOMAS EDISON

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Healing Spaces Founder, Kelsey Grimm

# About Kelsey Grimm

Hello, my name is Kelsey!

I am the Founder of Kelsey the Counsellor, a counselling influencer brand dedicated to creating a community of mental health resources, and Healing Spaces, a clinical counselling practice based in British Columbia. I strongly believe in the power of the human spirit, the ability to overcome obstacles, and that the phoenix rises from the ashes.

I have witnessed brave people willing to face challenges, willing to learn, and willing to change. I believe my role is to support each person who wishes to grow, grow – who wishes to heal, heal – and who wishes to learn, learn. I support each person uniquely, and together we will face your current life challenges and move through them towards a brighter and better tomorrow.

*xo Kelsey*

# About Healing Spaces



Healing Spaces Office in Kamloops, British Columbia

Healing Spaces provides a warm and welcoming place with our main focus on supporting you move towards the life you dream for yourself! We focus on counselling support for anxiety, depression, grief, trauma, chronic pain, and chronic illness.

We offer counselling to children, youth, adults, couples, parents and families in person in Kamloops , British Columbia and virtually all over British Columbia.

Our team of counsellors are well trained and experienced in multiple areas of counselling with different specialties. We offer in person and virtual counselling options, which allows our team to support you from the comfort and safety of your own home.

# Why are we so fearful of failure?

## Failure becomes internalized

Have you ever had a failure or a flop and then felt like you were a failure? Instead of accepting what we did didn't work, we tend to internalize our failures and attach them to our identity.

Instead of 'oh dear, that was a flop' we think 'oh dear, I am a flop'.

When we internalize what we have done and intertwine it with our identity, we become heavily weighed down with thoughts about not being good enough or never being able to accomplish anything.

Instead of separating this 'flop' as an isolated event, when we internalize it we start to think that everything we do will 'flop'.

## Internalizing failure can lead us to shame

It is almost a direct flight from internalizing failure to feeling shame. Shame is heavy. Shame is what we feel when we think 'I am bad' or a close relative of that. Shame can knock the wind out of us and can pull us into darkness. It tries to convince us that we are worthless and that we will never not be worthless.

When we internalize failure and interpret something that didn't work as we didn't work, we are on our way to experiencing shame.



I try something



Something doesn't go to plan



I feel disappointed  
I feel deflated  
I feel like a failure



I feel curious  
I feel frustrated  
I feel determined



I collapse  
I can't try again  
I'm embarrassed



I take a pause  
I wonder what went wrong  
I try again



I give up  
I feel lost in shame  
I feel fear of future  
failures

**Where is the courage?**  
**Where is the fear?**

# Inverse Midas Touch

Why does everything I touch turn to muck?

Catastrophizing follows failure!

Even if we do 99 things that go well and succeed, we focus on the 1 thing that didn't work the way we wanted it to. We scrutinize ourselves and zone in on what we did wrong and why we are the root of this 1 thing going array. We then think everything we do that follows will also go array

This is catastrophizing.

Fear of failure prevents us from taking chances

Think about something you are scared to try because you are fearful it won't work or that you will fail.

Think about that same thing and wonder...  
... 'what if everything goes right'!



Why don't we notice the 99 things that went well?

Our brains are wired to look for danger or things that could go wrong. This isn't innately harmful. However it can become harmful when we hyperfocus on this and interpret this outside things that could go wrong as connected to us.



# How to fail forward

## What is failing forward?

Failing forward takes immense courage and strength. It takes courage and strength because we need to acknowledge that what we do doesn't always go perfectly. What we do doesn't always go to plan. Sometimes that is because of something we did wrong actively and sometimes we are caught in the cross fire and our role is more passive.

Either way when failure comes along instead of thinking it stinks, we can interact with it as our teacher. We can use it to propel ourselves forward! We can use it to learn from our experience and do something different next time.

Who do you want to win?  
The failure or you?

Sometimes it is easier to shut everything down and call it a day if we have had an 'epic fail'. Sometimes we need a pause to recalibrate after whatever took place. We might be feeling embarrassed or confused.

But if you stop there, failure wins.

You loose your chance to try something new.

You loose your chance to learn something about yourself or life.

You miss out on digging deep and over coming.

You miss out on developing new strengths, courage and empowerment.

# Activity

## STEP 1: Plan to Fail – exposure therapy

You will need:

- An idea of something new you can try safely and fail intentionally

What you do:

- 1) Choose your brave outfit!
- 2) Breathe in and out.
- 3) Choose a safe buddy.
- 4) Talk out deciding on what to fail. It can be the same or different. Notice any sensation (tension or fluidity) in your body rising. Notice what your thoughts are telling you about failure as you are talking about it.
- 5) FAIL DAY Choose a day to both action your failures.
- 6) Decide a date and time to come back together and discuss what it was like to fail.

## STEP 2: Reflection

Conversation with buddy or journal entry

- What did you learn?
- Do you shut down or become overly buzzy?
  - How did you respond when it started to fail?
- What was hard about failing?
- What was easy about failing?
- What did you learn?
- What would you do the same/differently next time?

Expanding on this knowledge

- How can you use what you learned to other areas of life?
- How scary was it to fail?
- Could you separate the fail from your identity because it was planned? How can you bring this knowledge with you when unplanned failures happen?

# Resources



Playlist



Book/Article



App



Video



Podcast



## Failing Forward

Motivational Video

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XtEyfPUvPw8>



## Ted-EdX Uno: The Art of Failing Forward

[Sasha shillcutt](#)

[https://www.ted.com/talks/sasha\\_shillcutt\\_resilience\\_the\\_art\\_of\\_failing\\_forward](https://www.ted.com/talks/sasha_shillcutt_resilience_the_art_of_failing_forward)



## Physician Philosopher. Episode 11

The Fear of Failure

<https://thephysicianphilosopher.com/tpp/the-fear-of-failure/>



## Motivation Mix

Spotify

<https://open.spotify.com/playlist/37i9dQZF1DXdxcBWUjkbcy>



## Zehra Rizvi

Fail Forward: Building the foundations for Innovation

<https://socialprotection.org/discover/blog/fail-forward-building-foundations-innovation>



# THANK YOU

Feel free to reach out if you have any questions! I am looking forward to chatting with you!



[kelsey@healingspaces.center](mailto:kelsey@healingspaces.center)



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778-860-3120



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