A PRACTICAL GUIDE

Grow Your Mindset Today

Nine simple, research-backed ways to quiet self-doubt, drop old beliefs and grow stronger from every setback.



www.forwardstepsblog.com

Your thoughts aren't facts.
And your mindset isn't fixed.

A few small habits help you catch old thinking and choose thoughts that move you forward.



MINDSETS CAN SHIFT

<1 hour

online lesson teaching that abilities can grow raised grades for lower achievers, in a US study of 12,490 teens

Yeager et al., Nature, 2019



WE PLAY IT TOO SAFE

20,000+

coin flips settled real dilemmas. Those told to make a change were happier six months later.

Levitt, Review of Economic Studies, 2021

7

studies found that coaching yourself by name, not "I", eased distress and helped people perform under stress

Kross et al., Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 2014



HOW THIS GUIDE WORKS

Three parts, nine shifts

PART 1

1

Catch the old story

Spot the slide, find the roots, check the facts.

PART 2

2

Choose a new one

Add "yet", name the critic, say a new line.

PART 3

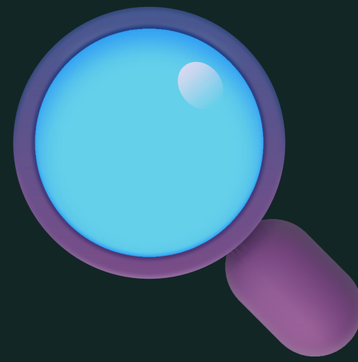
3

Grow through it

See the upside, learn, pick your people.



1



Catch the old story

Notice the thoughts and beliefs that keep you small.

SHIFT 1 · CATCH THE OLD STORY

Spot the slide

Negative thinking feeds on itself. One gloomy thought invites the next. The first step is simply noticing when it starts.

TRY IT TODAY

- ✓ Ask: when did I last feel truly upbeat? What changed?
- ✓ Ask a friend for an honest read on your mood lately.

1. 👂 Notice the gloomy thought as it shows up
2. 🪙 Drop a coin in your bad-thoughts jar
3. 🔄 Say a fairer version out loud



10:00

SHIFT 2 · CATCH THE OLD STORY

Find the roots

Many beliefs were handed to you by family, school or one bad day. Write down three that hold you back, and where each one came from.

OLD BELIEF	WHERE FROM?
I'm bad at math	→ A teacher, age 9
I'm not creative	→ One harsh comment
Money is scarce	→ Family worries

TRY IT TODAY

- ✓ Set a 10-minute timer and write without editing.
- ✓ Ask of each one: does this still fit who I am today?



SHIFT 3 · CATCH THE OLD STORY

Check the facts

Treat each old belief as a guess, not a fact. Look for evidence on both sides. A belief with no real proof is much easier to let go.

OLD STORY



"I always mess things up, so why even try?"

→

THE EVIDENCE



"I've learned hard things before, like driving and my job."

TRY IT TODAY

- ✓ List three times the belief turned out to be wrong.
- ✓ Ask: would I say this to a friend I care about?

2

Choose a new one

Swap limiting thoughts for ones that help you grow.



> **I'm not there yet. But I'm on my way.**

SHIFT 4 · CHOOSE A NEW ONE

You can grow

A fixed mindset says you are what you are. A growth mindset says skills, confidence and results can all be built, starting wherever you are now.

TRY IT TODAY

- ✓ Swap "I'm not good at this" for "I'm still learning this."
- ✓ Pick one skill and practice it for ten minutes today.



THE POWER OF ONE WORD

Yet

Adding it turns "I can't do this" into "I can't do this yet." Same moment, a whole new mindset.



SHIFT 5 · CHOOSE A NEW ONE

Name the critic

That voice listing reasons not to try? Give it a silly name. When it pipes up, answer it: "Not today, Larry." Then take the next step.

TRY IT TODAY

- ✓ Pick a name that makes you smile.
- ✓ Coach yourself by your own name: "You've got this, Sam."



Name it and the volume drops.



🌱
I'm learning

🔑
Not yet

🧭
I get to choose

🚀
Let's try

🌞
Fresh start

💪
I've got this

SHIFT 6 · CHOOSE A NEW ONE

Say a new line

For each old belief, write a new line that is present tense, positive and believable to you. Say it out loud morning and night.

TRY IT TODAY

- ✓ Keep it believable: "I'm getting better" beats "I'm perfect."
- ✓ Stick it where you'll see it: mirror, phone or desk.



3

Grow through it

Use change and setbacks as fuel to keep growing.



SHIFT 7 · GROW THROUGH IT

Ask what could go right

Your brain clings to the familiar and pictures everything that could go wrong. Treat those fears as suggestions, then picture what goes right.

TRY IT TODAY

- ✓ For every "what if it fails?" ask "what if it works?"
- ✓ Write down the best realistic outcome and reread it.



Answer the doubt with the upside.



SHIFT 8 · GROW THROUGH IT

Let setbacks teach you

Setbacks are part of any life worth living. Skip the blame and ask what this one can teach you. Then give yourself credit for having tried.



TRY IT TODAY

- ✓ Be kind to yourself, the way you would to a good friend.
- ✓ Ask: what will I do differently next time?

KINDNESS WORKS

4

experiments found self-compassion after a mistake made people more motivated to improve, not less

Breines & Chen, Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin, 2012



SHIFT 9 · GROW THROUGH IT

Pick your people

Spend time with people who lift you up, and less with those who drag you down. Once a month, check which beliefs still serve you.

1

belief check a month



Keep what helps.
Update the rest.

TRY IT TODAY

- ✓ Book a monthly belief check-in on your calendar.
- ✓ Celebrate every small shift you notice in yourself.

YOUR PLAN

Pick two to start today

- 🪙 Start a bad-thoughts jar
- 📝 Write down three old beliefs
- 🔍 Trace where each belief came from
- 📋 Check one belief against the facts
- 🌱 Add "yet" to one "I can't"
- 🙈 Give your inner critic a silly name
- 💬 Write one new line to say aloud
- 🌟 Ask "what if it goes right?"
- 💡 Find the lesson in a recent setback
- 🗓️ Book a monthly belief check-in



BONUS

Your 7-day mindset log

Print this page and fill it in each evening. Every thought you catch counts.

DAY	THOUGHT I CAUGHT	FAIRER VERSION	NEW LINE I SAID	ONE SMALL WIN
Monday				
Tuesday				
Wednesday				
Thursday				
Friday				
Saturday				
Sunday				



IMPORTANT

When to get extra support

- Low mood that hangs on most days for two weeks or more
- An inner voice that feels cruel or won't let up, not just annoying
- Losing interest in people or things you used to enjoy
- Finding it hard to get through work, home or daily tasks

Talking to your doctor, a counselor or someone you trust is a strong, smart step.

This guide is general information, not medical advice.



YOUR NEXT STEP

Start today with *one new thought.*

Pick the shift that feels easiest, catch one old thought today, and give it a fairer, kinder replacement.

Choose your first shift now

SOURCES

The research behind this guide

Yeager DS et al. A national experiment reveals where a growth mindset improves achievement. Nature, 2019.

Levitt SD. Heads or tails: The impact of a coin toss on major life decisions and subsequent happiness. Review of Economic Studies, 2021.

Kross E et al. Self-talk as a regulatory mechanism: How you do it matters. Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 2014.

Breines JG, Chen S. Self-compassion increases self-improvement motivation. Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin, 2012.

