

Welcome to Your Reflection Space

This worksheet was created with care—for anyone moving through something tender, uncertain, or important. Whether you're processing pain, seeking clarity, rebuilding trust, or simply needing space to breathe, you're welcome here.

These worksheets offer gentle tools for reflection—resources that meet you where you are, without pressure or expectation. They're designed to support emotional exploration at your own pace, in your own way.

The mission is simple: To make emotional support more available in a time when many are struggling. To offer free, compassionate resources with no hidden agenda. To help you reconnect with your own voice, in ways that feel safe and steady.

If this mission resonates, feel free to share it. Post it, print it, pass it along. Your share might be someone's first moment of feeling understood.

These worksheets are offered with care, for personal use only. They're here to support your healing—not to rush it. You don't need to finish every section. You don't need to have all the answers. Take what supports you. Leave what doesn't. Your pace, your process, your wellbeing—these come first.

You're not alone. Even if we've never met, this resource is offered with quiet solidarity—holding space, cheering you on, and believing in your capacity to heal.

A Gentle Note on Safety

These worksheets are designed for personal reflection. They are not a substitute for therapy or professional treatment.

If you're in therapy, consider sharing this resource with your therapist before exploring. If you're not in therapy, please reflect in a space that feels emotionally and physically safe.

You might choose to explore alongside someone you trust—a friend, partner, or support person. If that isn't available right now, this worksheet can still be a quiet companion. Go gently. In your own time. In your own way.

Where to Find the Worksheets

If this resource feels meaningful, please share it. Healing is communal—and your share might be someone's first step toward feeling less alone.

These worksheets are shared freely across platforms:

Website: <https://CompassionateConnectionTherapy.co.uk>

Facebook: Compassionate Connection Therapy

TikTok: @rosa.tomassi.bella

Instagram: @connectiontherapyrhl

Let's make emotional support tools free, gentle, and accessible—together.

A Note on Contact

These worksheets are shared freely, but individual support cannot be offered through messages or comments. If you need support, please speak with a therapist or someone you trust. These tools are here to guide gentle exploration—not to replace professional care. Thank you for understanding, and for sharing with kindness.

If You're in Crisis

These worksheets are not for emergencies. If you feel overwhelmed or unsafe, please reach out:

- Samaritans — 116 123 (free, 24/7)
- NHS 111 — urgent mental health advice
- 999 — if you or someone else is at immediate risk

You deserve support, safety, and care.

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New Year's Resolutions Worksheet

A gentle companion for reflection, intention, and growth

Introduction

New Year's resolutions can stir many different feelings. For some, they bring excitement and hope; for others, they may feel daunting, overwhelming, or even heavy. You might notice pressure from social expectations, or perhaps you've tried resolutions before and felt discouraged when they didn't last. All of these experiences are valid.

This worksheet is not about “fixing” yourself or striving for perfection. It is not about setting unrealistic expectations or measuring your worth by achievements. Instead, it is an invitation to pause, reflect, and gently explore what matters to you right now. Think of it less as a list of rules and more as a companion for self-discovery.

Here, you are encouraged to choose intentions that feel kind, manageable, and meaningful. That might mean setting a small daily practice, exploring a value you want to honour, or simply noticing what brings you joy. There is no single “right” way to use this worksheet — it is yours to adapt, reshape, and make personal.

You may find it helpful to:

- **Move slowly:** Take one section at a time and return later if you need space.
- **Stay gentle:** If a question feels too broad, narrow it down to something small and specific (e.g., instead of “What do I want this year?” try “What would help me feel calmer in the mornings?”).
- **Allow flexibility:** Your answers can change over time. Resolutions are living intentions, not fixed contracts.
- **Celebrate tiny steps:** Even the smallest action — like pausing for a breath or writing one word — is progress.

Remember: this is not about comparison or judgment. It is about noticing what feels nourishing for you, in your own life, at your own pace. Whatever you choose — or even if you choose nothing at all — you are already enough.

How to Use This Worksheet

This worksheet is meant to be a companion, not a test. There is no single “right” way to use it — only the way that feels most nourishing for you. You can move through it slowly, revisit sections when you’re ready, or skip parts that don’t feel relevant. Think of it as a collection of gentle invitations rather than instructions.

Here are some ways to make the most of it:

- **Move at your own pace:** You don’t need to finish everything in one sitting. Some people like to reflect a little each day, while others prefer to set aside quiet time once a week. Both are equally valid.
- **Choose your style:** You might write full answers, jot down single words, doodle, or simply pause to think. If you prefer, you can even speak your reflections aloud. The format is flexible — it’s about what helps you connect.
- **Use the prompts as guides, not rules:** Each section offers *open questions* and *sentence starters*.
 - The **open questions** invite deeper reflection and exploration. They’re there to help you think broadly about your values, hopes, and experiences.
 - The **sentence starters** are especially helpful if the open questions feel overwhelming or too big. They give you a gentle way in — you can simply complete the sentence without needing to come up with a full answer. For example, instead of tackling “What matters most to me this year?” you might start with “This year, I want to invite...” and see where it leads.
- **Try the tiny practices:** Each section includes a small grounding exercise. These are designed to be quick resets — like taking three breaths, picturing a joyful moment, or writing one kind sentence to yourself. They can help you pause and reconnect before moving on.
- **Notice the “sciency bits”:** These short explanations show why certain practices work, drawing on psychology and neuroscience. They’re not meant to be heavy or technical, but to reassure you that small steps really do make a difference.
- **Explore the evidence-based strategies:** Techniques like SMART goals, WOOP planning, If-Then intentions, habit tracking, and identity-based framing are woven throughout. They’re here to make your resolutions more achievable, but you can use them as lightly or deeply as you wish.
- **Adapt freely:** If something doesn’t resonate, let it go. If a section sparks a new idea, follow it. This worksheet is yours to shape — a gentle framework, not a rigid plan.

Section 1: Reflection on the Past Year

Guide

Looking back is not about judging ourselves or measuring success against others. It is about noticing what mattered, what challenged us, and what we want to carry forward. Reflection can help us honour the joys, acknowledge the difficulties, and gently release what no longer serves us. It is not about dwelling on regrets or “shoulds,” but about giving ourselves space to see the year with compassion.

If some questions feel too broad, try narrowing them down. For example, instead of “What challenges taught me something?” you might ask, “What small difficulty helped me grow in patience?” Reflection works best when it feels safe and manageable.

Open Questions

Use these as invitations to explore. You don’t need to answer all of them — choose the ones that feel most supportive:

- What moments brought me joy, even if they were small?
- What challenges taught me something I didn’t expect?
- What habits or routines felt nourishing and supportive?
- What do I want to gently leave behind as I move forward?
- What surprised me about myself this year?

- When did I feel most connected to others or to myself?
- What gave me a sense of meaning or purpose?
- What helped me cope during difficult times?

Sentence Starters

These are here for when open questions feel overwhelming. You can simply complete the sentence without needing to think too deeply:

- I felt most alive when...
- One thing I learned about myself is...
- I want to thank myself for...
- I noticed I grew when...
- I'm ready to release...
- A moment I want to carry forward is...

- I felt supported when...
- I surprised myself by...

Tiny Practice

Close your eyes and picture one moment from the last year that made you smile — it could be something big, like a celebration, or something small, like a quiet cup of tea. Hold that memory gently for a few breaths. Notice how your body feels as you recall it. If it feels right, write down one word that captures the essence of that moment (e.g., “peace,” “connection,” “laughter”).

Sciency Bit

Reflection activates the **prefrontal cortex**, the part of the brain involved in meaning-making and self-awareness. By revisiting experiences with compassion, we strengthen our ability to integrate them into our personal story. Research shows that reflective practices can increase resilience, reduce stress, and help us learn from challenges without getting stuck in self-criticism. Even brief reflection — like recalling one joyful moment — can boost mood and foster perspective.

Section 2: Setting Gentle Intentions

Guide

Intentions are softer than goals. They don’t demand perfection or rigid timelines — instead, they gently guide your energy and attention. While goals often focus on specific outcomes (“I

will run three times a week”), intentions invite you to consider how you want to live, feel, and show up in your daily life (“I want to move my body in ways that feel joyful”).

Intentions are flexible. They can shift as your circumstances change, and they don’t need to be measured to be meaningful. They are about direction, not destination. Setting intentions can help you stay connected to your values and remind you of what matters most, even when life feels busy or uncertain.

If the idea of “setting intentions” feels too broad, try narrowing it down to one area of life — such as relationships, wellbeing, creativity, or rest. You might ask yourself: *What do I want to invite more of into this part of my life?*

Open Questions

Choose the questions that feel most supportive. You don’t need to answer them all:

- What matters most to me right now, in this season of my life?
- How do I want to feel this coming year — in my body, mind, and heart?
- What values do I want to honour in the way I live?
- What theme or word could guide me gently through the year?
- What small shifts would feel supportive and realistic?
- Where do I want to offer myself more kindness?

- What do I want to invite into my relationships, work, or daily rhythm?

Sentence Starters

These are here for when open questions feel overwhelming. You can simply complete the sentence without needing to think too deeply:

- This coming year, I want to invite...
- A word that feels like my anchor is...
- I'd like to feel more...
- I want to honour...
- My guiding theme could be...
- I want to welcome more moments of...
- A gentle shift I'd like to try is...

Tiny Practice

Take a quiet moment and write down one word that feels like a compass for the year ahead. It could be something like *balance*, *connection*, *rest*, *growth*, *joy*, or *steadiness*. Place this word somewhere you'll see it often — on a sticky note, in your journal, or even as your phone background — so it can gently remind you of your chosen direction.

Sciency Bit

Research shows that **values-based intentions** increase motivation and wellbeing more than rigid, outcome-focused goals. When we connect our actions to what we truly care about — such as kindness, creativity, or health — we are more likely to sustain them over time. Neuroscience suggests that aligning behaviour with values activates reward pathways in the brain, making the process feel meaningful rather than forced. This is why even small, values-anchored intentions can have a powerful impact on resilience and satisfaction.

Section 3: Creating Manageable Goals (SMART)

Guide

Goals can be helpful when they are realistic, kind, and connected to what matters most to you. They don't need to be grand or dramatic — in fact, the most sustainable goals are often small, steady steps that build gently over time. Think of goals as invitations rather than demands, they are here to support you, not pressure you.

The SMART framework can help make goals feel clearer and more achievable. SMART stands for:

- **S (Specific):** What exactly do I want to do?
- **M (Measurable):** How will I know I've done it?

- **A (Achievable):** Is this realistic for me right now, given my energy and circumstances?
- **R (Relevant):** Why does this matter to me? How does it connect to my values?
- **T (Time-bound):** When will I start, and by when do I hope to see progress?

If this feels overwhelming, remember you don't need to fill in every letter perfectly. Even choosing one or two aspects (like "specific" and "achievable") can make a goal feel more manageable.

Open Questions

Choose the ones that feel most supportive. You don't need to answer them all:

- What is one change I'd like to try, even if it's small?
- What feels achievable in my current life, with the energy I have?
- What support or resources might I need to help me?
- How will I know I'm making progress — what signs will I notice?

- What's my first step, however tiny?
- How can I make this goal feel kind rather than pressuring?
- What value or intention does this goal connect to?

Sentence Starters

These are here for when open questions feel too broad. You can simply complete the sentence without needing to think too deeply:

- A small step I can take is...
- I'll know I'm moving forward when...
- Support that could help me is...
- I want to try...
- My first gentle action is...
- This goal matters to me because...

- I'll begin by...

Tiny Practice

Take one goal you're considering and break it down into the smallest possible step — something you could do in five minutes or less. For example:

- Instead of “exercise more,” try “stretch for two minutes after I wake up.”
- Instead of “eat healthier,” try “add one piece of fruit to my breakfast.”
- Instead of “write more,” try “jot down one sentence in my notebook.”

Notice how it feels to shrink the goal into something gentle and doable.

Sciency Bit

The brain releases **dopamine** when we achieve small wins, reinforcing motivation and confidence. This is sometimes called the “success spiral”: each small achievement builds momentum for the next. Research shows that breaking goals into manageable steps increases follow-through and reduces overwhelm. By focusing on what feels achievable right now, you create a sustainable path forward rather than setting yourself up for pressure or burnout.

Section 4: WOOP Planning

Guide

WOOP stands for **Wish–Outcome–Obstacle–Plan**. It is a gentle, evidence-based way of preparing for challenges while staying kind to yourself. Unlike rigid goal-setting, WOOP acknowledges that obstacles are part of life and helps you meet them with compassion rather than frustration.

Think of WOOP as a way to hold both hope and realism together:

- **Wish:** What do I want?
- **Outcome:** What would it feel like if I achieved it?
- **Obstacle:** What might get in the way?
- **Plan:** If that obstacle happens, what will I do?

This process is not about predicting failure, but about giving yourself a safety net. By imagining obstacles ahead of time, you can respond with gentleness instead of self-criticism. WOOP works best when applied to small, everyday habits — things that feel achievable and meaningful.

Open Questions

Choose the ones that feel most supportive:

- What wish feels meaningful to me right now?
- What outcome would make me proud or bring me joy?
- What obstacles do I often face in daily life?

- How can I plan gently for those obstacles without blaming myself?
- How will I support myself if things get hard?
- What small reminder could help me keep perspective when challenges arise?

Sentence Starters

These are here for when open questions feel too broad. You can simply complete the sentence without needing to think too deeply:

- My wish is...
- The outcome I imagine is...
- A likely obstacle is...
- My plan if that happens is...
- I'll remind myself...
- If I feel discouraged, I'll...

- A gentle way I can reset is...

Tiny Practice

Choose one small daily habit and write a WOOP plan for it. For example:

- **Wish:** I want to walk after dinner.
- **Outcome:** I'll feel calmer and more refreshed.
- **Obstacle:** Sometimes I feel too tired.
- **Plan:** If I feel tired, I'll remind myself I can just step outside for two minutes — even a short walk counts.

Keep the plan simple and kind. The goal is not perfection, but having a gentle fallback when life gets in the way.

Sciency Bit

Research by psychologist **Gabriele Oettingen** shows that WOOP users are more likely to follow through on their intentions. In studies, people who practiced WOOP **doubled their physical activity levels** and improved dietary habits compared to those who only visualized success. The reason is that WOOP combines positive imagery (which activates reward pathways in the brain) with realistic obstacle planning (which engages problem-solving areas of the prefrontal cortex). This balance helps us stay motivated while reducing the sting of setbacks.

Section 5: Implementation Intentions (“If–Then”)

Guide

Sometimes it can feel difficult to follow through on our intentions, especially when life gets busy or our energy shifts. One gentle way to make habits easier is to link them to everyday cues that already happen in your routine. This is called an **implementation intention** — a simple “If–Then” plan.

Instead of relying on willpower alone, you create a natural trigger for your action. For example:

- *If it's 7am, then I'll put on my trainers.*
- *If I finish dinner, then I'll walk for 20 minutes.*

These plans work because they connect your desired action to something predictable, like a time of day or an existing habit. Over time, the cue and the action become linked, making the behaviour feel automatic rather than forced.

Remember: your “If–Then” doesn't need to be big or dramatic. Even the smallest actions — like stretching after brushing your teeth or drinking a glass of water when you sit down at your desk — can build momentum.

Prompt

Write: “**If ____ happens, then I will ____.**”

Open Questions

Choose the ones that feel most supportive:

- What times or cues in my day could remind me to act?
- What small actions could I link to those cues?

- How can I make this feel natural and not pressured?
- What supportive environment could I create to make this easier?
- How will I celebrate or acknowledge myself when I follow through?
- What gentle reminder could help me if I forget?

Sentence Starters

These are here for when open questions feel too broad. You can simply complete the sentence without needing to think too deeply:

- If it's ____, then I'll ____...
- When I ____, I'll ____...
- My cue will be...
- I'll celebrate by...
- I'll remind myself that...

- If I miss it, I'll gently...

Tiny Practice

Choose one daily cue and link a tiny action to it. For example:

- *If I brush my teeth, then I'll stretch for one minute.*
- *If I make my morning coffee, then I'll write down one word that describes how I feel.*
- *If I switch on my computer, then I'll take three slow breaths before starting work.*

Keep it small and kind. The goal is not perfection but creating gentle anchors that support you.

Sciency Bit

Research by psychologist **Peter Gollwitzer** shows that implementation intentions significantly increase the likelihood of following through on goals. By linking actions to specific cues, you reduce reliance on willpower and instead build automatic responses. Neuroscience suggests that these cue-action links strengthen neural pathways over time, making behaviours feel more natural and less effortful. This is why even tiny “If–Then” plans can have a powerful impact on habit formation and long-term change.

Section 6: Habit Formation

Guide

Habits are not built overnight. Research suggests it often takes **55–66 days** for a new behaviour to feel automatic, though the exact time varies for each person. What matters most is not speed or perfection, but gentle repetition. Each small step you take strengthens the pathway, even if you miss days along the way.

Forming habits is about kindness and consistency rather than strict discipline. A habit doesn't need to be big to be meaningful — sometimes the smallest practices (like drinking a glass of water in the morning, stretching for one minute, or writing down one word about your mood) can create powerful shifts over time.

If the idea of “habit formation” feels overwhelming, start with something tiny and repeatable. Ask yourself: *What is one action I could do in less than five minutes that would support me?*

Open Questions

Choose the ones that feel most supportive:

- What habit do I want to form that feels nourishing for me?
- How can I make it small and repeatable, so it feels achievable?
- When in my day could this habit naturally fit?
- How will I track progress in a way that feels encouraging, not pressuring?
- How will I be kind to myself if I miss a day?
- What value or intention does this habit connect to?
- How can I remind myself that starting again is always possible?

Sentence Starters

These are here for when open questions feel too broad. You can simply complete the sentence without needing to think too deeply:

- The habit I want to build is...
- I'll repeat it at...
- I'll track it by...
- I'll remind myself that missing a day is...
- My gentle restart will be...
- This habit matters to me because...
- I'll begin with...

Tiny Practice

Create a simple habit tracker for one habit you'd like to build. Draw a grid with boxes for each day over the next two months. Each time you practice the habit, tick a box. If you miss a

day, simply leave the box blank — no judgment, no blame. The tracker is not about perfection, but about noticing patterns and celebrating progress.

Sciency Bit

Repetition strengthens **basal ganglia circuits**, the part of the brain involved in automatic behaviours. Over time, repeating an action in the same context makes it easier to do without conscious effort. Research shows that habits are more likely to stick when they are small, tied to existing routines, and reinforced with gentle tracking. Missing a day does not erase progress — the brain continues to strengthen pathways with each repetition, so every restart contributes to long-term change.

Section 7: Identity-Based Framing

Guide

Resolutions often feel fragile when they are framed as external commands — “I will go to the gym,” “I must eat better,” “I should meditate.” These statements can feel heavy, like rules imposed from outside, and they rely on willpower, which naturally ebbs and flows.

Identity-based framing offers a gentler, more sustainable approach. Instead of focusing on what you “should” do, you connect your resolutions to who you are and who you want to become. For example:

- “I am someone who values vitality, so I move my body with care.”
- “I am someone who honours rest, so I protect my evenings.”
- “I am someone who cherishes connection, so I reach out to loved ones.”

When resolutions are tied to identity, they become expressions of self rather than battles of discipline. They feel less like obligations and more like affirmations of your values. This approach helps you act in alignment with your sense of self, making habits more natural and meaningful.

Open Questions

Choose the ones that feel most supportive:

- Who do I want to be this year, in the way I live and relate to others?
- What values define me and guide my choices?
- How can my resolutions reflect and honour that identity?
- What small actions express who I am, even in everyday life?
- How will I remind myself of this identity when I feel discouraged?
- What qualities do I want to embody more often?
- How do I want others — and myself — to experience me?

Sentence Starters

These are here for when open questions feel too broad. You can simply complete the sentence without needing to think too deeply:

- I am someone who...
- I value...
- My actions reflect...
- I want to embody...
- My identity anchor is...
- I remind myself that I am...
- A quality I want to live by is...

Tiny Practice

Write one “I am someone who...” statement that feels true or aspirational for you. For example:

- “I am someone who honours rest.”
- “I am someone who values kindness.”
- “I am someone who embraces growth.”

Place this statement somewhere visible — on a sticky note, in your journal, or as your phone wallpaper. Let it serve as a gentle reminder of the identity you are choosing to live into.

Sciency Bit

Identity-based framing shifts behaviour from willpower battles to self-expression. Research in psychology shows that when actions are tied to identity, people are more likely to sustain them over time. This is because identity creates intrinsic motivation: we act not because we “must,” but because it feels aligned with who we are. Neuroscience suggests that identity-linked behaviours activate reward pathways in the brain, reinforcing the sense of authenticity and meaning. In short, when resolutions reflect your values and self-concept, they become easier to maintain and more fulfilling to live.

Section 8: Building Support & Safety Nets

Guide

Resolutions are easier to sustain when we feel supported and safe. Support can come in many forms — from people we trust, from resources that guide us, or from boundaries that protect our energy. A “safety net” doesn’t mean you expect to fall; it means you are giving yourself something soft to land on if life gets difficult.

Support can look different for everyone. For some, it might be a friend who listens without judgment. For others, it might be a journal, a community group, or even a reminder on your phone. Boundaries are also part of support — they help you protect your time, energy, and wellbeing so you can focus on what matters most.

Remember: asking for support is not weakness. It is a sign of wisdom and self-care. And celebrating progress, no matter how small, reinforces your motivation and reminds you that you are moving forward.

Open Questions

Choose the ones that feel most supportive:

- Who can encourage me when I need a boost?
- What resources (books, apps, communities, practices) could help me feel supported?
- How can I be kind to myself if I struggle or slip?
- What boundaries might protect my energy and help me stay balanced?
- How will I celebrate progress, even in small ways?
- What kind of support feels safe and nourishing for me?
- How can I remind myself that I don't have to do this alone?

Sentence Starters

These are here for when open questions feel too broad. You can simply complete the sentence without needing to think too deeply:

- I feel supported when...
- A resource I can lean on is...

- If I slip, I'll remind myself...
- I want to celebrate by...
- A boundary that helps me is...
- Support that feels gentle to me is...
- I feel safe when...

Tiny Practice

Text or call one person who makes you feel safe, just to connect. You don't need to talk about resolutions or goals — simply reaching out to say hello or share a moment of gratitude can strengthen your sense of support. If connecting with someone doesn't feel right, you might instead write a short note to yourself, reminding you that you are not alone in this journey.

Sciency Bit

Research shows that **social support reduces cortisol**, the body's primary stress hormone, and increases resilience in behaviour change. When we feel connected and supported, our nervous system calms, making it easier to try again after setbacks. Celebrating progress also activates reward pathways in the brain, reinforcing motivation. Boundaries, meanwhile, protect against burnout by reducing overstimulation and conserving energy. Together, these elements create a supportive environment where change feels safer and more sustainable.

Section 9: Coping with Setbacks

Guide

Slips are normal. They are not failures — they are simply part of being human. Every journey of change includes moments where things don't go as planned. Missing a day, forgetting a habit, or feeling too tired to follow through does not erase your progress. Instead, these moments can be opportunities to practice kindness, reset gently, and remind yourself that growth is not linear.

Coping with setbacks is about creating space for compassion rather than criticism. Instead of asking “Why did I fail?” you might ask “What do I need right now?” or “How can I begin again with gentleness?” This shift helps you see setbacks as pauses, not endings.

If reflecting on setbacks feels overwhelming, try narrowing it down. For example, instead of “How do I usually respond when things don't go to plan?” you might ask, “What helps me feel calmer when I miss a step?”

Open Questions

Choose the ones that feel most supportive:

- How do I usually respond when things don't go to plan?
- What helps me reset when I feel discouraged?
- What self-kindness can I offer myself in those moments?

- How can I reframe setbacks, so they feel less heavy?
- What reminder would soothe me when I slip?
- What small action helps me feel like I'm starting again?
- How can I remind myself that setbacks are part of the process, not the end of it?

Sentence Starters

These are here for when open questions feel too broad. You can simply complete the sentence without needing to think too deeply:

- If I slip, I'll...
- A kind reminder I can give myself is...
- I'll try again by...
- I want to remember that...
- My reset strategy is...

- When I feel discouraged, I'll...
- I'll remind myself that progress is...

Tiny Practice

Write a compassionate note to yourself as if you were encouraging a dear friend. For example:

- “It’s okay to pause. You’re still moving forward.”
- “Missing one day doesn’t undo your effort — you can begin again anytime.”
- “You are human, and that’s enough. Be gentle with yourself.”

Keep the note short, kind, and forgiving. Place it somewhere you’ll see it often or keep it in your journal as a reminder that setbacks are part of growth.

Sciency Bit

Self-compassion activates the **parasympathetic nervous system**, which calms the body and helps restore balance after stress. Research by **Kristin Neff** and others shows that people who respond to setbacks with kindness are more resilient, more persistent, and less likely to give up. Compassion reduces shame and self-criticism, which often block progress, and instead fosters a sense of safety that makes it easier to try again. In short: treating yourself kindly after a slip doesn’t just feel better — it actually supports long-term change.

Section 10: Failing Without Shame

Guide

Everyone experiences setbacks. Missing a step, pausing a habit, or changing direction does not mean failure — it means you are human. Too often, we are taught to see slips as proof that we are “not good enough” or “too weak.” But the truth is that setbacks are part of every growth process. They are not the end of the journey, but moments that invite us to pause, learn, and begin again with gentleness.

Failing without shame means meeting yourself with compassion instead of criticism. It means recognising that progress is rarely linear, and that each stumble can be reframed as information rather than judgment. For example:

- Instead of “I failed,” you might say, “I learned what doesn’t work for me.”
- Instead of “I can’t do this,” you might say, “I can try again differently.”

This section is about giving yourself permission to be imperfect, to reset without guilt, and to remember that your worth is not defined by flawless consistency.

Open Questions

Choose the ones that feel most supportive:

- How do I usually talk to myself when things don’t go as planned?
- What would it feel like to respond with kindness instead of judgment?
- What can I learn from this moment without blaming myself?
- How do I want to treat myself when I stumble?

- What reminder would help me keep perspective?
- How can I remind myself that setbacks are part of growth, not proof of failure?
- What small act of kindness could I offer myself right now?

Sentence Starters

These are here for when open questions feel too broad. You can simply complete the sentence without needing to think too deeply:

- When I fall short, I will remind myself...
- A gentle truth I want to hold onto is...
- I can reframe this setback as...
- I am allowed to...
- My next step, without pressure, could be...
- I want to remember that...

- If I stumble, I'll...

Tiny Practice

Write one sentence to yourself as if you were speaking to a dear friend who feels they've failed. Keep it short, kind, and forgiving. For example:

- "It's okay to pause — you're still moving forward."
- "Missing one step doesn't erase your effort."
- "You are human, and that is enough."

Place this sentence somewhere visible or keep it in your journal as a reminder that compassion is always available to you.

Sciency Bit

Research on **self-compassion** shows that treating ourselves kindly after setbacks increases resilience, reduces shame, and makes us more likely to try again. Shame, by contrast, often leads to avoidance and giving up. Self-compassion activates the **parasympathetic nervous system**, calming the body and reducing stress. This physiological shift makes it easier to reset and persist. In short: kindness is not indulgence — it is a powerful tool for sustaining change.

Section 11: Anchoring with Gratitude & Presence

Guide

Gratitude and presence are gentle anchors that help us stay grounded, notice progress, and reconnect with what matters. They remind us that growth is not only about big milestones, but also about the small joys and quiet moments along the way. Practicing gratitude doesn't mean ignoring difficulties — it means allowing ourselves to notice the good alongside the hard.

Presence is about pausing, even briefly, to be here in this moment. It might look like taking a breath before starting your day, noticing the taste of your tea, or appreciating a kind word from a friend. Gratitude and presence together create a rhythm of noticing, pausing, and appreciating, which can help us feel steadier and more resilient.

If reflecting on gratitude feels too broad, start small: *What is one thing I'm glad I experienced today?* or *What tiny joy made me smile?*

Open Questions

Choose the ones that feel most supportive:

- What am I grateful for today, even if it's something small?
- How can I pause more often in my daily rhythm?
- What small joys do I want to notice and savour?
- How do I want to mark progress in a way that feels gentle?
- What ritual could help me reset when I feel overwhelmed?
- How can gratitude help me reframe challenges?
- What presence practices (like breathing, noticing, pausing) feel natural to me?

Sentence Starters

These are here for when open questions feel too broad. You can simply complete the sentence without needing to think too deeply:

- Today, I'm grateful for...
- A small joy I noticed is...
- I want to pause when...
- My ritual could be...
- I'll mark progress by...
- Gratitude helps me remember...
- Presence feels like...

Tiny Practice

Take three slow breaths. With each breath, name one thing you are grateful for right now. It could be something simple — the warmth of your blanket, the sound of birds outside, or the

fact that you gave yourself time to reflect. Notice how your body feels as you acknowledge these small gifts.

Sciency Bit

Gratitude practices increase **dopamine and serotonin**, two neurotransmitters that boost mood and resilience. Neuroscience shows that regularly noticing and appreciating positive experiences strengthens neural pathways associated with wellbeing. Presence practices, such as mindful breathing, activate the **parasympathetic nervous system**, calming the body and reducing stress. Together, gratitude and presence help us feel more grounded, more connected, and more able to navigate challenges with steadiness.

Section 12: Why Resolutions Fail (and How to Reframe)

Guide

Many resolutions collapse not because people are lazy or unmotivated, but because they are often designed in ways that make them difficult to sustain. Goals that are vague (“I’ll get healthier”), too big (“I’ll completely change my diet overnight”), or driven by shame (“I should be better”) can quickly feel overwhelming. When this happens, it’s easy to mistake the collapse of a resolution as a personal weakness.

The truth is: failed resolutions are not proof of failure. They are signals that the design of the goal wasn’t supportive enough. Knowing this allows us to create kinder, more realistic approaches that honour our humanity. Resolutions work best when they are specific, manageable, connected to values, and framed with compassion.

Reframing “failure” as learning helps us move forward without shame. Each slip is information, not judgment. It tells us something about what works for us — and what doesn’t.

What Research Shows:

- Around **77% of resolutions fail within the first week** (Norcross, 1988). This shows how common slips are, and that early struggles are part of the process for most people.
- Only about **19% of resolutions are kept for two years**, which means long-term success is possible, but rare without supportive structures.
- Failures usually reflect **poor design of goals, lack of supportive structure, and unrealistic expectations** — not personal weakness. When goals are vague, too ambitious, or driven by shame, they are harder to sustain.
- Research suggests that resolutions framed around **values, identity, and small daily actions** are far more likely to last than those based on external pressure or rigid rules.
- Success often depends on **environmental support** (like reminders, social encouragement, or tracking tools) and **self-compassion** when setbacks happen.
- Neuroscience shows that **small wins release dopamine**, reinforcing motivation. This means that breaking goals into tiny steps is not only kinder, but biologically more effective.
- In short: most resolutions fail not because people lack grit or discipline, but because they are designed in ways that don't fit real life. With gentler framing, supportive structures, and kindness toward yourself, resolutions can become sustainable.

Open Questions

Choose the ones that feel most supportive:

- What past resolutions felt too big or vague for me?
- When a resolution slipped, what did I learn about my needs or circumstances?
- How can I remind myself that setbacks are information, not proof of weakness?

- What kind of structure or support would make resolutions feel more sustainable?
- How do I want to talk to myself when things don't go as planned?
- What values could guide me more kindly than rigid rules?
- How can I design future resolutions to feel realistic and compassionate?

Reframe Prompt

Try shifting the language you use with yourself:

- Instead of *"I failed,"* try: *"I learned what doesn't work for me."*
- Instead of *"I can't do this,"* try: *"I can try again differently."*
- Instead of *"I gave up,"* try: *"I paused, and I can restart when I'm ready."*
- Instead of *"I'm not disciplined enough,"* try: *"I need a gentler structure that fits my life."*

Sentence Starters

These are here for when open questions feel too broad. You can simply complete the sentence without needing to think too deeply:

- When my resolution slips, I will remind myself...
- A gentle truth I want to hold onto is...

- I can reframe this moment as...
- I am allowed to...
- My next step, without pressure, could be...

Tiny Practice

Think of one resolution or habit that didn't last in the past. Write a single sentence reframing it as a learning moment. For example:

- *“When I stopped journaling, I learned that evenings are too busy for me — mornings might work better.”*
- *“When I skipped workouts, I realised I need gentler movement, not strict routines.”*
- *“When I didn't stick to my plan, I discovered that I thrive with smaller steps.”*

Sciency Bit

Research shows that reframing setbacks reduces shame and increases persistence. Cognitive psychology highlights that the way we interpret events shapes our motivation: seeing a slip as “failure” triggers avoidance, while seeing it as “information” encourages problem-solving. Neuroscience also shows that self-compassion activates calming systems in the brain, making it easier to reset and try again. In short: reframing failure as learning transforms resolutions from battles of willpower into opportunities for growth.

Closing

Resolutions are not about perfection. They are about gentle direction, self-kindness, and noticing what matters to you. They are not tests to pass or standards to meet — they are invitations to explore what feels nourishing in your life.

They are not fixed promises, either — they are living intentions that can shift as your circumstances, energy, and priorities change. You are always allowed to change your mind, to pause, or to choose a different path. Flexibility is part of growth.

At the same time, know that meaningful change is possible. With the right supports, structures, and kindness toward yourself, small steps can build into lasting shifts. Progress comes not from pressure, but from steady repetition, encouragement, and remembering why your intentions matter to you.

Whatever you choose — or even if you choose nothing at all — you are already enough. Your worth is not measured by habits kept or goals achieved. It is reflected in the simple fact that you are here, reflecting, and caring for yourself in this moment.

This worksheet is here to support reflection, not pressure. Carry forward only what feels kind and meaningful, and let the rest go. You might choose one word, one intention, or one tiny practice — or you might simply pause and notice what you already have. All of these are valid.

If you ever feel discouraged, remember:

- Progress is not linear.
- Rest is part of growth.
- Every small step counts.
- Beginning again is always possible.

✧ May this closing remind you that resolutions are not about becoming someone else, but about honouring who you already are — while trusting that you are capable of both changing your mind and achieving what matters, in ways that feel kind and sustainable.