



LEARN THE TBH SCIENCE

5 MINUTES

- Present the science behind the class.
- Allow for brief discussion of the science with your students.

Of course, not all our mistakes turn out to be great inventions, and there are times that our failings feel hard to overcome. Sometimes we just make the wrong decision or pick the wrong path. We overpromise or say something in the heat of the moment we regret later. We overeat, don't make it to the gym or cancel plans to meet a friend because we can't muster the energy to go. There are lots of ways we may disappoint ourselves or others.

As the saying goes, "to err is human, to forgive divine." We all make mistakes. Yet we also all have the capacity to forgive. And the process of forgiveness can bring us closer to ourselves. Perhaps this is why all major religious practices offer a path to forgiveness, with rituals that guide us to acknowledge our errors and work towards forgiveness.

Today we are going to focus on just one aspect of forgiveness: Forgiving ourselves. Practicing self-forgiveness can help us build greater self-awareness. Looking at our shortcomings, whether they are everyday failings or more significant ones, can help us understand ourselves better. We can learn from our mistakes and transform and grow from the experience. And we can foster a more positive sense of ourselves and greater self-acceptance.

Sometimes it can be easier to practice self-forgiveness in our later years. An advantage of the third age of life is that although we continue to make mistakes, we have gained wisdom and experience that can help us put those mistakes into perspective. And most importantly, we have learned that there are no mistakes, only good lessons we can continue to learn from, no matter our age.



NOW DO IT!

15+ MINUTES

- Lead your class in this workout to personalize their learning of the science. Option to distribute class worksheets.
- Lead a discussion as you work together to explore the 3-step approach to self-forgiveness detailed below. Use 1 or 2 of the general examples provided below to illustrate the discussion.
- Distribute the *TBH No Mistakes/Just Lessons* journals, one to each student, as well as pens or pencils for students to use to personalize their journals.
- If time allows, ask students to begin their journals in class, working on their own.
- When repeating this class, select different illustration examples for your discussion.
- Encourage distance learners to join in from home. Adjust scripting accordingly.



One way we can bring more self-forgiveness into our routine is by journaling or writing down our thoughts. Studies have shown that the act of putting our thoughts about forgiveness on paper can help us explore our feelings and support us as we move forward towards a deeper understanding and acceptance of ourselves.

Today we are going to learn a 3-question approach we can use to deepen our awareness and work towards self-forgiveness. One way you can think of this exercise is that it gives us the chance to be our own best friend. Like a best friend, these steps ask us to be face our shortcomings with honesty, help us understand them better, and then allow us to extend forgiveness and acceptance. They don't take a lot of time to do and can be helpful whether the mistakes we are exploring are everyday ones or more ongoing challenges. We'll learn the questions together, and practice with a few general examples. Ready?

1. **“I am not happy that I”** Our first step is to acknowledge our mistake - what we did, said or thought that we are unhappy or discomforted about. Which of these examples feel familiar to you? Pick 1-2 examples for your group discussion.
 - Feeling badly about your physical appearance.
 - Not making the effort to be social even though you are feeling lonely.
 - Being short with a friend or family member.
 - Constantly criticizing yourself.
2. **“It's okay that I”** The next step is to accept that mistakes happen and forgive yourself. Focus on the thoughts and feelings you have around the mistake, and then make a conscious decision to let them go. Which of these ways we can better understand our mistakes and ourselves feels familiar to you? Pick 1-2 examples for your group discussion.
 - Feeling disappointed by physical changes in our bodies.
 - Feeling uneasy or anxious about meeting new people.
 - Being preoccupied, unhappy or impatient with friends or family.
 - Holding yourself up to a standard that might not be realistic.
3. **“Next time I can”** Our third and final step asks us to apply our wisdom and experience to find the lesson in our mistake. What is it you can try differently next time? Which of these suggestions feels familiar to you? Pick 1-2 examples for your group discussion.
 - Focus on positive thoughts about my physical self.
 - Think ahead of ways to start conversations or of topics I can talk about with others.
 - Take a few deep breaths if I feel myself feeling distracted, unhappy or impatient.
 - Reframe and think about all the ways I am doing well.

That was a really meaningful exploration, thank you.