

THE REASON WE STAY STUCK AND HOW TO BREAK THE CYCLE



Have you ever felt like you're treading water in life, unable to move forward despite your efforts? Maybe it's in your career, relationships, health, or personal growth. Feeling stuck is a universal experience, but it's also one that can be overcome. Let's explore the reasons behind this stagnation and, more importantly, how to break free from the cycle—with real-life examples to guide the way.

Why Do We Get Stuck?

1. **Fear of Change:** Change is inherently uncomfortable. For example, imagine someone who has been in the same job for years, even though they're unhappy. The thought of updating their resume, applying for new roles, and stepping into a new workplace feels overwhelming, so they stay put. This fear often stems from our brain's natural inclination to prioritise safety and predictability over growth.
2. **Limiting Beliefs:** Many of us carry beliefs that act as invisible barriers. Consider a writer who dreams of publishing a novel but is held back by thoughts like, "I'm not talented enough" or "No one will read my work." These internal narratives can keep them from even starting the manuscript.
3. **Lack of Clarity:** Without a clear vision or specific goals, it's easy to drift aimlessly. For instance, a recent college graduate may feel lost because they don't know whether to pursue further education, start a job, or travel. When we don't know what we want, we can't take meaningful steps toward achieving it.
4. **Overwhelm:** Facing too many options or an insurmountable challenge can lead to analysis paralysis. Picture a parent who wants to improve their family's health by cooking at home but feels paralysed by endless recipes and diet advice online. Instead of starting small, they do nothing.

5. **Habits and Comfort Zones:** Our routines shape our reality. A person who spends every evening scrolling through social media instead of pursuing a hobby may feel stuck creatively. While habits can be productive, they can also keep us anchored in a state of inaction if they reinforce stagnation.

Breaking the Cycle

1. **Acknowledge that you are Stuck** The first step to change is recognizing and accepting where you are. For example, a teacher feeling burnt out might reflect on their situation and admit, "I feel stuck because I'm overwhelmed and unsure how to reignite my passion for teaching." Honest reflection is the foundation for meaningful change.
2. **Shift Your Mindset**
 - **Challenge Limiting Beliefs:** Write down the thoughts that hold you back and counter them with empowering affirmations. For instance, a musician who thinks, "I'll never master this instrument," can replace it with, "Every day I practice, I'm improving."
 - **Embrace Growth:** Remind yourself that discomfort is a sign of progress. If you're nervous about starting a side hustle, view it as an exciting challenge rather than a daunting risk.
3. **Set Clear, Achievable Goals:** Break your aspirations into smaller, actionable steps. Instead of saying, "I want to run a marathon," start with, "I'll jog for 10 minutes three times a week." Small wins build confidence and momentum.
4. **Take Small Steps:** Momentum builds with action, no matter how small. For example, if you're stuck in a cluttered house, start by organizing one drawer today. Consistency over time leads to transformation.
5. **Seek Support:** Surround yourself with people who inspire and encourage you. If you're trying to lose weight, joining a fitness group or finding a workout buddy can make the journey less lonely and more motivating.
6. **Re-evaluate and Adapt:** Periodically assess your progress and be willing to pivot. For example, if you've been studying for a career in law but realize your passion lies in teaching, give yourself permission to change paths. Flexibility allows you to learn from setbacks and refine your approach.
7. **Prioritize Self-Care:** Burnout and neglecting your well-being can perpetuate feelings of being stuck. A busy entrepreneur who starts meditating for five minutes a day might find renewed clarity and focus. Ensure you're nourishing your body, mind, and spirit through healthy practices like sleep, exercise, and mindfulness.

The Power of Resilience

Breaking free from stagnation isn't a one-time event; it's a continuous process of growth and adaptation. Resilience - the ability to bounce back from setbacks and persist despite challenges—is key. Celebrate small wins, stay curious, and maintain a long-term perspective.

Moving Forward

Life's journey is full of peaks and valleys. Feeling stuck doesn't mean you're failing—it's a signal that something needs to change. It's the impetus or niggles we need to alter our path. By understanding the reasons behind your stagnation and taking intentional steps forward, you can break free from the cycle and create a life filled with purpose, progress, and joy.

[Listen to episode 50 - Why We Stay Stuck: The Hidden Patterns of Suffering](#)