

Missed Opportunities

Missed opportunities, and goals not reached, can create feelings of regret, disappointment, or sadness. Missing a score of 90 on a physical fitness test can lead to regret, “If only I had run a little more”. Unspoken words can also create missed opportunities and feelings of sadness, “If I had only told them how I truly felt, but now they’re gone and it’s too late”.

Missed opportunities and missed goals are unfortunate. However, the way we frame missed opportunities in the past can make all the difference in how we approach the future. It can be the difference between guilt and growth, regret and reset, sadness and success. If framed properly, we can allow these missed opportunities to shape our future without letting them define our present or future identity.



Imagine if Thomas Edison dwelt on his failure after not being able to create a working light bulb after 9,999 attempts and simply quit trying. Instead, Thomas Edison was quoted as saying “I have not failed. I have just found 9,999 ways that don’t work”.

Michael Jordan lost close to 300 games and missed over 9000 shots in his illustrious career in the NBA. Despite this, he is still considered one of the greatest basketball players of all time. Michael Jordan stated that the reason he succeeded was that he used his failures as fuel to motivate him to succeed. He used those feelings of disappointment and regret at not reaching his goal to lead him to try harder, train harder, stay future focused, and persevere.

There are lessons to learn in all of life’s experiences, even in the ones that temporarily bring us embarrassment, sadness, or regret.

-Don’t dwell on the past. If we live in the past, we can miss even more opportunities in the future. It is hard to plan for what is ahead when you’re stuck staring at what’s behind.

-Allow your missed opportunities to shape your future. Remember you are not starting over, you’re starting from experience. Use the lessons you learned from past mistakes to avoid the same pitfalls in the future. Instead of dwelling on the past simply do an after-action-review on your experiences and learn from your mistakes so you do not relive them.

-Let your failure or missed opportunity be the fuel of your success. One of the most powerful motivators for future success is past failures and missed opportunities. Do not waste that powerful fuel by pouring it into sadness and regret. Use those past failures as motivation to be the next great comeback story.

-At the end of the day it is **our choice**. Will we allow our missed opportunities to fuel our sadness or our success?