

Self-Sabotage: Why We Do It and What To Do About It

Start Taking Steps to Get Out of Your Own Way



the Fasting
Method

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Overview

Today I am going to present a few thoughts about the concept of self sabotage. As we get ready to begin, I invite you to think about why you are attending this talk today. Think about what this concept means to you and why it is something of interest to you to work on in your life.

I encourage you to think specifically about how it relates to you as far as your health and weight loss goals. How do you self-sabotage? Are you aware of what leads to this? How does it interfere with your progress?

It may be helpful to have a journal or piece of paper or open document on your computer so that you can jot down some thoughts as I share things with you and as you listen to the question and answer portion that follows this talk.

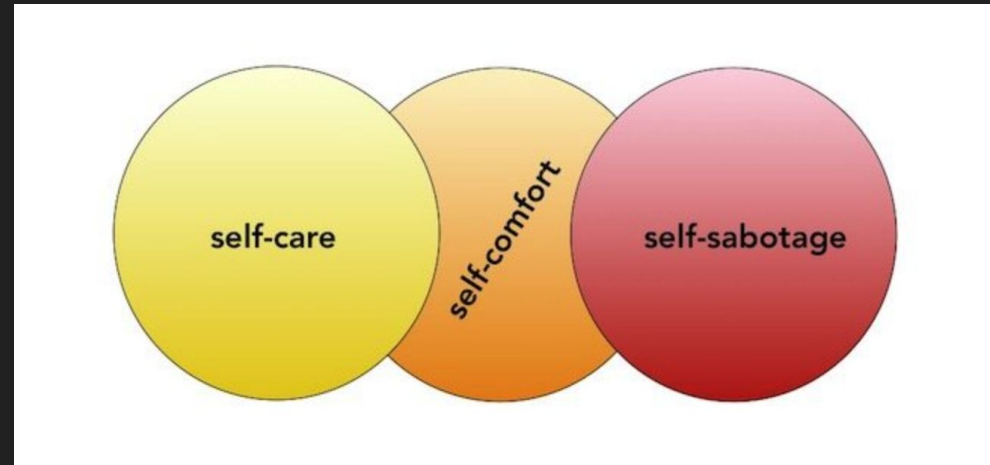
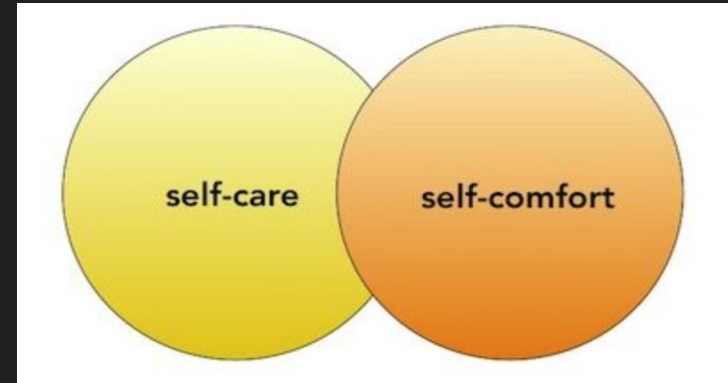
What do I mean as I talk about self-sabotage?

- **“Self-sabotage refers to behaviors or thought patterns that hold you back and prevent you from doing what you want to do.”¹**
- **“The term self-sabotage is used when this destructive behavior is directed at yourself. At first, you may not even notice that you're doing it. But when negative habits consistently undermine your efforts, they can be considered a form of psychological self-harm.”²**
- **“Behavior is said to be self-sabotaging when it creates problems in daily life and interferes with long-standing goals.”³**

Why We Self-Sabotage

A general way to understand what leads you to self-sabotage is that it is your brain's **MISTAKEN** overapplication of a necessary mechanism.

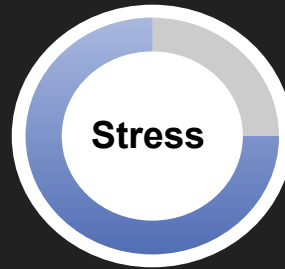
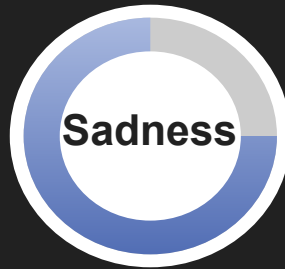
In order to protect you, your mind and body respond to perceived threats. But in reality, rarely are the triggers actual threats but are more just experiences of discomfort. So to avoid this discomfort, you select a behavior that eases this. In other words, you do something to relieve the fight or flight response, though this is often not apparent.



Triggers

Those That You May Detect

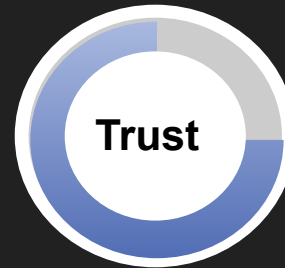
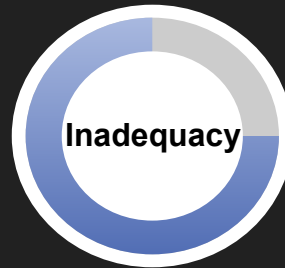
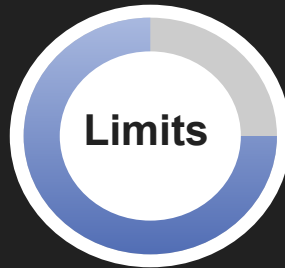
Some of the triggers are things that may be easier to detect. These are sometimes external triggers like relational or situational stimuli.



Triggers

Those That Are Harder to Detect

Some of the triggers are things that may be harder to detect because they are deeper, longer held limiting beliefs or self-criticisms.



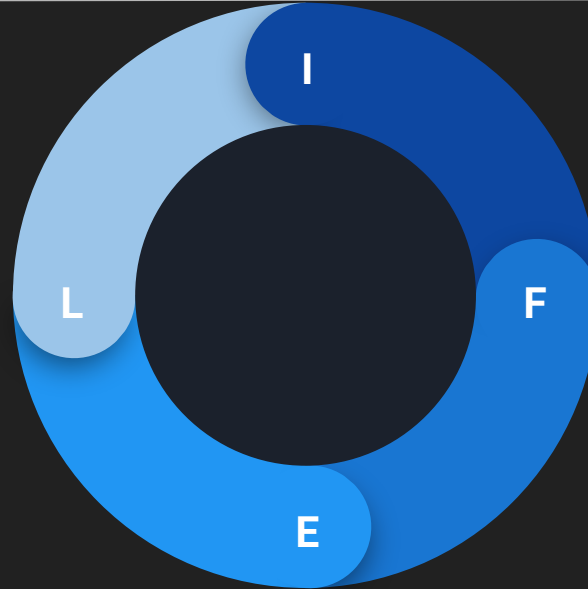
LIFE Underlying Reasons--from Judith Ho's book Stop Self-Sabotage⁵

Low self-esteem

Carrying negative thoughts and beliefs about our value, abilities,, etc.

Excessive need for control

Discomfort with being surprised of not following routine



Internalized beliefs

Limiting beliefs that we have learned and hold onto

Fear of change

We fear unknown outcome of changes we are making (failure or success)

Specific Triggering Thinking Patterns

“Shoulds” --inflexible rules about how you and others should behave

Mind reading--assuming how others feel and think about you

Discounting the positive--dismissing positive information about your efforts

Overgeneralizing/catastrophizing--broad conclusion based on single incident or making too much negative of an event

Personalization--excessive comparison of self with others

Black and white thinking--having no shades of gray

How to interrupt the patterns?

- Allow yourself to observe and ask what feelings, thoughts, beliefs preceded the action or desire to self-sabotage
- Refute the underlying thought or belief with supportive statements
- Remind your mind that you are okay, know what you are doing, that it is safe
- Continue to address changing the underlying triggers (journaling, meditation, celebrating small steps, etc)
- Hold in your mind's eye the comfort of progress in your goal rather than focusing on the discomfort causing the fight or flight response
- Practice getting comfortable with failure
- Set realistic expectations



Thank you!

1. https://www.mindtools.com/pages/article/newTCS_95.htm
2. <https://www.healthline.com/health/self-sabotage#seeking-help>
3. <https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/basics/self-sabotage>
4. <https://www.onlytogrow.com/blog-vital-signs-1/tag/Deborah+Adele>
5. <https://www.drjudyho.com/stop-self-sabotage>