

*Here are the six things you need to do to create a sustainable personal growth pattern:*

1. You must understand that long term personal growth is not a smooth “curve”. Even the most successful people are going to have setbacks and plateaus and this means the upward “curve” will actually look jagged and irregular. The one we have used on the exhibit is just one of endless possible irregular variations of what long term personal growth looks like. What will yours look like?
2. You must have long term vision and goals that are motivating for you for your journey. It's OK to not have the goals and visions, but the value does not necessarily require this. Even if you die before you fulfill them, these life “visions” will keep you engaged and oriented doing the things you really want to do and value. It is very important to define these visions and goals by desire and not what you consider realistic. Be bold and challenge yourself. You can use our Goal Builder-2 as a way to help you identify vision and long term goals.
3. You must realize that whether failures or setbacks undermine your long term growth depends on how you interpret them. If you interpret them as just more evidence you can never succeed at anything, you won't. You will crash and burn back down to the baseline. If you look at failures and setbacks as normal, inevitable and something that can be overcome, you will. The more you learn about your own growth, the more you will see that every time this happens it will provide valuable learning experiences and allow you to learn more effective ways.
4. You must realize that you will get more gratification and self-esteem increase from engagement in the process than the actual attainment of steps, outcomes and goals. Don't fall into the trap of thinking you can only feel good about yourself if you reach certain levels. That doesn't mean that achieving certain goals or outcomes isn't rewarding or useful; it just means that you will actually receive more reward from having a sense of self-created structure and purpose in your life.
5. You must learn to do things in a more engaging way by using long term goals, strategies and tactics. You can use our Goal Builder-3 as a way to help identify strategies to help you initiate action when you are stalled, confused or demoralized.
6. You must persist over time. There isn't a single person that can't amaze themselves by knowing where they want to go, continuing to take action, enjoying the process and simply keeping at it. You will be that person.

While anyone and everyone can better their lives by following this simple pathway, if you have had chronic, long term depression it is the one way we have seen work over and over to help people sustainably overcome depression.