

Minor Missteps

"Be not ashamed of mistakes and thus make them crimes."

A mistake isn't a big deal—so don't turn it into one

You get a pretty good idea from this quote that Confucius was reading from the TOPS playbook. Or maybe we borrowed from his playbook...

But either way, the sentiment makes sense. Confucius was urging people to understand that small mistakes are really just minor roadblocks in the long run. Doing one little thing wrong doesn't destroy all of the progress you've made.

However, by dwelling on that mistake to the point of no end, you're turning what was a small issue into a huge one. And the further you let it snowball, the more it's going to get you down, and in turn, put the brakes on any progress you'd ordinarily be making. Why do that to yourself over one simple misstep?

So you had a donut on the way to work. Or you overdid it in the diner at lunch. Or there was another birthday cake to face this afternoon, and you indulged. Was it the right thing to do? Probably not. Was it the end of the world? Of course not; learn from it, and move on. By obsessing over those small mistakes, you're invalidating the good things you have done.

Don't go penalize yourself for simple misdemeanors that you've turned into felonies. What's done is done—the real key is to learn from the past, move on and know that the next time, you won't make the same mistake twice.

Let's take this a step further to

Future perfect

"Study the past, if you would define the future."

Remember those mistakes we talked about? The ones that Confucius suggested we don't turn into crimes? We're not quite done with them just yet.

Confucius was simply stating that to understand the future, it's best to look to the past. After all, the past is prologue, and can give you great insight into what's to come.

It's important to remember the things you would do differently, so that history doesn't repeat itself. But it's also nice to keep in mind that your future is not predestined when it comes to weight loss; you, and only you, choose the direction in which it goes.

It may not seem like it when things are going wrong, but occasional failure can be one of your greatest assets for future success. Don't obsess, but learn from those mistakes. After all, they can be one of the greatest tools to learning that you'll have.

Make your own weight loss future a complete success by keeping in mind those things you might want to forget. The purpose is not to punish yourself, but to get valuable insight into how you might do things differently—then create a future with a brighter outcome.