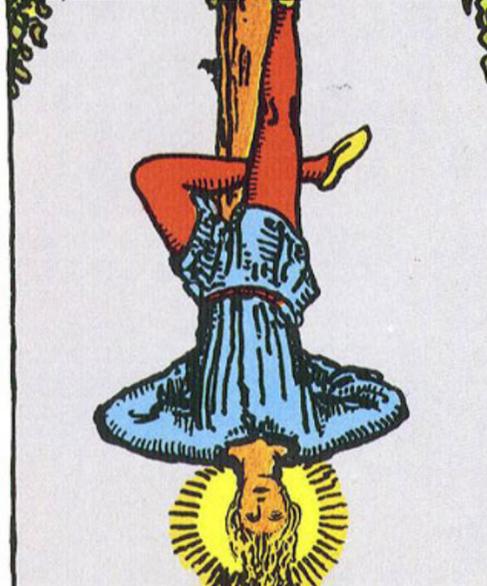
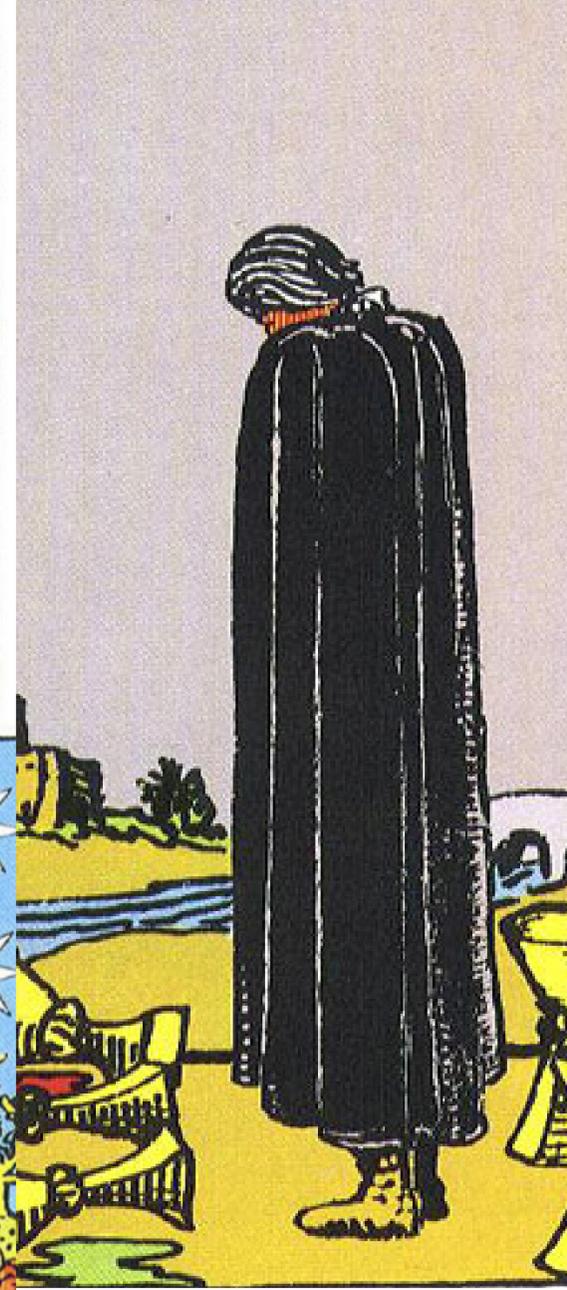
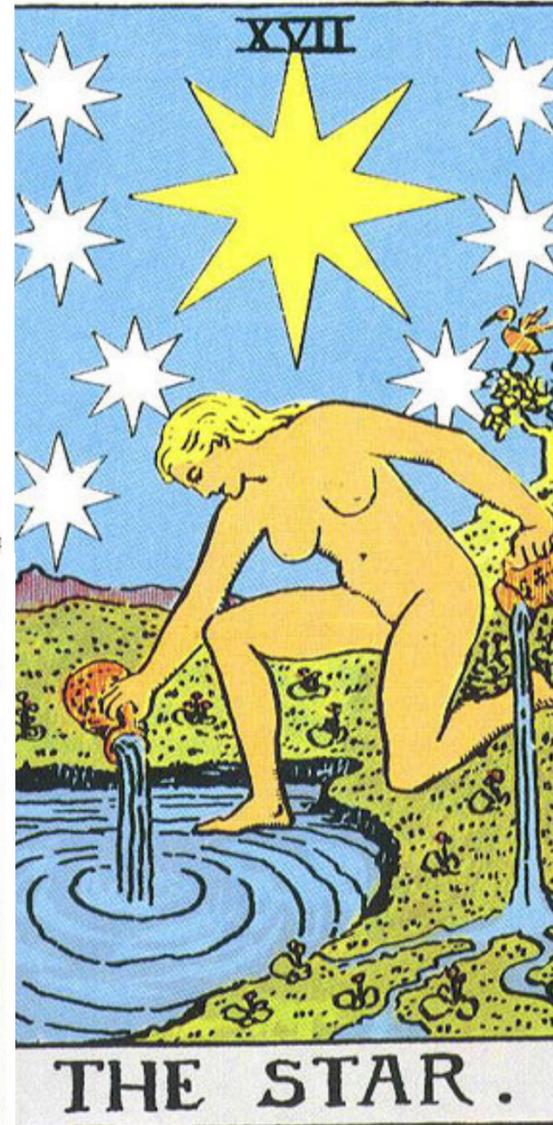


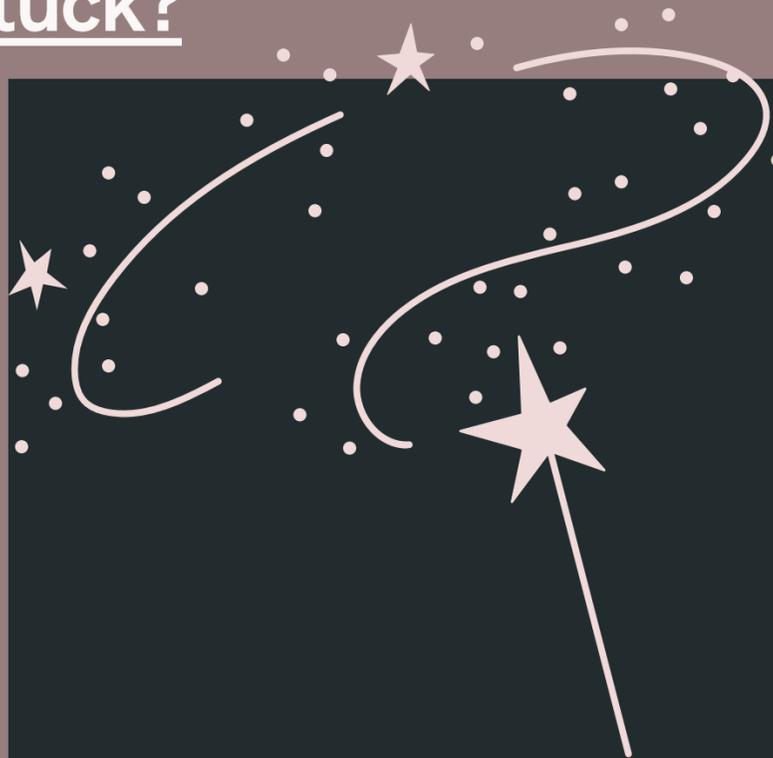
5 Ways to Get Unstuck Right Now

by Shelley Ruelle,
founder of The Tarot Sessions



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Feeling Stuck?



You're Not Alone

It's part of the natural rhythm of life to occasionally get to a point where it feels like nothing's moving forward.

Paradoxically, "stuck" moments can sometimes be the most fruitful times in our lives, even if it doesn't seem like anything is really happening ... outwardly.

We don't always have control over the external circumstances that can make us feel blocked or stopped in our tracks: job loss, relationship breakup, family issues, illness—to name just a few!

However, we do have control over how we approach these moments and situations.

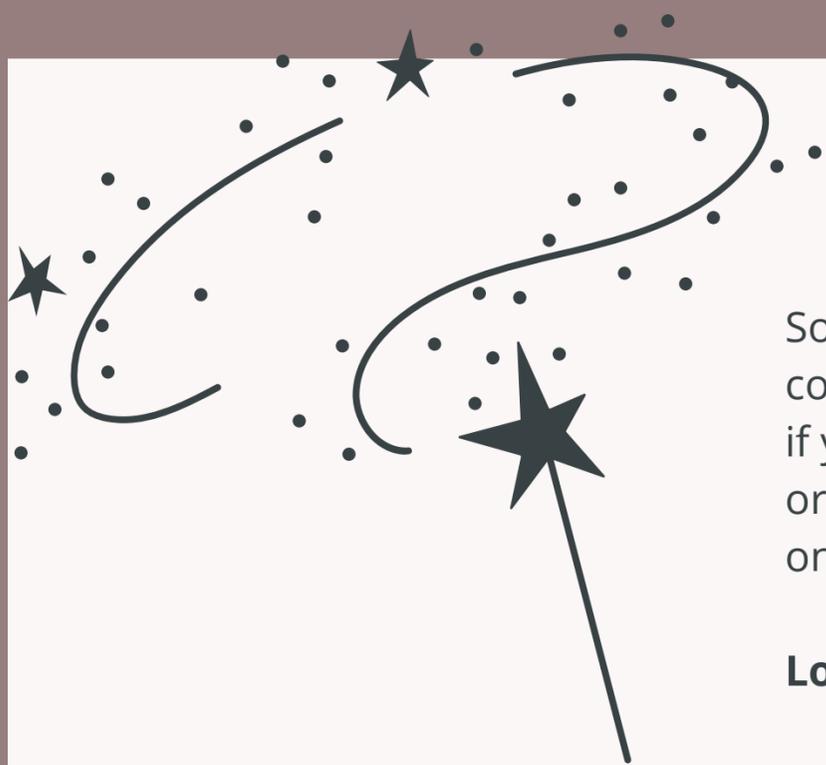
One of the keys to getting "unstuck" is to take a constructive approach, one in which you hold yourself accountable for how you move through the "stuckness." Rather than blaming the world for the situation, you can choose to view your **crisis as an opportunity** and use this time to your advantage, for personal growth that will help you move forward.

In this guide, I'll share five strategies that have helped me move through moments when I felt lost, stuck, confused—or all three at once, and more!

Let's get started!

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1. Get Unstuck from What You've Lost



Key: **Accepting Loss and Change** Card for Reflection: **Five of Cups**

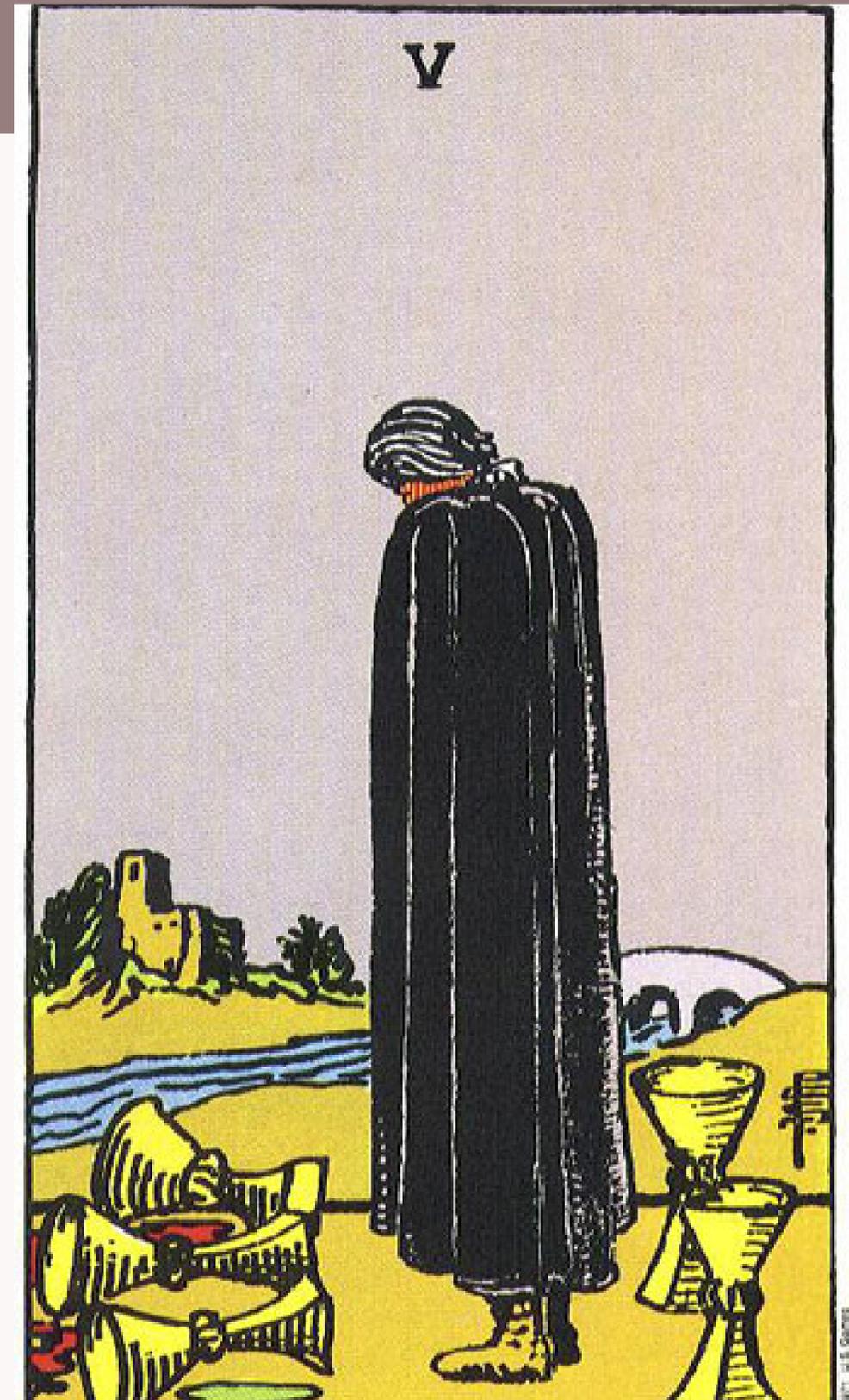
Sometimes we get stuck when we experience a loss. One of the most common ways this can happen is when a relationship breaks up, even if you were the one who chose to leave. Another example is a job loss, or the loss of a friendship. Yet another example is the loss of a loved one through illness, death, or becoming estranged.

Loss happens throughout our lives, in ways big and small.

Have a look at the figure on the Five of Cups. This person is surrounded by five chalices: three have fallen over and the colored liquid that was inside has spilled all over the ground, while the other two are behind the person and appear empty, waiting to be filled.

If you've experienced a loss and you find that's the reason why you feel stuck, it's important to **recognize the loss and work through your feelings**. Trying to pretend that nothing's happened or everything's ok—when it's really not—won't help you move forward; that's simply denial and prolonging the inevitable **emotional need to process the loss**.

Don't judge yourself or how you feel. Simply ask yourself what you're feeling, identify it, embrace it, and then consciously work to let it go. As you work through all of the feelings associated with the loss, you'll also be **reclaiming strength** so you can eventually turn around and view those two shiny golden goblets with a fresh perspective. Loss is part of the cycle of life, and when you compassionately accept it and accept yourself in the process, you give yourself permission to move on, and therefore move forward.



2. Get Unstuck from Being Treated Unfairly.



Key: **Letting Go of the Need to Be Right** Card for Reflection: **Two of Cups**

Sometimes we can get stuck in a rut because we're focused on how someone did us wrong, or how things went in a way that wasn't fair to us. The inner desire to "avenge" this wrong can become all-consuming.

Here's the catch, though: it's all in your head. That doesn't mean you shouldn't address an injustice; however, until you **let go of the need to be right**, you won't be able to move forward. When you stop spending your energy on being angry about how you were wronged, you **reclaim your power**. And with that power, you can choose how to move forward.

The image of the 2 of Cups is suitable for helping you get unstuck here, as it represents two people coming together on equal ground, searching for an emotional connection based on clear and authentic communication. If you imagine yourself sending out this love to the person who wronged you, you can embody the spirit shown on the 2 of Cups.

Whatever method you choose to get unstuck from anger over a personal injustice, the key is to **take the focus off of yourself** and **open your heart** to extending compassion to others.

A paradoxical, but quite effective, way to get unstuck here is by flipping the script entirely. Rather than imagining all the ways you might get revenge on the person who wronged you, you give yourself permission to **let it go by sending them love**. There are a few practical ways you can do this, which I'll include on the next page.



Additional Resources



Psychotherapists Phil Stutz and Barry Michels, authors of *The Tools*, have a tool they call **Active Love**, [which you can read about here](#). It involves visualizing infinite love and sending it to the person who has you feeling stuck, then allowing that infinite love energy to flow back to you. The premise is that you're drawing from a higher source, something they call "outflow," or "the force that accepts everything as it is."

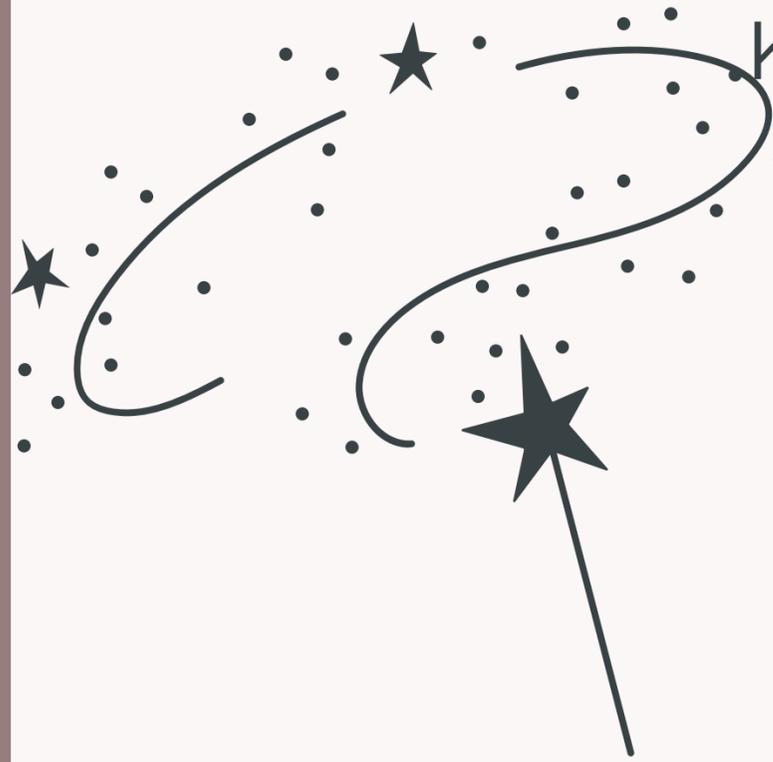
The Buddhist practice of maitri, or loving-kindness, is another way to practice sending love to others, including those you have difficulty with. In this practice, also known as **metta meditation**, you extend love to yourself, to someone you already love, to someone you feel neutral about, to someone you have negative feelings towards, and eventually to all beings everywhere. Meditate and focus on the person who wronged you by reciting these words, either silently or aloud:

May you be happy
May you be healthy
May you be safe
May you live with ease

Here are some more [resources for metta meditation](#), including a guided meditation audio from Sharon Salzberg, author of *Loving-Kindness*.



3. Get Unstuck from Needing to Control



Key: **Embracing Uncertainty and Change**

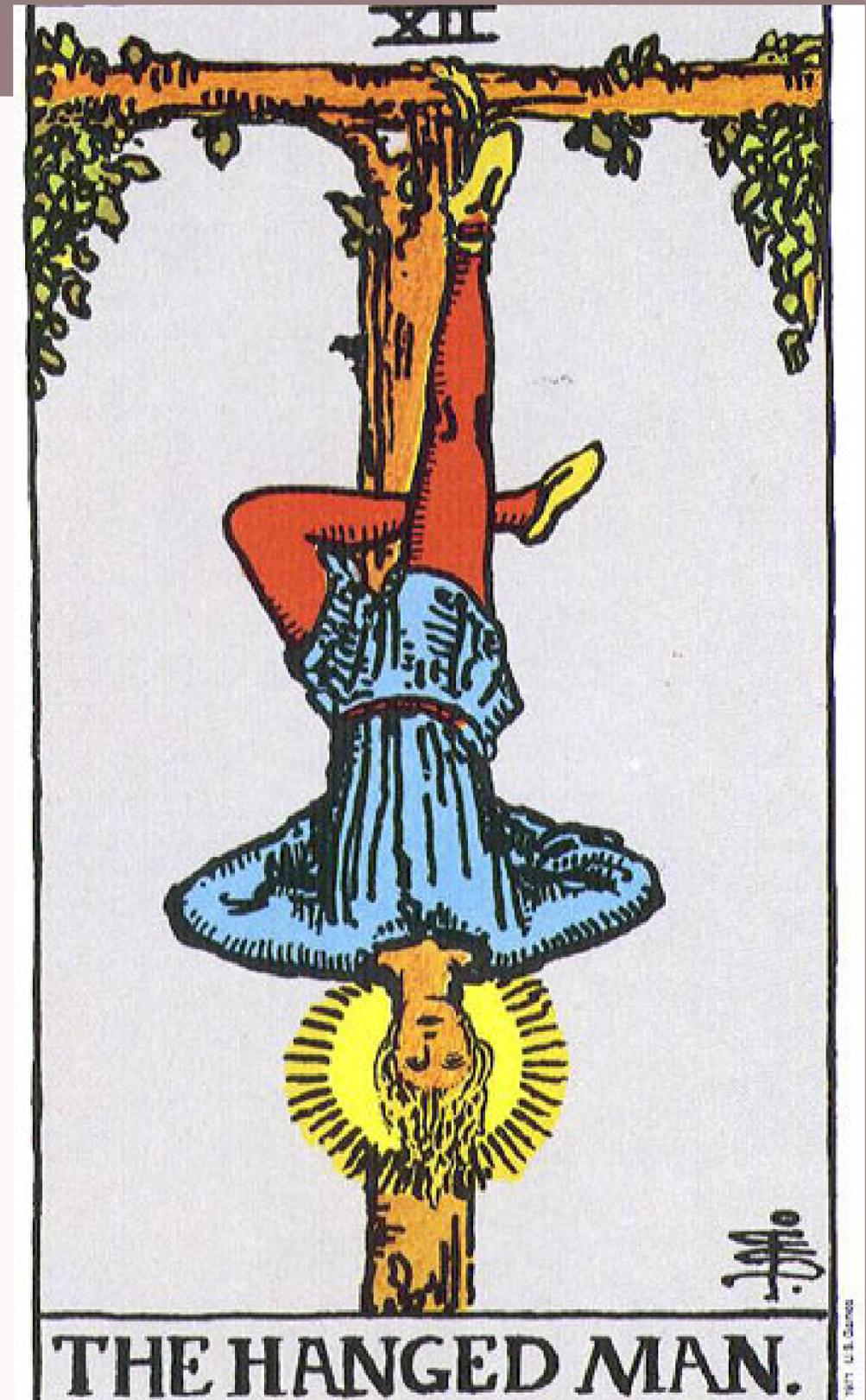
Card for Reflection: **The Hanged Man**

Another way we can get stuck is when we feel the need for control over everything in our lives. It can hold us hostage and make us feel overwhelmed, because it's an impossible task. This need for control often masks a fear of uncertainty.

If we constantly try to control everything, we live in the illusion that this control will ensure our lives are safe and predictable. The truth, however, is that **life is unpredictable and we can't control everything**. The need for safety and predictability is understandable and healthy. But when it exceeds a reasonable limit, it can become debilitating and keep us stuck.

The Hanged Man shows us a constructive way to get unstuck from the need to control. Once again we're shown how **letting go can bring us to a place of higher consciousness**.

We don't know how The Hanged Man ended up in the predicament they're in, hanging upside down by one foot, with their hands behind their back. However, now they have to make the most of the situation they're in, and the first step involves **acceptance of the situation**. The next step is acknowledging that they've already done everything they can to move the situation forward. Now is the time to consciously let go and **embrace uncertainty**, trusting that there is a higher order and wisdom to the events in our lives.



Additional Resources

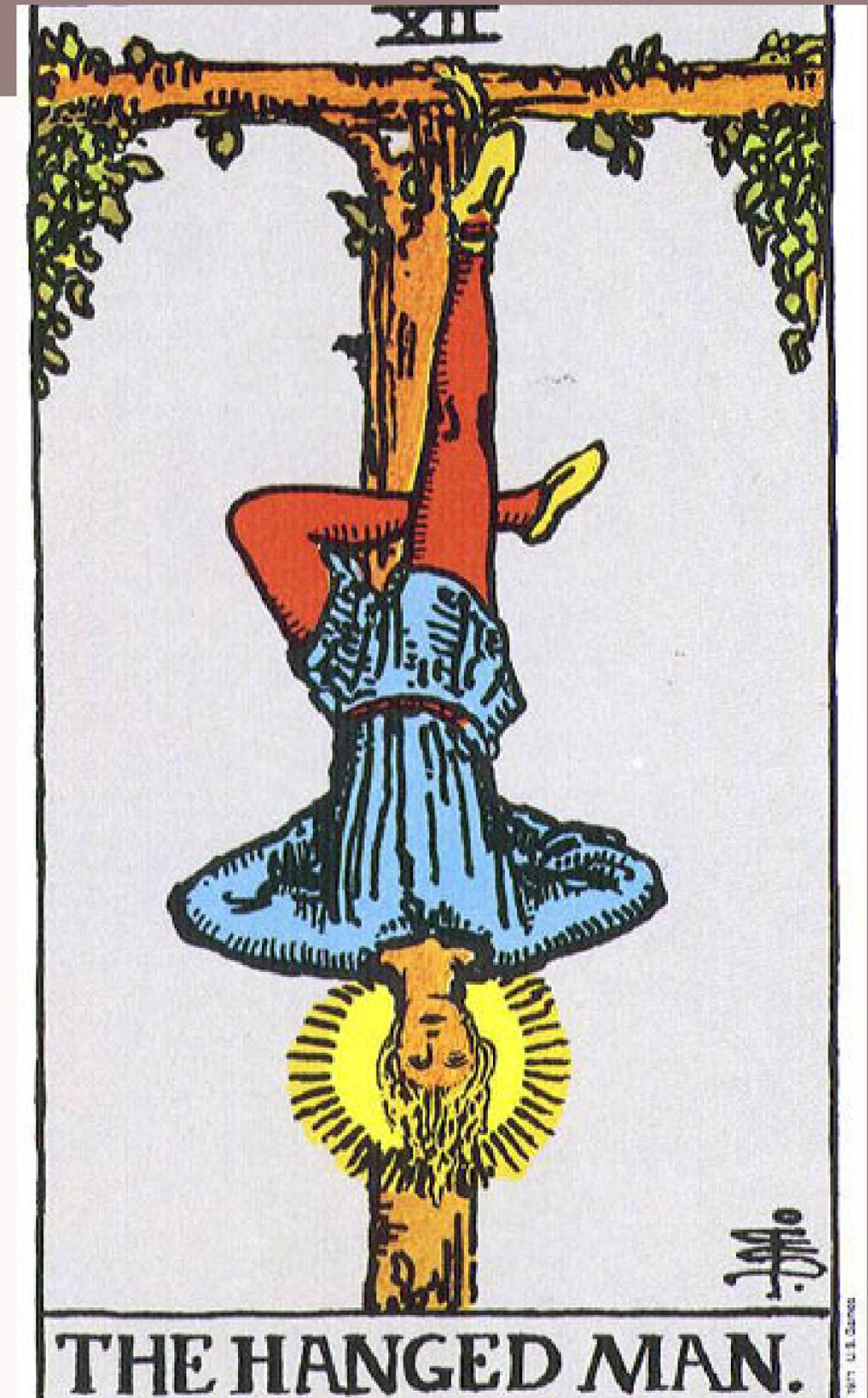


It can be difficult to truly open up to and embrace uncertainty and admit that we don't ultimately have control over everything. Yet, the more we seek control, the more we can become aware of **ways we can gently work to let go.**

Journaling is a great way to get outside of your head by **putting your thoughts down on paper** and giving yourself space to work through them. Here are some journal prompts to get you started:

- I let go of the need to control [situation], and I trust that ...
- When I allow myself to let go, I feel ...
- I admit life is unpredictable and I trust that I can handle whatever comes my way, because ...

Another tool for letting go of control is the practice of mindfulness meditation. Learning to focus on and **live fully in the present moment** can help you step back from the anxiety around the uncertainty of the future. Mindfulness meditation is a practice that can help you do this.



4. Get Unstuck from Feeling Worthless



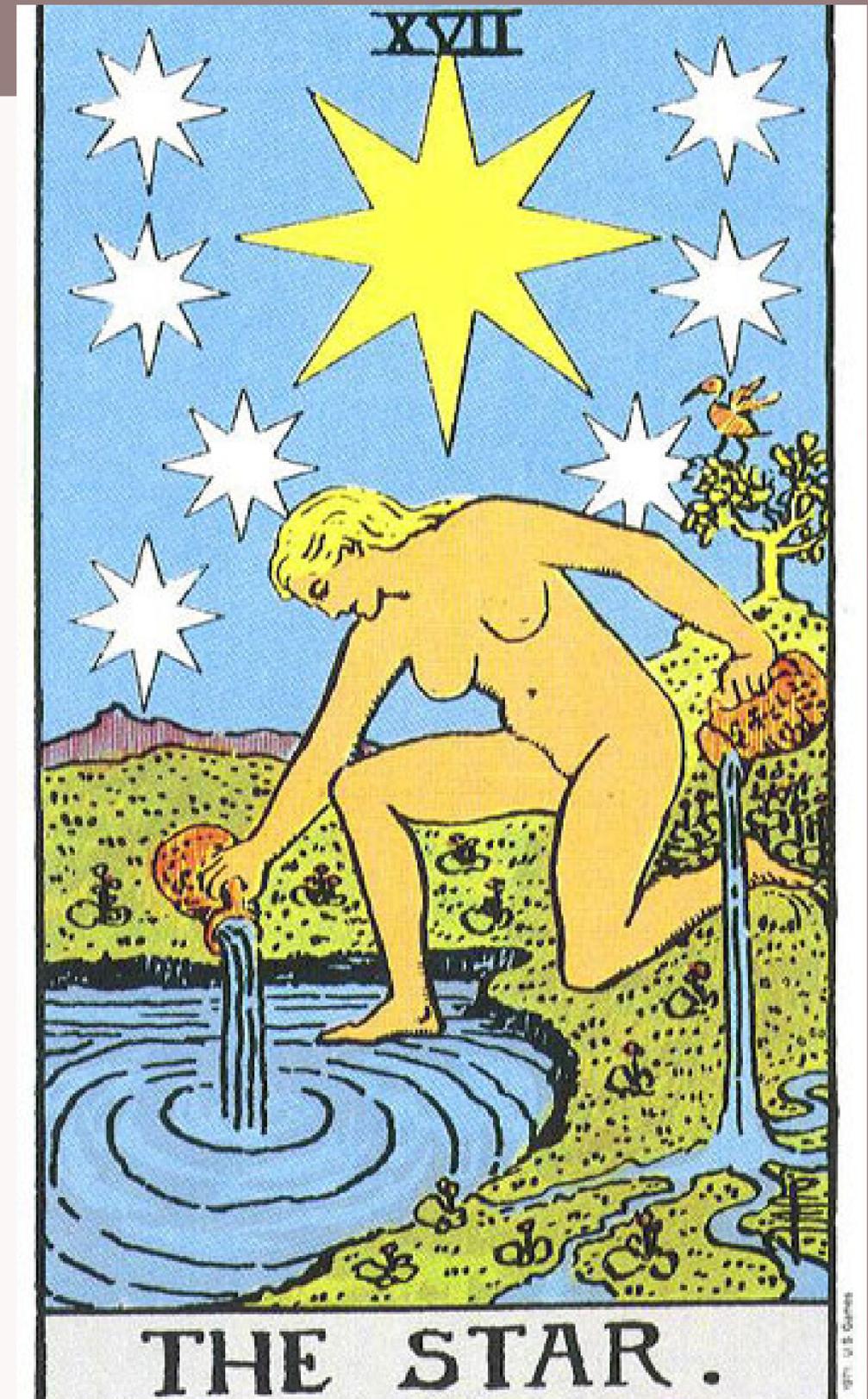
Key: **Recognizing Your Inherent Worth** Card for Reflection: **The Star**

One of the most pervasive ways that people get stuck is by not believing in themselves or their inherent worth and dignity. Many of us harbor **negative voices that judge our every thought and action**, telling us constantly that we're not good enough. When we feel we're worthless, it's easy to lose hope and purpose, and to think that nothing we do even matters. This thinking can quickly spiral into desperation.

You are worthy of care, love, and respect, simply for existing right now, just as you are. You don't have to "do" anything to be worthy of this.

You can use the image on The Star to reflect on self-compassion and **accepting yourself as worthy of love and respect**.

The figure on The Star is **completely vulnerable**, without any clothing—therefore not hiding any part of themselves—and at the same time, they are **secure and confident** about who they are. They pour water out of the vases they hold in both hands, offering the unique gifts they possess to nurture the environment around them.



Additional Resources

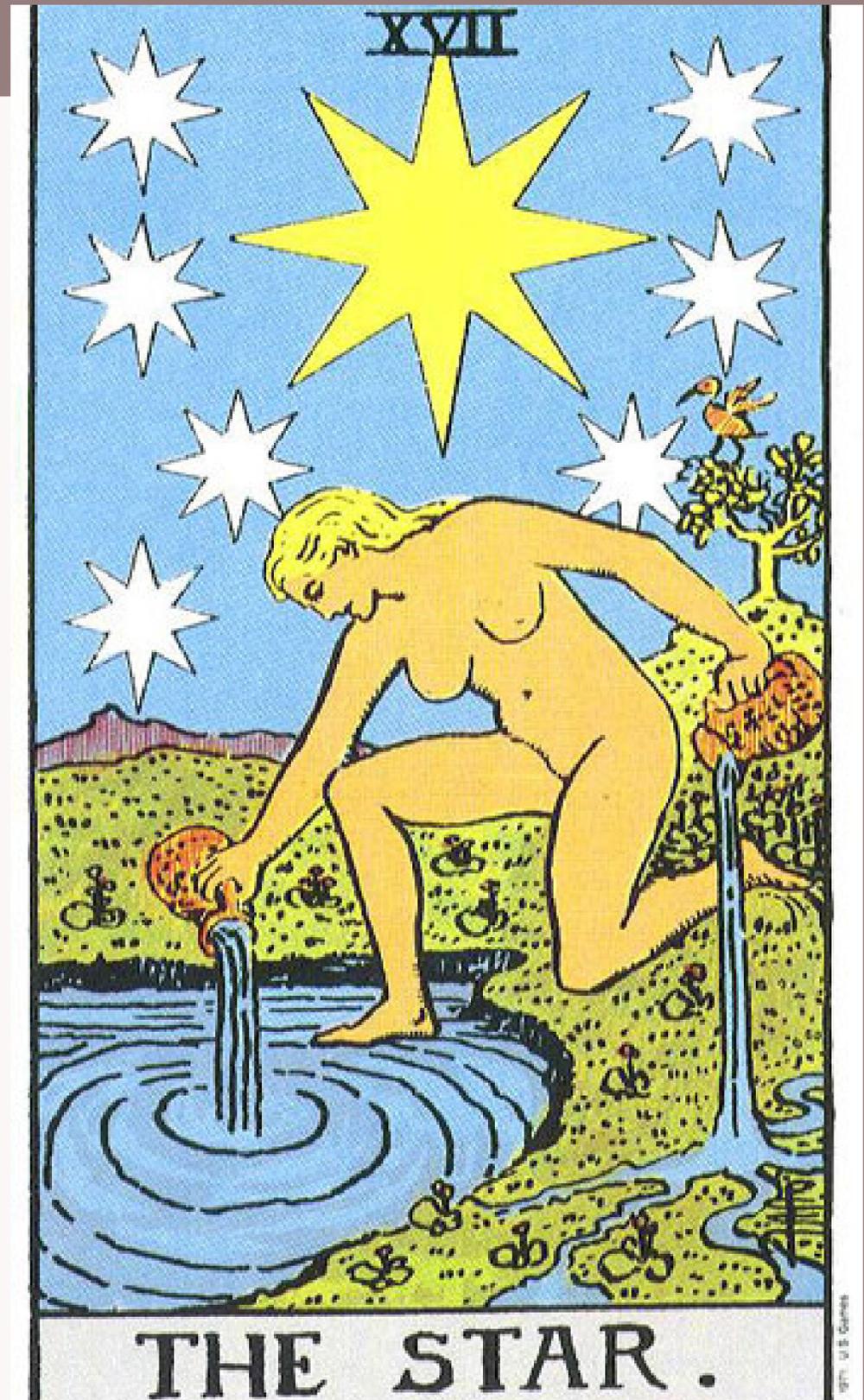


Self-compassion is a valuable practice for cultivating your sense of self-worth and beginning to treat yourself as you would treat a beloved friend. The truth is, you can't give to others what you don't have for yourself. If you begin to **treat yourself with compassion**, you can extend this compassion to those around you. You'll find that you become kinder and more gentle not only with yourself, but with others as well.

Each and every human being on the planet is a unique, one-of-a-kind creation, and as such, has talents to offer the world. Ask yourself what **things you love to do**, what your core values are, what you strongly and passionately believe in.

Get in touch with **what makes you uniquely you**, and honor that. Make it a practice to treat yourself as you would treat a friend or loved one, and extend the same compassion to yourself that you extend to others.

Additional resources for practicing self-compassion:
Self-Compassion Exercises
by Dr. Kristin Neff



5. Get Unstuck from Fear of Failure

Key: Taking a Calculated Leap of Faith Card for Reflection: The Fool

Often we get stuck when we feel like we can't achieve the life we want to live. We feel held back by any number of things, and yet often the biggest thing **holding us back from success is simply fear**. Fear can take many forms, including fear of getting started, fear of failure, or even fear of success. The common denominator is that we stay stuck because **we feel unable to take that critical step** forward into the unknown. We want certainty about our choices and want to know that things are going to work out the way we want them to.

When you look at The Fool, you can imagine that they are about to **take that first, single step into the unknown**. The Fool isn't sure of how things are going to work out, but they are sure of one thing: staying stuck and not taking any steps will ensure they never move forward. The Fool's single first step is a leap of faith. That step is telling the Universe: "I'm willing to **trust that my needs will be met** and that I'll be led where I need to go." It's not a passive stance of waiting for things to magically appear; rather, it is an act of co-creation with the Universe. By taking that one initial step into the unknown, The Fool is **setting an intention in motion** that will propel them forward.



Here's the key, though: getting past fear of failure requires that we **take action at the very moment we still feel unsure**. Working towards success often does involve failure, or missteps, or unexpected setbacks. When we **accept "failure" as a part of the overall process**, we can move beyond an unrealistic expectation that everything will work out perfectly, and instead work towards taking action.



Additional Resources



This [article in Scientific American](#) discusses research by scholars at Northwestern University that **proves failure is essential to success.**

If you can accept failure as an inevitable—and necessary—part of the process that leads to success, you can unlock the "stuckness" that comes from fear of making mistakes.

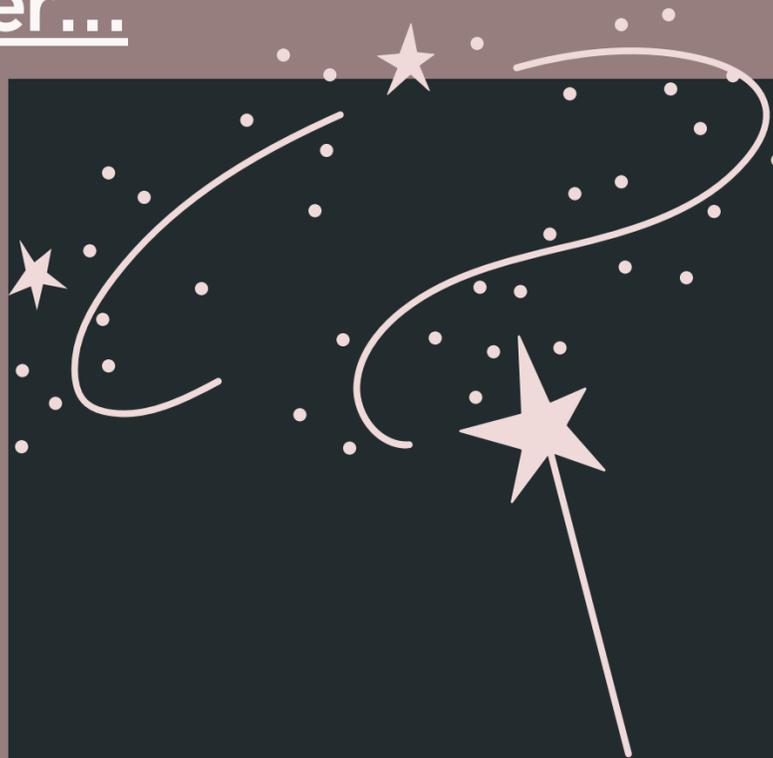
"Every winner begins as a loser," said Dashun Wang, who led the study.

Additional resources to help combat fear of failure:
[Go Ahead and Fail](#)
by Arthur C. Brooks,
The Atlantic

According to a 2018 [survey](#) conducted by Norwest Venture Partners, 90% of CEOs "admit fear of failure keeps them up at night more than any other concern."



Remember...



Life is a process

Feeling stuck is just one moment in the continuous process and flow of your life.

"Stuckness" doesn't last forever!

Take advantage of the discomfort you feel to explore what's really going on.

Ask yourself:

- What do I need right now?
- How can I stay with these feelings and honor them?
- Where is the opportunity in this crisis?

Want more insight?
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