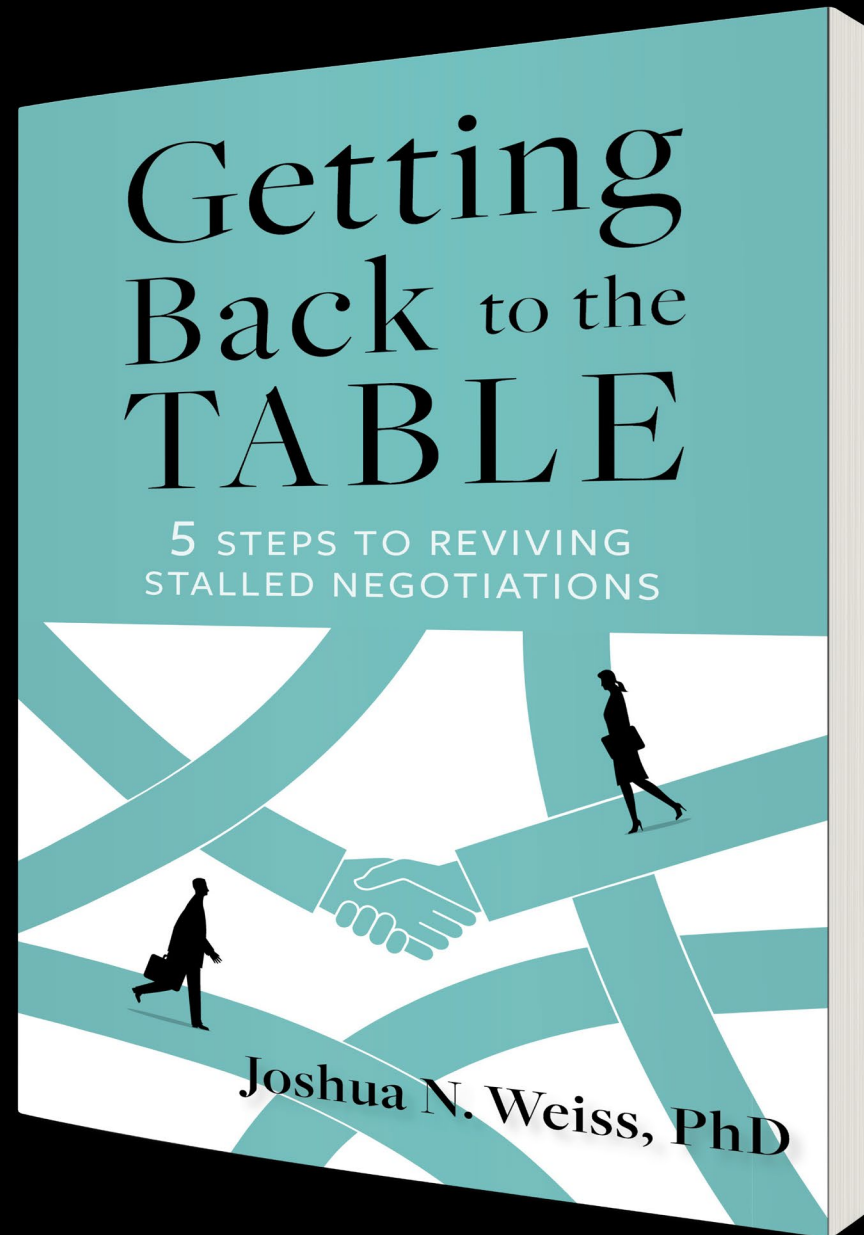


BY JOSHUA N. WEISS
PRESENTED TO THE PROGRAM ON
NEGOTIATION
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Why Getting Back to the Table?

- ▶ “Loved your book, but why the focus on successes?”
- ▶ “Thank goodness! I feel like all we read about is success. It feels like if we don’t succeed all the time we are bad negotiators.”
- ▶ To recognize that setbacks/failures are part of the negotiation landscape
- ▶ To create awareness about the different ways negotiators can fail
- ▶ To broaden and deepen the conversation around failure
- ▶ To help people to learn from their setbacks/failures so they become better negotiators

Setbacks and Failures Defined

- ▶ A setback is a breakdown of a negotiation process that can be temporary or significant, but a path back to the table is relatively clear
- ▶ A failure is when a negotiation breaks down more permanently and there is no obvious way to get back to the table
- ▶ Why the distinction? What happens if we don't call a failure a failure?



3 Typical Responses to Failure

Rationalization



Anxiety

Learning

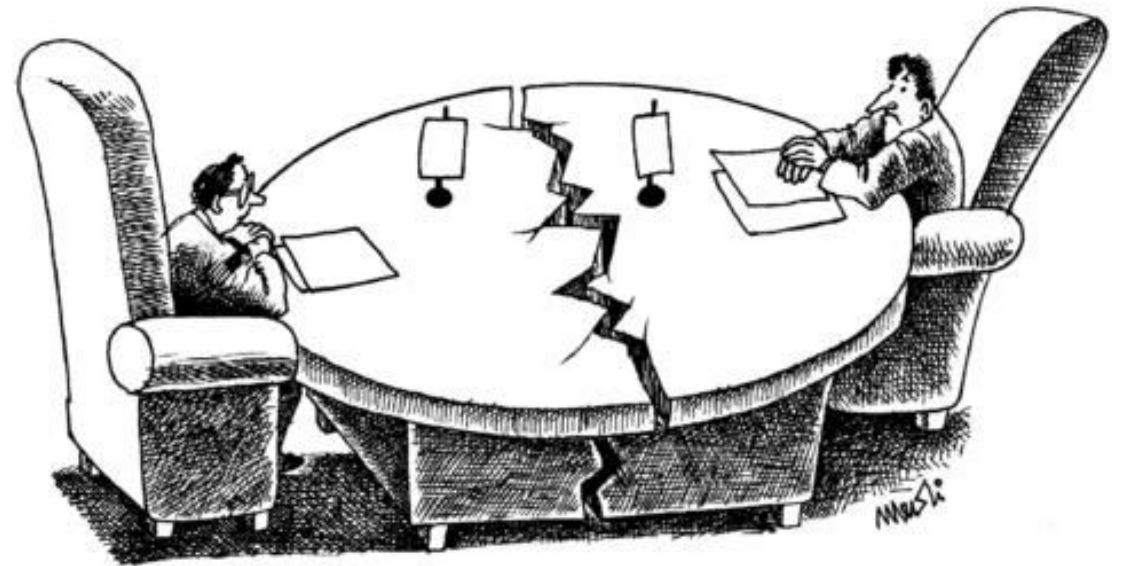
Some examples of the types of failure (7 in total) and their magnitude

- ▶ Slipping through the fingers failure
- ▶ What were you thinking failure
- ▶ Penny wise and pound foolish failure



Why don't we learn from our failures?

1. Blame and Rationalization
2. Biases – some include self serving, the backfire effect, and tendency toward loss aversion
3. Heuristics (mental shortcuts)



The Five Steps for Getting Back to the Table

Step 1: You Failed – Accept it.

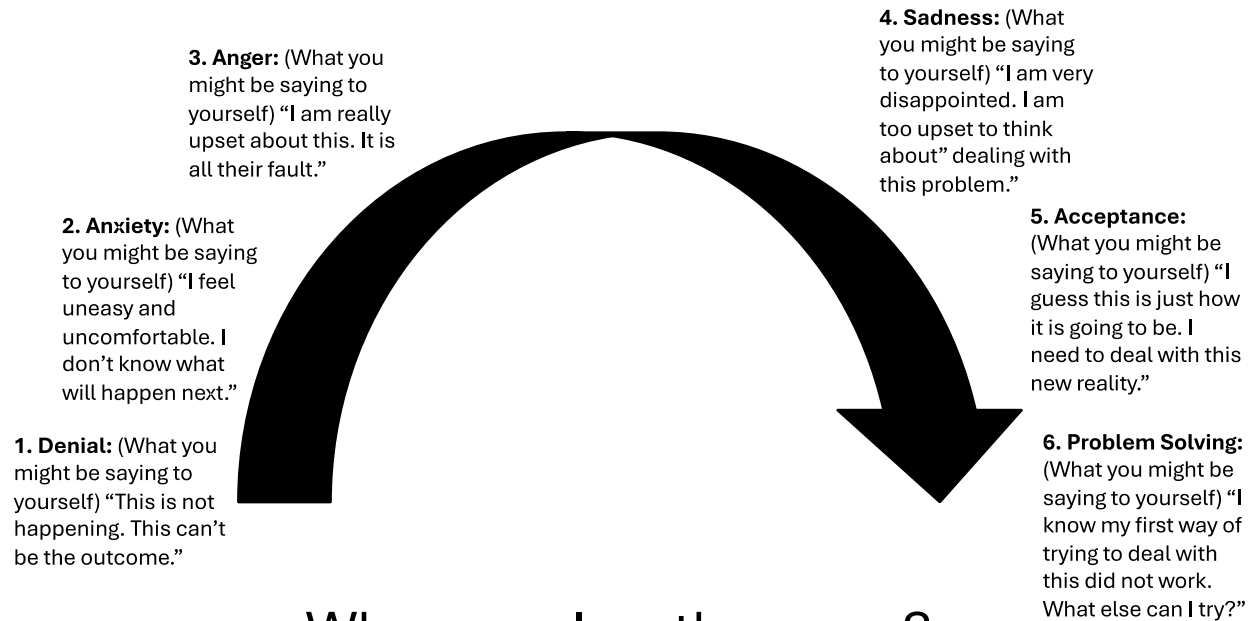
Step 2: Analyze the Forest and the Trees -- what went wrong?

Step 3: Not just any lessons – learn the right ones

Step 4: Actively unlearn what your weaknesses taught you

Step 5: Return to the table smarter and stronger





Where am I on the curve?

Listen to the conversation in your head

Step 1: You Failed – Accept it.

The Five Steps for Getting Back to the Table

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**Step 2: Analyze the Forest and the
Trees -- what went wrong?**

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the right ones

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and stronger



Step 2: Analyze the Forest and the Trees

- ▶ The forest is the big picture – back to the seven types of failure and their magnitude
- ▶ The trees are the moves and turns of a negotiation process that can shed insight on where a process broke down and why



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Step 3: Learn the Right Lessons

- ▶ “Experience is not the best teacher, evaluated experience is.” John C. Maxwell
- ▶ Too often most people have one core approach to negotiation and apply it to every scenario
- ▶ Be careful of the problem of transference rooted in the subconscious
- ▶ We don't look hard enough for the similarities and differences – one off vs. long term negotiations, dynamics, etc.
- ▶ It is **easy** to learn the **wrong** lessons unless you really examine things in great detail



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Step 4: Actively unlearn what your weaknesses taught you

Weaknesses, Why you hold them?, and What to Unlearn. Examples

My Weaknesses	Why I have them	What do I need unlearn?
1. Seeing the other negotiator as an adversary	1. I learned that I have to gain as much as I can in the short term and to deal with the longer term later	1. Negotiations are rarely short term only and we can damage important relationships we will need with this approach
2. Viewing compromise as synonymous with negotiation	2. I was taught you have to give something up of great importance in negotiation to reach an agreement	2. That compromise is a core aspect of all negotiations. I don't always have to give something up that is important to me to meet my objectives
3. Learning that I have to keep emotions out of negotiation	3. I have seen many negotiations fall apart because people's emotions got the better of them	3. That emotions only have a destructive impact on negotiation and they can actually be kept out of the process

The Five Steps for Getting Back to the Table

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Two Ways to Return to the Table

- ▶ If you have had a **setback** and are ready to get back to the table
 - ▶ Knock on the door first
 - ▶ Start with them
 - ▶ What went wrong and how can you modify your approach
- ▶ If you have really **failed**, how can you grow over the long term as a negotiator from this experience?
 - ▶ Talk to colleagues
 - ▶ Take your unlearning seriously
 - ▶ Study key realms of negotiation – uncertainty, adaptability etc....
 - ▶ Embrace the lesson of Kintsugi



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tesekkür ederim

Questions?



References:

- Previous work done on failure in negotiation – see Michael L. Moffitt & Scott R. Peppet, *Action Science & Negotiation*, 87 Marquette Law Review 649 (2004)
<https://scholarship.law.marquette.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1185&context=mulr>
- “*Entrepreneurial Negotiation: Understanding and Managing the Relationships that Determine Your Entrepreneurial Success*” by Samuel Diner and Lawrence Susskind (2019)
<https://www.pon.harvard.edu/shop/entrepreneurial-negotiation/>
- Article on Transference and Negotiation in the Negotiation Journal:
- The connection between negotiation and transference was first laid out by Susan Fukushima in 1999. See Susan Fukushima, “What You Bring to the Table: Transference and Countertransference in the Negotiation Process,” *Negotiation Journal* 15, no. 2 (April 1999): 169–180, <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1571-9979.1999.tb00189.x>.
- Elisabeth Kübler-Ross was a Swiss-American psychiatrist, a pioneer in near-death studies, and author of the internationally best-selling book, *On Death and Dying*, where she first discussed her theory of the five stages of grief, also known as the “Kübler-Ross model”.
- Watch the PON Live recording of Joshua Weiss's book talk titled *Real World Negotiations and the Power of Story* <https://www.pon.harvard.edu/events/real-world-negotiations/>
- Links to Joshua Weiss’s publications: <https://www.pon.harvard.edu/store/author/joshua-weiss/>