

## Self-Sabotage Quiz

Read through the 30 patterns outlined below and rate how applicable each is to you, using a 1 to 7 scale in which 1 = “Not a problem at all” and 7 = “This is a big problem for me.”

### A. How You Approach Change:

- 1) You expect yourself to succeed in making life changes without designating any time or mental space to accomplish them.

1      2      3      4      5      6      7

- 2) You see your capacity to change as being dependent on other people’s behaviour. For example, you’d exercise more or make better spending choices if your spouse was more supportive and on board.

1      2      3      4      5      6      7

- 3) You’re a perfectionist who doesn’t believe in incremental improvements, and you’re only satisfied when 100 percent of a problem is fixed.

1      2      3      4      5      6      7

- 4) You’re too busy to come up with processes or systems that would help you better manage your time.

1      2      3      4      5      6      7

### B. Pleasure and Self-Care:

- 5) Your approach to pleasure is a denial-binge cycle. You deny yourself simple pleasures and relaxation, and then stay up watching Netflix until 3 a.m.

1      2      3      4      5      6      7

- 6) You ignore the warning signs that you need a break.

1      2      3      4      5      6      7

- 7) You don’t solve simple roadblocks to pleasure. For example, you enjoy taking photos, but your phone is full, and you haven’t gotten around to backing it up.

1      2      3      4      5      6      7

- 8) You hold back from doing the things you want due to thinking you might not be able to achieve it “I can’t....” thoughts. For example, you think “I can’t take a dance class until I’ve lost weight.”

1      2      3      4      5      6      7

C) Hidden Drains on Your Time and Energy:

- 9) You waste a lot of time and emotional energy reinventing the wheel, such as writing a new packing list each time you take a trip or continually resetting passwords you forget rather than taking the time to set up a password manager.

1            2            3            4            5            6            7

- 10) You need better routines that work for you. For example, you go grocery shopping every second day, because you're always running out of basic items.

1            2            3            4            5            6            7

- 11) Other people in your life defer all decision-making to you rather than taking up some of that burden. You allow this pattern rather than empowering them to make decisions.

1            2            3            4            5            6            7

D) Procrastination:

- 12) You create self-imposed rules that trigger and support procrastination. For example, you think, "If I don't have time to vacuum the whole house, I won't do any housework."

1            2            3            4            5            6            7

- 13) You overcomplicate solutions to problems. You think and research endlessly, trying to find perfect solutions.

1            2            3            4            5            6            7

- 14) You stay stuck in patterns that are psychologically comfortable, but not working for you. For example, overworking is more comfortable and familiar than having more balance.

1            2            3            4            5            6            7

- 15) You allow yourself to ruminate or worry without expecting yourself to take appropriate problem-solving actions. For example, you worry about the security of your online accounts, but do nothing to lower your risk.

1            2            3            4            5            6            7

E) Relationships:

- 16) When a relationship needs improving, you over-focus on decreasing negative interactions, but under-focus on increasing positive interactions and shared experiences.

1            2            3            4            5            6            7

17) You complain about other people's behaviour when you need to make the same change yourself.

1            2            3            4            5            6            7

18) You repeat strategies for trying to influence others that aren't effective 90+ percent of the time. For example, you repeatedly complain to your spouse when it hardly ever works.

1            2            3            4            5            6            7

19) You operate based on how you think a situation should be rather than dealing with reality. For example, you think your spouse should be able to remember to do a particular task, so you don't write instructions, when writing instructions and putting them in view would solve the problem.

1            2            3            4            5            6            7

20) You don't adequately acknowledge the valid points other people make. You ignore other people bringing up genuine problems about your behaviour; for example, your spouse complains about you spending time on minimally productive tasks and has a point, but you don't adequately acknowledge this.

1            2            3            4            5            6            7

21) You have emotional raw spots that, when triggered, result in out-of-proportion reactions. You don't have effective methods for managing your emotions and behaviour when your childhood hurts and traumas are reactivated.

1            2            3            4            5            6            7

F. Work:

22) You self-generate stress. For example, you start more projects than you have time to finish.

1            2            3            4            5            6            7

23) You work on low priority tasks, but leave high priority tasks undone.

1            2            3            4            5            6            7

24) You overwork when what you really need is to step back and see the big picture.

1            2            3            4            5            6            7

25) You're self-critical when self-acceptance and compassion would have a more positive impact on your behaviour and emotions article continues after advertisement

1            2            3            4            5            6            7

G. Money:

- 26) You hold back from investing or otherwise taking charge of your money, because of shame and anxiety about a bad decision or experience from years ago. For example, you made a poor investment decision in your 20s. Now you're in your 30s and too scared to invest again.

1            2            3            4            5            6            7

- 27) You overpay for items due to risk aversion. For example, you could buy generic printer ink for a fraction of the cost of brand-name ink, but you overpay for a sense of security.

1            2            3            4            5            6            7

- 28) You will overpay for minimal extra gain. For example, you'll spend more for a top-of-the-line model when the extra features that model offers are not even particularly important to you.

1            2            3            4            5            6            7

- 29) You make financial decisions based on being sucked into marketing incentives when those decisions don't make logical sense. For example, you'll pay \$40 more to stay at a hotel that belongs to a particular chain, because you collect their loyalty points, when realistically the points are only worth \$10-15.

1            2            3            4            5            6            7

- 30) You keep paying for subscriptions you rarely use.

1            2            3            4            5            6            7

H. Overcoming Self-Sabotage

1. Consider addressing any habit you've rated a 5 or above. If you had lots of "that's me" experiences reading the quiz, then pick what's most appealing to you to work on or focus on the patterns that have the biggest negative impact on your life and relationships.
2. Once you see your patterns, make specific behavioural plans of what you'll start doing instead.

Here's an example: If negativity is affecting your relationships, you could use two strategies.

You set a goal to:

- (a) make one positive comment at every meeting you attend at work, and
- (b) ensure that the first thing you'll say when you see your spouse in the evening will be something positively toned.

3. Any behaviour change plan you come up with needs a contextual trigger. In other words, “When X happens, I’ll do Y,” as in “When I’m in a meeting, I’ll make a positive comment.”
4. Aim to *improve* your habits (by say 1, 10, or 20 percent), rather than to *eliminate* all self-defeating behaviour from your life.

That type of perfectionism is self-defeating in itself! Gradual improvements you make over time will add up more than you expect and will help rewire your default mindsets to create resilient new habits.