



THE  
**verywell  
mind  
podcast**

WITH THERAPIST  
**Amy Morin**

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## 142 - The Power of Regret with Best-Selling Author Daniel Pink

Amy Morin:

Welcome to The Verywell Mind Podcast! I'm Amy Morin, the editor-in-chief of Verywell Mind. I'm also a psychotherapist and a best-selling author of four books on mental strength. Every Monday, I introduce you to a mentally strong person whose story and mental strength tips can inspire you to think, feel, and do your best in life. The fun part is we record the show from a sailboat in the Florida Keys. Don't forget to subscribe to us on your favorite platform so you can get mental strength tips delivered to you every single week. Now let's dive into today's episode!

Do you have any huge regrets in life? Do you try to convince yourself that you actually don't regret anything? Do you go to great lengths to avoid doing anything that you might regret later? If so, you're going to want to hear today's show. I'm talking to New York Times bestselling author Dan Pink about his new book, "The Power of Regret." Some of the things he talks about are the most common regrets people have, the best strategies for coping with regret, and how to use your regrets to create a better life. Make sure to stick around until the end of the episode for the Therapist's Take. It's a part of the show where I'll break down Dan's strategies and talk about how you can apply them to your own life. So, here's Daniel Pink on how your regrets can actually help you grow mentally stronger!

Amy Morin:

Daniel Pink, welcome to The Verywell Mind Podcast.

Daniel Pink: I am glad to be with you.

Amy Morin: I am super excited about your new book, "The Power of Regret." I have no doubt that it's going to help a lot of people. Regret is something that we don't talk much about. But before we dive into it, maybe we should have you define it. What does it really mean to have regret?

Daniel Pink: Well, regret is an emotion and it's an emotion that involves looking backward and thinking, *ugh, if only I hadn't made that stupid choice, if only I hadn't taken that path, if only I hadn't made that decision*. So, it's backward looking and unpleasant, and it makes us feel bad, and that's one reason we try to avoid it. But if we deal with it right, it can actually help us out quite a bit.

Amy Morin: So, I'm a therapist. It's an issue that we deal with often in the therapy office. People will say things like, I was thinking about moving, or I was thinking about taking on this new job, but I don't want to do it because I'm afraid I'm going to regret it. Can you talk a little bit about that anticipation of regret, the fear of feeling regret?

Daniel Pink: Yeah, that's a really, really interesting topic and there's a lot of research on that. Exactly as you say, Amy, one of the things that we see with anticipating our regrets is that if we do that too much and in the wrong way, we end up making very risk averse self-protective decisions. So, while it's helpful to anticipate your regrets, that anticipating your regrets properly can steer a behavior, it's sort of like, I think of anticipated regrets as like a drug that should come with a warning label. It's useful for some things, but it has a downside. One of the big downsides is that it makes us risk averse. To me, one of my favorite examples of that is the advice on people switching answers on a multiple-choice test.

When I was a kid, people always said, go with your first instinct. Don't switch answers. What the research tells us is that, when you switch answers, you're more likely to get it right. But the reason we don't switch is that we can more easily imagine regretting switching from a right answer to a wrong answer than we can with sticking with a wrong answer. Sticking with a wrong answer, it's like, oh, I didn't really do anything. Going from a right answer to a wrong answer is like, oh my God, that would be the worst thing that could ever happen. So, we end up making the wrong decision.

Amy Morin: You did tons of research for this book, and you discovered that people are more likely to regret the things that they didn't do rather than the things they did, right?

Daniel Pink: Sure. That's in the research that I did. It's also a pretty sturdy finding in 50 years of psychological literature. This is particularly true as people age. Younger people tend to have often more or less equal numbers of action regrets, I regret what I did, and inaction regrets, I regret what I didn't do. But as people age, inaction regrets totally dominate.

Amy Morin: Why do you think that is, that the older we get, the more we think "I should have done that?"

Daniel Pink: I think that it's a great question. I think there are a number of reasons for it. One of them is that action regrets sometimes are easier to resolve. So let's say that I have hurt somebody or offended somebody, or maybe done even something worse than that. I can try to make amends. I can try to apologize. I can try to restore that person. That can kind of extinguish the inaction regrets. But if I regret that I never started a business, that I stayed in a lackluster job and never started a business, that's not going to get resolved anytime soon. So, it sticks with us, and a lot of the regrets, the core regrets, a lot of them go to inaction, particularly these regrets of boldness, not starting a business, not asking somebody out on a date, not traveling, not speaking up. Those are the things that really, really stick with people.

Amy Morin: Interesting. So when you were doing your research, what kind of regrets did you find people had? What were some common ones, things people said I shouldn't have done that or I should have taken-

Daniel Pink: Oh my Lord. So, for a part of the research here, what I did is I collected regrets from around the world. I ended up gathering about 16,000 regrets from 105 countries. It's nuts. I couldn't believe I ended up with so many of them. As I started going through them, what I discovered is that over and over again, around the world, people had the same four core regrets. These were irrespective of the domain of life. So, we tend to think about regrets in the domains of life. So that's like, oh, it's a career regret. It's an education regret. It's a romance regret. But deep down there was something else going on.

So, one regret was what I call foundation regrets. Those are regrets are, if only I'd done the work. These are a lot of people who regret not saving money, not taking care of their health, smoking, not working hard enough in school, little decisions that ended up having big consequences later on. I mentioned boldness regrets, which is, if only I'd taken the chance. Those are huge for people, huge. Another really interesting category. You might hear this in your therapist's office. I heard it in a lot in my online confessional, was moral regrets where people are at a

junction, and they have a choice. They can do the right thing or do the wrong thing, and they do the wrong thing, and it bothers them 10 years later, 20 years later, 30 years later. So, on that, I had a lot of regrets about bullying earlier in life.

Amy Morin: Yes.

Daniel Pink: Have you heard that in your office?

Amy Morin: All the time.

Daniel Pink: Interesting.

Amy Morin: Somebody will say I was in the third grade, I was mean to somebody. They're 45 years old and they still feel really bad about that.

Daniel Pink: But isn't that interesting though? I had a lot of bullying regrets. Infidelity was a big one too. I think in a weird way, these moral regrets, if only I'd done the right thing. In a weird way, I found them kind of heartening because the fact that someone still comes into your office is still bugged by something they did 30 years ago, to me suggests we actually, most of us want to be good. You know what I mean? That we want to do the right thing. When we don't, it bothers us. I think that's in a weird way kind of ennobling.

Then the final category are a huge category, connection regrets. Those are if only I reached out, and those are about relationships of every kind, not only romantic relationships, which tend to get all the press, but relationships of parents and kids, of siblings, of other relatives, of friends. Huge numbers of regrets about drifting apart from friends and not wanting to reach out feeling like it's going to be awkward, feeling like the other side won't care and drifting further. So those four regrets, to me, are very revealing about what we all want out of life.

Amy Morin: It is, isn't it? The thought that you did so much research and uncovered so many of the same things over and over again. What surprised you the most about the research that you did?

Daniel Pink: I think it was partly that very thing that, how universal some of these regrets were. I think that surprised me. When I looked, I also did a quantitative piece of research where I did a survey, a public opinion survey of the U.S. population. Looking, especially for demographic differences. There weren't that, that many of them actually. There's some differences based on age, which I mentioned before. A lot of the regrets

have to do with different levels of opportunity. So, in a sort of counterintuitive way that I think makes sense, once you think about it, people with more formal education had more career regrets than people with less formal education.

Amy Morin: That's interesting.

Daniel Pink: Well, yeah, so it sounds kind of weird. Then I thought about it. It's like, well, if you have more formal education, you have maybe more opportunities and therefore more forgone opportunities. So that was kind of interesting, but I think the universality of it. In this giant database of 16,000 regrets, over and over and over again, the same things kept coming up.

Amy Morin: So, let me tell you about something else that comes up often in my therapy office and if you heard much of this. Sometimes people will come in for treatment and they finally find something that works for them. Maybe they take an antidepressant, or they discover that there are strategies that work, and then they're so upset that they didn't do it sooner and they regret it because they'll say, 20 years ago, if I would've known this existed or if I would've just gotten help the first time somebody suggested it, I could've really enjoyed those last 20 years, yet I resisted it. Did you hear a lot of those kinds of regrets?

Daniel Pink: I did, and they're in the book. I heard a lot of those things. On that one, again, my view is that we can use regret as something to help us move forward. We can look backward, sort of let ourselves out the hook a little bit, disclose it to somebody else, draw a lesson from it and apply that lesson going forward. That's a little bit of a tougher one. That's a little bit of a tougher one. To me, again, this is a cliché, but there's that old Chinese adage, the best time to plant a tree is 20 years ago. The second best time is today. Yeah, you didn't do the 20 years ago, you did it today. So, that's good. Let's move on.

Amy Morin: It is a tough one because people will say, now I'm finally happy, but it's almost like I can't enjoy my happiness, or I can't enjoy this good thing in my life because I'm so upset I didn't do it before.

Daniel Pink: Yeah.

Amy Morin: For a lot of people that's tough to work through.

Daniel Pink: Yeah. Yeah. You're a therapist, but a strategy that people have used for that, for those kinds of things, there's certain kinds of regrets that we

have where we might not be able to do anything about that particular regret. So, one way to at least feel better about those is to do what's called at leasting it, or I call it leasting it, which is basically to do what it is called, a downward counterfactual. Imagine how things could have turned worst. When we do that, it makes us feel better, and just simply feeling better is sometimes totally valuable. So, what I have, again, in the database over and over again, are regrets like, *ugh*, almost all from women, *I shouldn't have married that idiot, but at least I have these two great kids*. So, anything to do for people who regret, and I have them in the book, who regret not getting that kind of help earlier was like, well, at least I didn't wait another five years.

Amy Morin: Yeah, I like that. I think sometimes we tend to look at the best-case scenario and think it could have been that great. But yeah, it could have been that worse too, if you waited longer.

Daniel Pink: I think just as a general tool for navigating life, to me, you have to ask life's most important follow up question, which is compared to what? Yeah, you wish you had taken that antidepressant or that anti-anxiety med 15 years ago, but compared to what? Compared to waiting another 15 years? So, I think that can be helpful. I did hear a lot of that and those are a little tougher to work through.

Amy Morin: They are, but I'm glad that not only did you talk about some of the common regrets and issues that come up with regret, but thankfully you then talk about how to deal with our regret, the strategies that we can do. Can we talk about some of those so our listeners can say, all right, I can move forward with this regret because you really say it's not a bad thing that we can optimize regret and use it as a way to move forward.

Daniel Pink: Yeah. Here's the thing. Let's start with a starting premises here, that everybody has regrets. This idea that we should not have regrets is absurd.

Amy Morin: Right.

Daniel Pink: Everybody has regrets. It's part of our cognitive machinery. We have regrets for a reason, because they're instructive. It's one of the most common emotions of any kind. It's the most common negative emotion. But the question really, and again, it's a therapeutic question in a way, is like, what do we do with these negative feelings? Do we ignore them? No, that's a bad idea. Do we wallow in them? No, that's a worse idea. What do we do? We use them as signals. We use them as signals for our

thinking. So, one of the things that we can do is, in some ways, reframe the way we look inward.

You're obviously familiar with the work on self-compassion. It was new to me, but you know, a lot of times when we make mistakes, when we have blunders, we just rip ourselves, we excoriate ourselves. That's a bad idea. There's very little evidence that self-criticism leads to positive outcomes. Self-esteem isn't that much better. What we should be doing is self-compassion, which is very simple from Kristen Neff at the University of Texas, basically treat yourself with the same warmth and understanding that you would treat somebody else. Recognize that your missteps are part of the human condition, recognize that a misstep is not definitional of your entire being. In some ways, it sounds touchy feely, but, but treat yourself with some kindness. That's the first step.

Second step, why people go to therapy, in some ways, is disclosure. Disclosure is inherently valuable. It converts these blobby mental abstractions into concrete, less fearsome words. It begins the sense making process. The other thing is actually then to get some distance from your regret and say, OK, what do I do about this? How do I extract a lesson from it? There are all kinds of techniques for doing that. So, the way I look at it is sort of like, look inward, express outward, move forward. That can be super useful for people to take this negative aversive emotion and draw lessons from it to guide the rest of their life.

Amy Morin: Oh, that makes so much sense. Let's kind of break that down a little bit. You talk about disclosure. I hear a lot of people say things like, well I don't really have any regrets in my life. If somebody says that, do you think that they're lying?

Daniel Pink: Are they lying? I don't think that they're lying. I think what they're doing, Amy, is not thinking hard. So let me give you an example of that. So again, go back to like, I got so many regrets. Okay. So, I got this database of regrets. People could volunteer to contribute. I have several entries that begin, I don't have any regrets. I don't believe in regrets, but ... and then they go on to say that they feel bad that they hurt somebody. They feel bad that they never got a chance to travel. They feel bad that they lost touch with their brother. So, I think that there's something about the word itself that people find aversive. Actually, in my quantitative survey, this study, this poll of 4,489 Americans, I asked a question that avoided using the word.

I said, how often do you look back on your life and wish you had done things differently? Okay. So, I didn't say the word regret. What we found

is that it was 83% of Americans did that at least occasionally. One percent said they did it never, because I didn't call it regret. I called it-

Amy Morin:

Interesting.

Daniel Pink:

But here's the thing, we need to normalize regret. Everybody has it. It's part of our cognitive machinery. It exists for a reason and we've stigmatized it so much. We're so loathed to talk about it, when in fact, every piece of evidence tells us that regret is normal. Regret makes us human, regret treated right can make us better. It instructs us. It clarifies the world for us. There are some simple, affirmative steps that we can take to remake our regrets into forces for good.

Amy Morin:

I find that too, in the therapy office, if I ask somebody asks about a regret. They might be more likely to say something like, well, I don't really regret anything. I messed up a few times. I learned from it. So, it's not really that I regret it. Because I think you're right, we just don't like that word 'regret.'

Daniel Pink:

Yeah, it is a regret. It's a regret you've dealt with in a healthy way. You have a regret.

Amy Morin:

Right.

Daniel Pink:

I regret taking that job without doing enough due diligence behind it, but I learn that I need to do more due diligence before I accept the job. OK. It's still a regret, but you've dealt with it in a healthy way. This idea that a healthy person simply extinguishes all regret is just not right.

Amy Morin:

Did you get the idea that a lot of people who were telling you about their regret, that this might be the first time they've ever acknowledged it to anybody else?

Daniel Pink:

Interesting question. Yes, I did. Yes, I did. So, I had, in people who completed the survey, who contributed their regret to this world regret survey, these 16,000 regrets that I have, a few people mentioned that. Then when I did some follow up interviews with people who had opted in to include their ... People had the chance to opt in to include their email address if they wanted to be contacted for follow-up interviews and huge numbers of people did, more than I would've expected. I interviewed a lot of people, and I did hear that, "This is the first time I've ever told anybody this." Because part of the way we deal with regret is we disclose it and we've gotten disclosure all wrong too.

Disclosure is an unburdening. But again, as I said before, the reason disclosure is helpful is because these negative emotions are abstract. They're blobby, they're amorphous, they're menacing. And when we convert them into words, by writing about them or talking about them, we defang them. They become less fearsome. So that is really useful. The other thing that we're wrong on is that we ... and there's 30 years of research in behavioral science about this, is we think, when we disclose our vulnerabilities, our mistakes, our weaknesses, people will like us less. They generally like us more because they admire our courage. They empathize with us.

Amy Morin: I have no doubt that when a lot of people say, "Oh, I regret this," the other person you're talking to can relate to it, or they might be able to say, "Yeah, I've gone through something similar." I regret this in my life. People will be much more willing to talk about it.

Daniel Pink: You're exactly right. That's one of the things that got me on this in the first place, this whole topic is that I realized that I was at a point in my life where I had some regrets and I had a moment at one of my kids' graduations, where I just started thinking about it. I very sheepishly came back and started talking a little bit about it with people. I don't know why. I'd expected people to kind of like, *Ooh*, but instead they lean forward. Literally in some cases, leaned forward and said, "Oh wow, I can totally ..." I'm like, whoa, wait a second. That's really interesting. Maybe we've gotten this emotion totally wrong.

Amy Morin: One of the things you talked about in your book is you don't necessarily need to disclose it to a therapist or even anybody else, but you talk about journaling or just leaving a message, doing an auditory sort of journal too, and how powerful that could be.

Daniel Pink: Yeah. There's some really good research on this. There's some really good research on this. James Pennabaker at Texas has done 30 years of research on the importance of just writing about things privately. So if you're skittish about disclosing it to other people, just writing about your regret for 15 minutes a day for three days can be really useful because, again, it defangs the regret. It makes it less menacing and it begins the sense making process.

Amy Morin: Is there anything specific we should write? Do you stick to the facts? Do you talk about the emotions? Do you talk about what you think would've happened if you would've done something differently, or anything to make it really useful?

Daniel Pink: I'm not sure. I think that there is something to be ... I don't know. I think there's something to be said for simply recounting it. That happened a lot in the interviews. People just wanted to recount it. Once they told the story of it, that unburdening in some ways freed them. Once they unburden it, they can try to derive a lesson from it. So, I think, and I'm not sure about the research on this, but I think that the best move is to just recount the story, take a beat, another beat and say, what did I learn from this?

Amy Morin: Cause I think it's easy for our imaginations to get carried away with us, right? If I would've dated that person longer, if I would've taken that other job, I'd be rich and famous and I'd love my life, and I'd be so happy. We could really easily romanticize that life would be way better if we'd done something. On the flip side, if I hadn't done this, then I wouldn't have. Or we maybe still think that that kid we bullied in the third grade is still thinking about it. They might not even remember it. But in our heads, I think we really easily get caught up thinking about all of these magical things that we're imagining as truth.

Daniel Pink: It's true because here's the thing. It's a great point because we are natural storytellers. It's our ability to ... regret is an amazing thing that human beings do. It's a combination of time travel and storytelling. It's like, I can't imagine any other species is able to do this, what we do here. So, the question then becomes, do we use our remarkable powers of time travel and storytelling to lift ourselves up or to bring ourselves down? On that one, we have a choice. We have volition over this. I think we can easily use these incredible cognitive and emotional skills to chart a way forward for our life rather than ruminate over the past.

Amy Morin: I like that, time travel and storytelling. That's really simple.

Daniel Pink: That's what it's all about.

Amy Morin: Yeah.

Daniel Pink: That's what regret is all about. We go in our heads to ... OK, so you mentioned, oh, if I only ... what did you say, had dated that person or hadn't dated that person? If only I had kept dating that person. OK. So you're going back in time. Then you're rewriting the story. You've sort of done an edit on the story. You're telling a new story. Then you travel back in time and, because you've changed what happened in the past, the future now is different. It's incredible. It's like, this is why this is why five-year-olds don't experience regret. Their brains haven't developed enough. It takes until about seven or eight where kids even understand

the concept of regret because it's so emotionally and cognitively complex. But again, when we have something that is universal, complex and omnipresent, you have to say, well, why do we have that? It must serve some kind of purpose. It's very clear that regret's purpose is to make us better.

Amy Morin: That's where the self-compassion comes in, right?

Daniel Pink: Absolutely.

Amy Morin: We treat ourselves with a little kindness, then we can learn from it rather than beating ourselves up about it over and over again.

Daniel Pink: I really think that's the starting point. It's hard to draw lessons from your behavior, from your regret, if you begin the process by just slacking yourself over it. You're going to be too beaten to extract any kind of lesson. What you want to do is start out by looking inward and just treat yourself with a little bit of kindness. As you know from the research on self-compassion, the research on self-compassion is amazing. I did not know much about it. I was blown away by how powerful it is as a force for physical health, for traits like wisdom and curiosity. It's a very powerful concept. I wish it were more widely taught.

Amy Morin: I do too. We had Dr. Kristen Neff on our show to talk about self-compassion and what a superpower it can be. Another thing that you talked about is self-distancing. Can we talk a little bit about some strategies that we can use to gain a little distance from that thing that we just did or didn't do?

Daniel Pink: Totally. There are all kinds of things. Here's the thing. Fundamentally, we all know this. We're better at solving other people's problems than our own. So, one way to solve your own problem or get lessons from your own problem is to distance from it. So, there are all kinds of ways you can do that. It's going to sound like silly, but there's pretty good research on this. So, for instance, let's say that you wanted to know, how should I deal with this regret that I didn't take that career opportunity. Instead of saying, "what should I do," you ask yourself, "what should Amy do?" Even talking to yourself in the third person is valuable. You can distance in time. You can say, OK, it's 10 years from now. I'm looking back on this decision. What do I want to have done?

You can sort of distance it. I think one really interesting technique, it's really the key about zooming out. So, you can look at it almost clinically and say, OK, I'm in this room, examining this regret in a pristine, clean

laboratory, almost like examining a cadaver or something like that. What am I learning from it? I'm a doctor of regret sciences. What am I learning from this? And what am I advising people to do? Again, I think that one of the best decision-making tools in general for anything if you're stuck is to say, OK, what would you tell your best friend do? Once we do that, we almost always know.

Amy Morin: Yeah. It becomes crystal clear when you think, oh, well, I tell them, don't worry about it or go ahead and try it and see what happens.

Daniel Pink: That's what self-distancing is. It's taking a step back, getting some space in, literally in physical space or in time, or with language to give yourself the ability to solve your own problem as jointly as you would solve someone else's problem.

Amy Morin: Right. When you take all that emotion out of it that clouds our judgment.

Daniel Pink: Yeah, that's a good point.

Amy Morin: The anxiety and the fear and all of those things. Yeah, you take all that out and you think, oh yeah, that's what I'd say to somebody else. Before we go, I'd love to know. Can you tell us what some of your regrets are?

Daniel Pink: Sure. I have plenty of them. I do, I do. I guess one of the biggest ones was earlier in my life. I just felt I wasn't kind enough. I wasn't cruel to anybody, I don't think, but I wasn't affirmatively kind. So, I just think about all these situations that I was in, where some kind of social situation, it was very clear to me as a sort of introverted guy, a writer, an observer. You look around and you see somebody on the periphery, who's being left out. It's like, OK, that person's being left out. I didn't do a fricking thing. Sometimes other people might be mistreating somebody else, and I didn't step in to do anything.

I didn't go affirmatively out of my way to be kind. That really bugged me. It still bugs me. I try to use that going forward. I also did something, I love this technique, is put together a failure resume, which instead of having a ... you think about our resumes, there are these glorious glistening documents about how awesome we are. But a failure resume is the exact opposite where you list all your failures, setbacks, screw-ups. I did that. But what's important is that you do that, so disclosure is helpful. You do that, and then you say, what did I learn from this? By doing that, I learned just on the professional level, that a lot of my screw ups, a lot of my regrets, a lot of my mistakes kept coming back to the same two kind of core mistakes that I think I've done a better job of trying to avoid.

Amy Morin: Oh, I like that. That's got to be a brave thing to do, even if you know you're the only one looking at it.

Daniel Pink: Yeah, oh believe me. No one's ever seen my failure resume. It's painful, but here's the thing. You're a therapist, so you understand this, but it's sort of, what do we do with pain? What do we do with any kind of pain, particularly the pain of a negative emotion. Do we ignore it? Bad idea. Do we revel in it? Bad idea. Do we use it as a signal for our thinking? That's the approach.

Amy Morin: I love that. Well, thank you so much for writing this book. I have no doubt that you're going to change how a lot of us think about regret and it's going to be super helpful.

Daniel Pink: Well, I hope so. That's nice of you to say. Thanks for having me on the show, Amy.

Amy Morin: Absolutely.

Welcome to the Therapist's Take! This is a part of the show where I'll break down Dan's mental strength-building strategies and share how you can apply them to your own life. Here are three of Dan's strategies for dealing with regret that I highly recommend.

**Number one: Share your regret.** Dan said it's important to disclose your regret. Fortunately, you might not have to tell someone else about it though. You might benefit from writing in a journal. Even if no one else sees it, writing down your regrets might help you make more sense of it. This is a great strategy.

We often want to avoid thinking about the things that we regret. After all, most of those things we can't go back and change. Of course, there might be times when you can make amends. But for the most part, you can't do anything about the past. The more you try not to think about something you regret, the more you might be haunted by it. So, give it a shot. Take a little time to think about a few of your regrets, acknowledge them either to yourself or someone else, and see what happens.

**Number two: Practice self-compassion.** The way you talk to yourself matters. Dan shares how important it is to treat yourself with some compassion. This is a topic that we've tackled on our show quite a few times because the research is clear. Talking to yourself the same way you

talk to a friend can help you learn and grow from your experiences. Yet most of us struggle to be kind to ourselves. We're often much more critical of ourselves than we are of other people. If you beat yourself up for a mistake that you made, stop and ask yourself, "What would I say to my friend right now?" Then give yourself those same kind words.

**Number three: Get some psychological distance.** It's tough to make decisions when you're afraid that you might do something that you're going to regret later. So, I like that Dan talked about getting some psychological distance. This is a strategy that can help take the emotions out of a decision. There are lots of ways to do this. One is to do just what we talked about. Ask yourself what you'd say to a friend. Another way is to do some time travel. Imagine an older version of yourself asking, are you more likely to regret something that you're about to do or something that you're not about to do? I like that Dan's research showed regrets are more likely to involve chances not taken. So, you might keep that in mind as you anticipate feeling regret later.

So, those are three ways that you could turn your regrets into opportunities to grow stronger, share your regret, practice self-compassion, and get some psychological distance. If you want more tips for dealing with regret, check out Dan's book "The Power of Regret: How Looking Backward Moves Us Forward."

If you know someone who could benefit from hearing this message, share it with them. Simply sharing a link to this episode could help someone feel better and grow stronger. If you like the show, make sure to subscribe to us on your favorite platform. Do you want free access to my online mental strength course? It's called "10 Mental Strength Exercises That Will Help You Reach Your Greatest Potential."

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