

The Reset Mindset: How to Get Unstuck, Focus on What Matters Most, and Reach Your Goals Faster

Penny Zenker

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Penny Zenker's self-help book *The Reset Mindset* suggests a mental model for adjusting one's point of view and regulating emotions.

The Reset Mindset is a mindfulness method designed to help people detach themselves from emotionally charged situations—the deep breath a person takes to avoid screaming at their toddler, for example. All about composure and responding rather than reacting, the book introduces a three-step Reset Practice (step back, get perspective, and realign) built on taking Reset Moments, or “purposeful pauses to reflect and align actions with values, goals, and intentions.”

Personal anecdotes are used to give the model credence, with Zenker tracing its conception to the death of her father, after which she had to shift her thoughts to take control and find meaning in the loss. There are examples of recognizing Reset Moments, building a Reset Practice, and fostering a Reset Mindset as well, illustrating the Reset Mindset's potential applications in everyday life.

The book is given to dramatic storytelling, including tales of a skydiving experience, a near-death snorkeling venture, a gut-wrenching divorce, and a high-level investments scam. Such examples are both inventive and entertaining. They pair with compelling metaphors, as with a description of burnout culture as a “tug of war with time,” to give added life to the book's otherwise practical mindfulness tips, like differentiating between completing tasks and achieving a goal. Also down-to-earth are the chapter-ending journal prompts.

The model itself is somewhat convoluted, though, with the different stages rolling into each other without sufficient distinction. Further, the mindfulness and self-determination principles that the book introduces are quite familiar. Excess page space is dedicated to comparing Reset Moments to their equivalents in the medical world, the courtroom, and academia, making the text feel overstuffed. For example, Reset Moments are equated to seeking a second opinion or proofreading a book, but such comparisons are unconvincing. An analogy between Reset Moments and pit stops is far more succinct and illuminating.

The latter half of the book is overreliant on the quotes and stories of others; it becomes a bloated call-and-response interpreting previous self-help guidance to the Reset Mindset. There are no surprises regarding the sort of quotes and anecdotes included, either, from Admiral McRaven's “Make your bed” mantra to Alcoa CEO Paul O'Neill's 1987 investors' speech on safety.

The Reset Mindset is an amiable self-help guide designed to nurture open and grounded worldviews.

HANNAH PEARSON (July 12, 2024)

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