

BLACK AND WHITE THINKING

When a mixed moment gets judged as a total win or a total failure.

IN PLAIN ENGLISH

Your mind offers two boxes: perfect, or ruined.

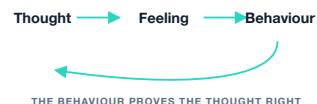
Most real moments are neither. They are mixed.

The giving up came from the label “ruined”, not from the chip.

THE CLINICAL NAME

Dichotomous thinking

A certainty shortcut. Sorting into two buckets is fast and costs the brain almost nothing, so a tired or stressed mind reaches for it first. It feels clean. What it removes is the middle — and the middle is where most of the truth lives.



HOW IT RUNS *One awkward work email*

	THE VERDICT	THE NEXT STEP
THOUGHT	“That reply was clumsy. I have damaged my reputation.”	“That reply was awkward. I can clarify one point.”
FEELING	Panic, then shame, then a wish to disappear.	Uncomfortable, but steady enough to act.
BEHAVIOUR	Re-read it. Avoid the person. Ruminates all day.	Send one short follow-up. Return to the task.

THREE TOOLS

- Catch the cue.** Circle the words always, never, ruined, perfect. They are the tell.
- Name two truths.** “I slipped — and I can still take one useful step.” Both, not one.
- Act for ten minutes.** The next email, the next task, the next repair. Not a grand restart.

A MUSLIM LENS

After a sharp exchange at the masjid, one moment becomes “I am a bad Muslim”, or the whole relationship is written off.

At wudū’ — Slow the body before the mind gets a verdict in.

In sujūd — Ask specifically for steadiness — not for the moment to be undone.

Then one repair — Salām, a calm message, or quiet ṣadaqah if pride needs softening.

The middle path is a discipline, not a compromise.

THIS WEEK Catch yourself saying “ruined” once. Write down the in-between version before you decide anything.

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