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EAR OF FAILURE? EVEN SO DO IT!

BY NELLIE FELIPE

Why are we so afraid to fail? Fear of failure is one fear that cripples a person's potential and their contribution to mankind. We all have a purpose to fulfill in life. Most people will withdraw at the first sight or smell of failure. Fear of failure is most linked to fear of rejection and criticism. We care so much about what others will say or think of us. To some extent, we should.

The most successful people, despite the field they are in, have failed many times before success was ever associated with them. The people we fear the most criticism from may surprise us with words of wisdom and even share their lessons learned.

Any successful individual will tell us not to view them with envy. There is a price to pay to live out our dreams which include long laborious hours, exhaustion, pain, sometimes even loneliness, and lots of missteps... hence failure. We can never taste success without a good dose of failures. Here is the key - We will reap what we sow. The failures help us to streamline, perfect, and deliver a better product and/or service. Not to mention this is how we gain wisdom.

In fact, fear is a friend if we see it through the appropriate filter and use it to propel us.

*Without fear, **courage** could never exist.* Ever experienced the kind of courage that made us feel like we had the strength of Hercules and/or the resolve of a great pioneer? Courage that allowed us to stand before an audience, climb a mountain, take on rolling rapids, ski down a steep mountain side, jump off a plane, audition for the school play, ask for the job, network in a room full of strangers? It is the most exhilarating feeling to take on fear with courage and see it through. Nothing compares.

Some questions that help me put fear into perspective:

1. "What is the worst thing that can happen?"
2. "What will be the impact on me if it did happen?"
3. "Will it help anyone else if I go through with it?"
4. "What is the greater purpose?"
5. "Is personal pride causing me to fear?"

While preparing to write this article, fear reared its ugly head, bringing thoughts to mind like "What can you say about fear that they do not already know?" Courage responded, "It does not matter, remind them. For we all have a great purpose to fulfill." Since this is not about me, as it pertains to how foolish I will look to others, I took courage.

We can accomplish extraordinary feats when we overcome fear. Face your fear, accept it as part of undertaking something new (the unknown), and admit your fears out loud. Doing this surprisingly begins to minimize the effect it has on us.

One other thing, we do not have to do it alone. Find a mentor and/or coach (each has a distinct purpose but are complementary to each other). They can be a sounding board for sanity checks and accountability partners; encouraging you every step of the way. Someone who has been there, done that. They will share pearls of wisdom and keep us from repeating similar mistakes they have made.

The battlefield is in the mind. The mind amplifies fears causing them to look worse than they really are. We already have what it takes to get there. Take courage... stay on the journey. You will win!

To quote Dr. John C. Maxwell, in his book "Leadership Gold": *The difference between average people and achieving people is their perception of and response to failure.*