

Question: How can you learn from the mistakes and turn them into learning moments of growth?

Tamar

“Experience is simply the name we give our mistakes.”

Within every mistake we make, there is something to learn. There are so many ways to learn from our mistakes however we often get so caught up in the embarrassment or devastation of the moment, we forget to seek the deeper meaning of what caused us to make the mistake. The best possible way to learn from our mistakes and turn them into moments of growth is to take the time to understand the cause of our mistake, and strategize ways to prevent it from happening in the future. Growth and moments of learning outside the classroom would not be possible if one did not make a mistake. Throughout the mistakes I have made, came many learning moments, but one that stood out particularly was when I committed to too many activities than I could handle. It is so easy to say yes, yet so hard to provide your undivided attention to multiple groups who equally deserve it. From my mistake I learned to commit to the few things I feel most connected to, that way I am able to devote and focus my attention and enjoy the activity to its fullest.

Although ongoing learning can be a tedious, and stressful commitment, with that come advantages that are well worth the hard work. Studying for a test with your full attention, and motivation, allows us to succeed at a greater level than giving up on studying. Devoting your full attention to ongoing learning enables us to do the best we can no matter what the task is.

“Great ones are willing to get burned time and again as they sharpen their swords in the fire.”

Gina

Hardships and challenges are part of every successful person's journey. We cannot dodge hardship. Life is filled with challenges; adversities, misfortunes, troubles, and difficult times and these experiences are an essential part of our lives. Of course they come hand in hand with joys and memorable happy moments but they are the more difficult and challenging experiences. Hardships can take many forms for example; physical, material, emotional and social. If we have the right attitude these hardships or

challenges can actually be a blessing since each one provides the opportunity for growth. I have read a saying before "the blessing of a skinned knee". The idea being that we learn best when we are allowed to fall. When we fall or get burned we experience a range of emotions whether fear, disappointment, hurt etc. If we have the right attitude we learn to deal with these emotions and work out how to evolve through each of them. If we see them as learning opportunities we will grow from each experience. From each challenge there is a life lesson to be learned. The other important issue is that we do not dodge or avoid challenges. We need to be prepared to face challenges head on. If we are willing to face our fears then we overcome them with time and become stronger as we emerge from each one. In the quote I chose to respond to, the reference is made to sharpening swords in the fire. Life is like a fire. It is ever changing and unpredictable, it can be dangerous and at times comforting. I believe that the full spectrum of all these experiences need to be acknowledged and faced. In some ways it is only from hardship that we learn, that we can grow. This is because we have felt the discomfort, we have walked a mile in some else's shoes and we begin to empathize with other people's situations. We get stronger ourselves as we tackle and emerge out of hardship determined not to repeat the same mistakes. We are then forced to face change and from change comes growth. Life lessons are friends and teachers.

Oran

This quote reminds me of when I first started to make oral presentations, I felt pretty comfortable and relaxed but when the moment came, I would always freak out and ultimately get burned for no reason. Even though I continued through my presentation, I would always think of ways to feel confident with my presentation skills. I would practice and use a lot of expression to make myself feel less anxious and more proud with my presentation. As I progressed and utilized these skills, I did feel a lot less pressured when I did an oral presentation which as a result sharpened my public speaking skills. The author also did this when talking about how he was trying to be less pressured and more relaxed when doing tai chi and every time he would be pushed around, he would learn from it and become stronger.

Jared

The idea of this quote is the fundamental idea of investment in loss. There are many great people in the world today, and the path they took to get there was not an easy one. These people had to give themselves up to the learning process in order to learn humility and become great. When learning to do or become anything, you have to let yourself be pushed over and again without "reverting back to old habits". One needs to put their ego on hold, and learn to accept the suffering and pain, in order to fully succeed. You need to be willing to look bad on the road to success. As Josh Waitzkin says "We must take responsibility for ourselves, and not expect the rest of the world to understand what it takes to become the best that we can be". We must invest in our losses in order to come out as a greater

individual. By learning to avoid making the same mistake over and over again, we could reach and go beyond our full potential. By giving yourself up to learning, and suffering through pain and hardship, you will “sharpen your sword in the fire” and be able to use that sword for greatness.

What are the advantages to ongoing learning rather than giving up or only working in a half-hearted way?

Kayla

In the book, “The Art of Learning” by Josh Waitzkin, we learn that one can benefit from any scenario/situation (good or bad). In the book, Waitzkin used the example of him breaking his “fighting hand” while training for a world Tai Chi Chuan competition. However, instead of completely stopping his training and changing his determined and focused mind-set, to use this opportunity to his advantage — both as an individual and an athlete. He practiced fighting with his left hand and after some time, he was able to defeat his opponents “single-handedly”. He did not let his injury get the best of him and the outcome was remarkable. He not only learned how to shut down his opponent with one hand, but he also obtained the skill of finding the balance between emphasizing his strengths and strengthening and enhancing his weaknesses.

Although he was faced with adversity, he could have either given up, or come back with greater determination and willingness. This mindset does not only apply to Tai Chi, but can apply to everything in life. For example, if a student is not satisfied with a mark that he or she got in school, that person should focus more on targeting the mistakes and looking for ways to improve rather than simply focusing on the mark received and giving up. With the mind-set discussed in Waitzkin’s book, the individual would ultimately become a better learner, would improve tremendously on the next assignment/assessment and would benefit, in more ways than one, from this valuable life skill. This teaches us that when faced with adversity, while the easy thing to do would be to give up, it is with pure determination, hard work and a desire to continuously grow and learn, that one can overcome the challenges being faced.

“Great ones are willing to get burned time and again as they sharpen their swords in the fire” and “How can you learn from mistakes and turn them into learning moments of growth? “

Aimee

Both these statements can relate directly to my past experience when I auditioned for an arts

school called Baythorn. This school only accepts 30 students from approximately 400 applications across Thornhill and Toronto. I applied to this school at the age of 12, while in Grade 4, but did not succeed. I did not let this get me down, and a year later applied again and did accomplish my goal of the acceptance. This quote relates to my past experience because if I did not persevere and try again willing to risk the consequences of not getting accepted a second time, I would not have succeeded. Nevertheless, I persevered and tried again even though there was a large chance that I would get “burned” and rejected again. The second time I took the application process a lot more seriously. When I auditioned I had to put myself out there and ensure that the judges noticed me. I needed to stand out from the rest of the students whom were also auditioning. Auditioning for the second time gave me the ability to be more prepared as I had a better idea of the questions and routines they would ask me to perform. Furthermore it gave me more confidence during the process as I knew what to expect and did some preparation for the audition. Even though I was scared of rejection I knew that if I let myself shine through then I would succeed. This time I was successful and did make the cut! Through the perseverance and immense ability to perform and speak with confidence it gave me the ability to risk “sharpening my sword in the fire”.

A specific example that supports this is that when auditioning the first time I was extremely nervous which affected my performance. I did not participate as I should have when they asked me certain questions nor was I that interactive with the judges. This was a mistake that I made when auditioning the first time. During my second round of auditions I knew not to let my nerves control me and that I must interact with the students and teachers to my best ability. I thoroughly rehearsed the second time, and practiced many routines. Through the recognition of my mistakes it gave me the ability to perform to my fullest potential which lead to my acceptance into Baythorn Arts School.

This time I came prepared, I was more confident, and I succeeded.