



## Courageous Leadership Step 5: Far Better to Dare Mighty Things

One of my favorite quotes in the world is Theodore Roosevelt's "Far Better to Dare Mighty Things".

*"Far better to dare mighty things, to win glorious triumphs, even though checkered by failure, than to take rank with those poor souls who neither enjoy nor suffer much, in the gray twilight that knows neither victory nor defeat."*

.....and nobody on earth lives this wisdom more than one of our Project Athena "Survivors", Alli Morgan. When Alli was 15 years old, she tore her ACL in a soccer game. She went in for a routine surgery to fix her ACL and was progressing toward recovery until she faced intense pain and couldn't advance further in her therapy. It was discovered in an x ray that a screw was lodged in the joint and the replaced ACL was too long. So she underwent a second surgery to correct the first. A few weeks after her second surgery, a staph infection set in, and her surgical wound refused to close. The ligaments and hardware in her knee became septic and were removed. But the infection continued to spread.

Over the next four years, which were spent on crutches, Alli endured over 40 surgeries and spent a collective 15 months in the hospital, missing college. To literally add insult to injury, her leg had become irrevocably locked straight, and no surgeon could provide her with an answer about whether she would ever be able to bend that leg or walk again. So at the very young age of 20, Alli decided to make a very brave decision to avoid the "Gray twilight" her life had become, and she Dared to do a very Mighty Thing. She decided to become an elective above the knee amputee to gain her life BACK.

And she applied for a grant to become one of our Project Athena "Athenas" for the Keys to Recovery Adventure, which is a kayak and bike ride from Key Largo to Key West. She completed all 120 miles of that journey surrounded by a supportive group of fundraising Gods and Goddesses in 2012 and crossed the finish line with her new bionic leg and her new life. She's now a member of the US Paralympic Skeleton Team. And she is working on her PHD. For me, Alli truly embodies Theodore

Roosevelt's Far Better To Dare Mighty Things quote, because she knew that there would be fear, failure, and pain along the way....but a far bigger fear for her was to take rank with those poor souls who neither enjoy much nor suffer much in the gray twilight that knows neither victory nor defeat. She knew her life would be harder in many ways, but as she said in an interview "I didn't know if I was going to get my life back or what would ultimately happen, I just knew I had to try". Brave words, from a brave young lady who would much rather have victory or defeat than what ifs. So what is your gray twilight? How are you in limbo in your life? It's time to channel your inner Alli Morgan and dare mighty things!

XO, Robyn



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