



Courageous Leadership Step 7: Fall Down 7 Times, Stand Up 8

I was at a big stand up paddling race with my friend Bill, watching the pros battle it out for the big bucks in the sprint race. I was amazed at how deftly they could maneuver at high speed around the 8 cones on the course, zipping through 180 degree turns while simultaneously surfing 4 foot tall waves. I was scared to death of waves and equally afraid of the turns, so I always stayed away from races that had a lot of either. As the race leaders rounded the cone closest to the beach, I asked Bill why the pros were so much better than we were, and without hesitation he said "they're not afraid to fall in".

So much of the time we avoid those waves in our lives and stay in a bad relationship or a dead end job, just because it's familiar, and comfortable for us. But the waves are the only thing that can launch you to the next level in your life--and those that learn how to surf the big waves and maneuver around the turns the best, will ultimately reach their goals. Yes, you're going to fall off that board over and over again, yes, you're going to get pulled under, and yes, you're going to get sand in your shorts. But like the pros, you'll fall down 7 times and stand up 8. And you'll be riding your first wave in no time. And the confidence that comes from handling the smaller waves will lead you to the bigger ones. In other words, confidence in dealing with change is something you EARN through practice, not something you're born with.

The courageous part lies in getting your feet wet and paddling out every day, falling over and over again, and earning that confidence. So what changes do YOU need to make, and why are you still standing on the shore? Are you so afraid to fall that you'll never have the joy of riding that surfboard to the next level of success in your life? And if you do fall, what will happen?

You'll swim back to shore and start again. A little wet and winded, but having lost nothing and having gained the wisdom and experience to stay on that board a little bit longer the next time. The only real failure is in not paddling out again the next day...or in never leaving the shore at all. So who will YOU be? The person who tried, failed, tried again and could eventually surf any wave of change in their lives? Or the person who stood on the shoreline and ventured nothing?

The most meaningful things in life are often not simple, and not something we can just "poof" accomplish on the first try. If it were that easy, everyone would do it. But the people who are living their dreams right fell down 7 times and stood up 8. Or 9. Or 10 times. Or however many times it took. Don't miss catching the next wave of your life because you're going to get a little wet. How do you think the pros became pros!?! Xo Robyn I was at a big stand up paddling race with my friend Bill, watching the pros battle it out for the big bucks in the sprint race.

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