



FAILURE TRY SUCCESS

# Failing *Forward*

Failure; the necessary part of connectedness.

**i**n our picture-perfect social media world that features air-brushed faces and heavily edited photographs, it's difficult to believe any of the people you see or read about have ever felt like failures. Yet Olympic athletes, scientists, celebrities, visionary geniuses and financial gurus all have one thing in common—failure.

The fact that failure is so important to one's overall success should make it a hot topic for you to discuss with your children, partner and friends, but just the opposite happens. We hide our mistakes and feel ashamed or embarrassed about them. The one human characteristic that unites us all is locked away, and instead we bond over boasting about what we've done, where we're traveling and how bright our children are. Don't get me wrong: It's wonderful to have accomplishments, but those don't nurture deeper, more supportive

and connected relationships as effectively as being truthful and learning from our mistakes do. No matter who you are, to completely avoid failure is impossible, regardless of whether those failures concern your relationships, parenting or children's struggles. Since everyone fails, learning to use these experiences as lessons learned will help you move forward with insight and understanding you didn't have before.

When I gather with friends or family and the conversation opens to what we're doing with our lives, it's the talk about what's going wrong that elicits the liveliest conversation. It's also the most funny and meaningful part of the evening. When parents are terrified of letting their kids fail or worried about what school their child will go to, remember it's our failures that connect us to each other. You may admire a person's achievements, but if you listen to their failures, you'll feel a sense of respect, compassion and admiration that their success alone could not have impressed

upon you. Allow yourself as well as your partner, children and friends to be imperfect and fail. One of the most important characteristics in a relationship as well as life is being able to withstand difficult times. You cannot learn the lessons failure teaches if you're so afraid of failing that you never try.

## FIVE LESSONS LEARNED FROM FAILING

- 1. Resilience.** If you don't learn anything else, you must learn how to get back up again and move forward after failing. If you're a parent, allow your child time to work things out and get back up on their own two feet.
- 2. Reflection.** Reflect on what needs work. Social media and movies make it look easy to become whatever you want.
- 3. Persistence.** Success doesn't happen overnight. Small failures help shape your perspective and narrow your focus.
- 4. Humility.** Failure creates healthy humbling. Whether it's a failed marriage or getting fired from a job, there will be a feeling of hitting rock bottom. Rock bottom only lasts if we stay there in our thinking. Failure helps you refocus; rather than trying to impress others, redirect your focus to survival and improving.
- 5. Forgiveness.** Failure teaches self-respect and forgiveness. You can't be a perfect parent, employee, friend and spouse every day of your life. Instead of wallowing in your failures, learn to forgive yourself and others because we all fail at some point. ♡



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