

## DETOUR

“You’re on the road to success when you realise that failure is merely a detour.” William G. Milnes, Jr.

We have all been told that to be successful we must endure some failure and to look at the lives of great entrepreneurs and not the number of times they failed before pushing on to great achievements and ultimate success. We understand that when we make mistakes we can profit from them and should not make the same mistake twice; that in the experience of failure there is a potential for learning something about the strength needed for setting your face determinedly toward victory. Somehow, when it is our own failure, not someone else’s, it is difficult to see ‘the forest for the trees’ and it seems we will never get through the experience to taste success. We feel we have lost our identity and our self-confidence is shredded. Even though you don’t feel like it, you must keep up the fight to re-establish your self-esteem. Begin to look for a detour, a way around your roadblock and think about what Zig Ziglar said, “Failure is a detour, not a dead-end street.”

When failure happens or mistakes occur, it is easy to say, “I’ve tried and failed so what is the point of trying again?” That is not the attitude of a winner. Instead think of your journey as a road trip and failure as a roadblock. You have three options. You can turn and travel back to where you started (i.e. give up completely), you can sit at the roadblock and hope things return to normal soon (i.e. do nothing) or you can follow the sign which says ‘detour’. When you see that sign you know that if you want to get to your destination (i.e. successful achievement of your goal) it will be necessary for you to leave the road you know (perhaps leave your comfort zone) and travel along an unknown route until it meets your road again, somewhere up ahead. If you want to continue on the road to success, just look for the detour; look for a different plan to help you around your difficulty. Even though you are, perhaps, following a road unknown to you, if you follow the signs put up by those who *do* know the road, you know you will remain on track. There will always be a way around your failure, if only you are prepared to look for it and follow the signs.

Many people say failure is a fact of life and, certainly, no one is immune to making mistakes when you are aiming for a high goal. Even the most successful people have experienced failure at some time. The important thing is to recognise the potential danger of negative feelings and attitudes that come from failing to achieve and take positive action to correct your course. Instead, if you recognise that in failure there is power for success – a detour available to get you back on track – you will not be discouraged by the failure and you will learn from it.

Don’t make the mistake of thinking of failure as the enemy of success – it isn’t. Failure is a teacher, a harsh one, but nevertheless it is the best one. You can be discouraged by failure or you can learn from it and gain knowledge that would otherwise be unobtainable and unavailable to those who have never failed. Find the detour which takes you past your obstruction, for that is where you will find success – on the far side of failure.

There is incredible value to be found in the mistakes you make. T.H. Huxley said, “There is greatest practical benefit in making a few failures early in life”. He knew it was impossible to reach your dream without mistakes and failures along the way. You cannot grow without

being prepared to risk something of yourself and having to handle the inevitable criticism you will attract. Hang in there – finding the detour around the boulders that obstruct progress can be a quicker, easier means of achieving the end you desire. By doing this you show a strong belief in yourself and you will find that circumstances are unable to disturb your determination to continue your journey. Success always transcends failure when persistence and passion have their way.