



Podcast Episode 224  
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## “How to Use Your Failure as a Stepping Stone to Success”

**David Loy:** Hi and welcome to *In the Loop* with Andy Andrews, I’m your host David Loy. Andy I am so excited about this and I’ll tell you why in just a second. Are you there, I should make sure first of all?

**Andy Andrews:** I am here. You are excited, I am too. Don’t tell me why in just a second, tell me why right now.

**David:** I’m telling you why right now and you will be excited about this too. But I am sitting in, let’s just call it, it’s kind of like a cave, I’m in Franklin, our management office here, in Franklin, Tennessee, you’re in your office down in Orange Beach, Alabama.

**Andy:** Aren’t you where we always do this?

**David:** I am, except since the last time you were here.

**Andy:** You’ve added rocks, it’s a cave?

**David:** Matt, our producer and our audio engineer, who does everything behind the scenes for this podcast, thank you to Matt Lempert. Matt thank you very much. He has created a sound proof, it’s like a little studio within our studio. You know, we’ve got our video room, where we’ve shot some of the video courses that you’ve done before, where we’ve done some video blogs. And then within that

room, he's got all these huge soundproof panels and you know, deadening foam, so I'm like sitting in a little box right now. And when you're up here next time, we're gonna record more podcasts and you'll get to be in the box with me. But this is really cool, feels very professional.

**Andy:** So even though this is *In the Loop*, and we do things out of the box, we'll still be in the box.

**David:** We're in the box right now, I'm in the box, yes. So it just feels very secluded, sound is amazing, it feels like, you're going to love it.

**Andy:** Good, good.

**David:** Excited to have you back up here at some point. But thankful for technology that we can continue to do these podcasts from 600 miles away.

**Andy:** Yes, I'm sitting at my desk, looking at my portrait of Joshua Chamberlain and the picture of my boys and my wife. So I'm ready to go, what do we got?

**David:** We've got a great question that came in from Michelle, and this is good. I'm interested to hear your thoughts on this. It's a short question so let me read this from Michelle and we'll get going. She says, Andy my question is, if failing leads to learning, then why do we push people and students to only succeed, especially if learning from failing is more of a lesson? And this might end up being my dissertation topic so I would love to have your insight. So Michelle, first of all thank you for the question and best of luck as you pursue your dissertation. Andy you might get to speak into a lengthy paper here, what are your thoughts on that question?

**Andy:** Ok, now I'll give you my smart-alec answer first. You know Michelle you say, that why do we push people to succeed? Well you don't want to push them to fail, right. I mean, this is the overarching thing. I think what we want to do is we want to, and I don't know that push is the right word but I think that we want to have the destination as a certain thing, and is described by a successful conclusion to something, successful path through that area. Success is in whatever form is your destination. But I think what you want to do is create value with the journey and value from every part of the journey, which failing along the way, falling along the way, getting lost along the way, there is value in that. We don't even have to go over how many kinds of value there is in failure. You know this because this is a part of your question. But the value that can come from experience, the value that can come from relatability, there is no weaker leader in my opinion than a leader who has only succeeded in certain things and has gotten kind of to where they are relatively easily. Because nobody can relate to that leader. They're ultimately very weak because as you go to somebody and say, gosh, this is what I'm struggling with, and the person you're opinioning to lead you, if all they can ever say is, gosh that never happened to me, so you need to just kind of get up and get over it. I mean, if that's the only kind of leadership they can provide, then their leadership is very weak.

But a stronger version of leadership would be able, would enable a person to say, yeah, I know how you feel because I felt the same way. We've heard that before, the feel, felt, found. I know how you feel because I felt the same way because this happened to me. I struggled with this very thing. And here's what happened, here's what happened because of it, how long it lasted, this is what I did to get out from under that weight. This is what I was able to do ultimately, this is what this enabled in my lifetime, this is what came about because of that. And that is a very strong person who has found value in that failure. And so I really think that the

ultimate goal is not to focus on the failure but to make sense of the failure, to have proper perspective about the failure. And to understand that that is a stepping-stone on this journey. And so we're not pushing people to, I guess, we are, because we ultimately want to best for people. I mean, don't we want?

**David:** Yeah, absolutely. But what about this, I was thinking about her question in a sense of should we be in the encouragement of people, students, kids, you know, young entrepreneurs, whoever, should we be encouraging the success while mentioning or kind of warning about the possibility or likelihood of failure, but that, that's still ok. Or is part of teaching someone that they should, you know, strive for success included in that, that you should also encourage them that even if they fail, that's ok.

**Andy:** You know, that's a good question, that's a good point David. Because I really do believe that, I do believe that there is a push for success that can, and I'm sure this is what she means and I'm sorry Michelle for being so dense, but I'm sure that this is what you mean. And so I really believe there's a push for success that can make people scared to try, it can make them fearful of any kind of failure. And yet a balanced approach would be to let people know that, hey, this is something, anything worth doing is worth struggling to get better at it. Zig Ziglar had a great line years ago, he said, anything worth doing is worth doing poorly until you get good at it. Isn't that a great line?

**David:** That's a great line. And I'm not laughing at the line, I'm laughing at the terrific spot on impression of Zig.

**Andy:** It's a message I have used with the boys too. Because most people travel their life with the path of least resistance. And they only do the things that they're good at. You know, well I'm not good at that. You know, one of the reasons that

the schools in the Orient just absolutely destroy us academically, is because they don't subscribe to that, you know, that kind of thinking. Here in America, if you quickly emerge as a math person or a music person, or you're musically inclined so you're gonna go in the band. And well you can do math so you're gonna go in math. And you're not really that good at math and so you know basic stuff but you don't ever have to take the math again. You're not that good at baseball and you're not that great athletically so you know, after the fourth grade. I mean, most schools, they don't have P.E. anymore, so you don't have to do any of it. In the Asian culture, they do everything, they do it all. Everybody takes music, you know. And yet in our country here's something very curious. In our culture, to struggle at something just reveals your weakness, you're just an idiot. You can't even catch. You're so stupid that you can't get that math problem, you cannot understand that. And this is the way we have kind of come to somehow teach or allow our kids to do that to each other. And to speak to each other that way because that's what we show on TV, that's what we as adults show. And because of that, people are very afraid to show their weaknesses, very afraid to fail. And so they will only really go with, I'm not good at that, I can't do that. And so they're not even gonna play softball when the church team plays. They're not gonna even line up for the kickball, they're not good at it, they're not gonna do that.

And so when, in American school, when the teacher wants a kid to do the math problem on the board, who does the teacher get? Well the kid that's great at math of course. That's who they're gonna get. And so they get this kid who's great at math. But in the Asian culture, when the teacher needs somebody to do the math problem, do you know who they choose, David? They choose the kid who is struggling the most with it. And that's absolutely fine, the kid is fine with it, the class is fine with it, because in the Asian culture, to struggle is honorable. It is honorable to think hard and to struggle and to continue to try again. That is an

honorable thing. And so when the kid in the Asian culture goes up to the blackboard, and really obviously can't do this math problem, the teacher continues with the rest of the class or the class continues doing what they do. I've watched this happen. And so the class at that point is free to speak, to help this child. And so when the child gets stuck, somebody, one of the children will stand up and say, you know, little Jamamoto or whatever his name is, they'll say, remember so and so, and we did yesterday and da da daa, and so that's the part you're looking for right there. And he goes, oh yeah, oh yeah. So he'll continue on a little bit and then the kid will sit down at his desk and the class is continuing. Then the kid gets stuck again and maybe a little girl will say, don't forget, the so and so part, and he's, oh yeah, oh yeah. So you know, the class will help. And so then when the child is through with the problem, and the problem is correct, the teacher, in a way kind of presents this child to the class and he has done it correctly and the entire class applauds, and the child bows and then goes and takes his seat. But he is honored for having struggled through that. And he is, you know, it's a different understanding that if you're not good at it, then you work until you get good at it.

**David:** That's right. And maybe that's the shift in perspective here, is to start encouraging people in this sense that it's honorable to struggle. Michelle maybe that's a great angel to take on this potential dissertation. And this goes a lot further than just with kids or students. I think Andy, in the workplace might be totally different. Entrepreneur, the approach to entrepreneurship might be completely different, if the mentors and the encouragers were focused on the fact that it is honorable to struggle, it's going to be a struggle.

**Andy:** Let me tell you something that I've noticed and we can kind of close out on this David. But Michelle this would be very interesting to you, I think. Even in America, inadvertently, even though we don't honor the struggle like we should,

even in America, it's those who struggle who really get rewarded disproportionately to how they began their life or their youth or whatever. Here's what I mean. A students, A students have kind of a prescribed path. Kids who make all A's, these kids who don't seem to struggle, they just make A's, their path is somewhat prescribed because everybody expects them to be a doctor or a scientist or something like that. And so, and people even say to them, it's not that everybody can do this, so they're really kind of pushed into this funnel a lot of times. And they kind of go with it and they understand that because they're, you know, academics are easier for them so they're little more fun for them, not as much as a drudgery as they are to others. And so they're in this kind of funnel. Well this funnel is doctors and scientists and you know, mathematicians, physicists, these kind of things.

And yet, the people who we look that we go, oh my God, look at what they have done. And maybe they earned millions of dollars and became this great philanthropist, these are generally B students, you know, B and C students. And part of the reason is because those people were not on a path. They're not on a prescribed path. They have many more options available to them, ok. You made a few A's and you made a few C's but you made mostly B's. So you ain't getting into a medical school. And as a matter a fact you can do whatever you want. You got your choice. And because they have their choice, they often times become more creative. And they are more in a position to figure. And because maybe they had to struggle for their grades a little more, than they understand struggling for other things a little more. And understand the reward of struggle. And so I see, I had a guy tell me, years and years ago, Austin, who has been 40 years old ever since he was 6, you know, I mean, 2.5 years old, I remember walking outside with Austin and said, buddy, it's cold, do you need a jacket? And he said, no, I don't need a jacket but thank you for asking. He was 2.5 you know. Now Adam's more

kind of like the wild man. And sweet as he can be, sensitive, unbelievable people skills but he's a wild man. And Joe Bullard one time, a great friend of ours, we were eating dinner and Joe's just laughing at the boys and I think Austin was like 7 and Adam was 5 or 4. And I remember Joe making a comeback, I didn't really understand it then but Joe said, you watch, Austin's gonna make all A's, Adam's gonna make C's, and Austin's going to end up working for Adam. And I remember thinking, oh what, I don't really understand that but we all kind of laughed. I do kind of understand that now. Because there is a freedom in a kid who understands that he can do anything he wants to but he's going to have to struggle to do it, but he can do it. But where A students are a lot more likely to go, I can't do that, I'm not any good at that. I don't do that.

**David:** Interesting. Michelle a lot for you to consider and think on, and possibly include in that dissertation.

**Andy:** These are just things I have noticed.

**David:** Great perspective from you Andy, thanks for the insight. And Michelle great question, we'd love to continue having more questions like this, what are you going through, what questions do you have for Andy. Give us a call and leave a voicemail for a future episode. That phone number 1800 726 2639, that's 1800 726 Andy. Or by email [intheloop@andyandrews.com](mailto:intheloop@andyandrews.com). That goes straight to Matt and Matt will process those and we'll try to get to as many as we can on future episodes. Make sure that you're plugged in to the email list and on social media. Some big announcements coming in the coming weeks and months. And we're very excited about some of the things Andy is working on. Potentially some life changing opportunities for many people. So stay tuned to all of that. Thanks for listening to *In the Loop*, and Andy thank you for taking the time to be with us.

**Andy:** Thank you guys, thank you David, thank you Matt. I appreciate you guys more than you'll ever know. I always have such fun with you. I appreciate you guys listening out there In the Loop land, whatever we're calling this. I'd love talking with people in airports about the podcast and I love doing these. So thank you guys.

**David:** That's terrific, we'll talk to you next week.

**Andy:** Bye, bye.

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**Would you like to run something by Andy? Contact us and your question might be featured on the show!**

- Phone: 1-800-726-ANDY
- Email: [InTheLoop@AndyAndrews.com](mailto:InTheLoop@AndyAndrews.com)
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