Article #9

Refusing to expect big starts is one of the keys to success

I remember the first time I learned how to ride a bike. After several false starts that involved me and my brother scraping our knees and becoming bloody messes, we were able to stay on that bike. It was one of the happiest days of our lives. There’s just something about that “I did it” moment when you push on one pedal then the other and it quickly dawns on you that you won’t fall off the bike (and hurt yourself again). I suppose it’s close to the feeling of a bird flying off its next for the first time.

Sadly, far too many of us quickly go from the thrill of discovery and achievement to the expectation that now we can do the most extreme version of whatever it is we achieved. Talk about getting ahead of ourselves. But we do it anyway.

The interesting thing about my biking experience was that we automatically assumed that the next day, we can race in the tour de france. We basically racing all around the block. We were biking long distances. We shot out of the gate, so to speak.

Here's the problem. Regardless of how excited you may be when you first learned something, please understand that at first, there will be challenges. Don't expect things to go smoothly. They often never do.

This should not be a surprise. After all, you just figured out how to do something. Does it really make sense to expect that you will be able to do it like an expert soon after you learn it? I know it sounds reasonable and this seems logical but let’s face it, people often throw logic and reason out the window when they get excited.

Instead, be prepared for hiccups down the road. Sure enough, I almost got hit by a car. I missed becoming a potential quadriplegic by mere inches. In fact, I could've been killed. There was so many close calls during that first week. How come?

Me and my brother expected to bolt out of that gate and become the best bicycle riders we knew. This is a serious problem because I was expecting big starts. It doesn't work that way.

Regardless of what you're doing, regardless of what you're focused on in life, don't expect big starts. Instead, understand that change happens in two ways. You can be making incremental changes externally and this is a good thing.

However, at the same time, you're also changing from within. You think you may be going on a process. In fact, you may be thinking that you're going on a simple journey from point A to point B. But, interestingly enough, this journey changes you.

The process that you're in, regardless of how complicated it may be and regardless of its specific details, changes you. Allow it to happen. Allow the stage to sink in. This is how you become more self confident because this is based on competence.

Competence is based on lived experience. It's not something that somebody gives you. It's not something that happens randomly. It's definitely not something that occurs to you magically, mystically or accidentally. You have to work for it. You have to sacrifice. You have to commit.

To figure out how this all works out to create in you unstoppable self confidence, click here.