

Heal stronger

GAIN STRENGTH TO REACH A NEW LEVEL OF PERFORMANCE AND SUCCESS



I heard the sound of the bone snapping before I felt the pain. It was the end of a grueling workout and my karate instructor had challenged us to finish by attempting a difficult technique. I knew I was too fatigued to perform well, but when the younger students eagerly responded, I foolishly followed my pride.

As I jumped into the air to perform a series of kicks, I failed to get enough height and landed with my leg beneath me, breaking the bone in three separate places. Seconds later, I was lying on the floor screaming in pain. It was a moment I will never forget.

Months later, I was in the doctor's office looking at a new X-ray of my leg and comparing it to one from the day of the accident. All three breaks had healed, but their location was still clear because, in the place where each break had been, the bone was denser and showed darker on the film.

As the doctor began to remove my cast, I asked him the question that had been on my mind for weeks, "Will my leg ever be as strong as it was before?"

He stopped and looked directly into my eyes. "Don't you know what happens when a break heals?" he said, smiling. "The bone heals stronger in each place where it was broken. One day, this will be your strongest leg."

Are you feeling the pain today of a relationship that is broken or of trust you once had with your company or your boss that has fractured under the pressure of challenging times?

If so, then know this: The point of your greatest pain can become the point of your

greatest strength. You must only follow the body's example — *heal stronger*.

Heal stronger by learning about yourself

Today, I can easily see how I broke my leg. But seeing the factors that led to a break in a relationship is not always so easy.

I once lost a long-term friendship whose final moment was a single heart-wrenching incident. While I initially thought that this incident was the cause of the break, I now see that it was simply the culmination of differences that had been growing for some time — differences that neither of us addressed and that ultimately became too great to resolve.

If you've recently broken with a company or received a step back in your title or income, look back to see what the real cause may have been. You may find that the signs were there long before the final moment, whether you were less and less engaged with the work you were doing, becoming increasingly frustrated with your co-workers or simply bored in a position that you had outgrown.

Whatever the cause of the final break, you could likely have created a different outcome if you had addressed the early warning signs more quickly. You can heal stronger by using this experience to learn about yourself and deciding how you will handle similar situations in the future, before they reach the breaking point.

Heal stronger by changing your thinking

Weeks after my leg was completely healed, I was still unwilling to train to my full capacity. My body was ready, but my mind wasn't. Each time I would prepare to use my leg in a challenging way, I would hold back, afraid that it would break again.

One day my teacher called me aside and said, "You can only do what your mind believes. Believe first, then do."

It was advice that set me free to move forward.

In the same way, it's tempting to hold on to the emotions surrounding the loss of a job or a change in position, replaying them constantly in your mind. As long as your keep your thoughts focused on the break, you will never completely heal.

Instead, begin to focus on what you've learned, on the talents and experience that you possess, and on the successful future that is still ahead of you. The more you focus your mind on these thoughts, the more you will believe them, and as my teacher said, the more you will be able to do.

Not long ago, someone asked which leg I had originally broken. When I had to pause to remember, I knew my healing was complete.

No matter how painful your break has been, you can heal stronger. And the strength you gain can be the key to a new level of performance and success. <<

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