



Stanford eCorner

Ride Out Failures

Jane Chen, *Embrace Innovations*

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Video URL: <http://ecorner.stanford.edu/videos/4673/Ride-Out-Failures>

Midway through sharing some takeaway lessons for aspiring entrepreneurs, Embrace Innovations CEO Jane Marie Chen explains how courage and persistence are critical because failure inevitably lies ahead. She also warns against becoming too personally attached to certain outcomes: “We are not defined by our successes or our failures. We are defined by our values and the journey that we take.”



Transcript

^- My second lesson here from Winston Churchill who said, ^"Success is not final, failure is not fatal: ^"it is the courage to continue that counts." ^And I have a picture of me surfing here ^because this was a sport I picked up about a year ^and a half ago that I've become completely obsessed with. ^And one of the things about surfing, it's so humbling because most of the time I'm not on my board, I'm falling off my board and having to find the courage to get back on and paddle back out for the next wave. And to me, this is the most important trait of being an entrepreneur is persistence and tenacity, because you will inevitably fail over and over again and you need to have the courage and that persistence to get back out there, learn from your mistakes, and try again. The other related thing I've learned from surfing and the ocean is this idea of impermanence. You know, everything in this world is constantly changing and nothing teaches you that more than being in the ocean where your conditions are changing minute to minute. And what that's taught me about is this concept of non-attachment, to not be attached to anything including end outcomes. I think I had become so attached to this end outcome for Embrace that the thought of the company shutting down and that story I told really threatened my own sense of identity. And what I learned from that process is that we are not defined by our successes our our failures, we are defined by our values and by the journey that we take. So, as cliché as it sounds, the journey is truly more important than the destination, and make sure you're having fun in that journey every step of the way.