

EXPECT SUCCESS



MAKING MISTAKES AND MOVING ON

"The greatest mistake you can make in life is to be continually fearing you will make one."

Elbert Hubbard



I attended the DHS Solo and Ensemble contest recently and watched numerous student performances in awe and appreciation. If you have never been to a solo/ensemble contest, students perform vocal and/or instrumental selections for a musical judge in classrooms filled with family and friends. Once the performance is finished, the judge critiques the performer(s) in front of the full audience. Some judges share words of encouragement in a coaching fashion while others deliver the critique in a stronger tone. Once the critique is finished, the judge assigns a score which is then posted publicly in the commons.

I have attended many years of solo/ensemble and always watch in awe as our students are placed on the spot in front of peers and family, listening to someone point out areas of weakness, mistakes that need to be fixed, or dynamics that can be corrected. It is quite humbling and takes great vulnerability to accept feedback graciously while a room full of eyes and ears are directed toward you. The great news is that they handle it well — because they have to. There is no teacher or parent who gets to step in to soften the message, no clearing the room for a confidential conversation, no contradicting the opinion of the judge even when you don't agree — there is just listening, accepting and learning how to move on. Many of our students perform multiple selections so they literally need to move on physically and mentally to get ready for the next performance. That's a valuable life lesson that all kids should experience, not because it is enjoyable to be critiqued in front of a large group (it isn't), but because finding out that you can move on after making a mistake is essential to facing obstacles that may come later in life.

Whether your child missed the winning free throw, broke an expensive toy, scored poorly on the ACT or backed the car into a light pole, kids of all ages, and adults too, need reassurance that making mistakes is a part of life and learning how to let yourself move on is essential to personal happiness and growth. Below are some tips you can use to help your child move on after a mistake. The tips come from a website called Tiny Buddha. To read the complete article by Alesha Chilton visit: <http://tinybuddha.com/blog/moving-on-from-a-mistake-5-tips-to-relieve-your-pain/>.

Moving on from a Mistake: 5 Tips to Relieve Your Pain

1. Remind yourself that you are a good person who does a lot of good in the world.

So you messed up big time. Or maybe it isn't that big of a deal. Either way, it's consuming your mind and eating away at your ego. Learn to let go of that mistake. You have many great talents and have had many successes. Focus on the parts of yourself that you like.

2. Know that all good things come to an end—and bad things do too!

This, too, shall pass! Everything is temporary, including the aftermath of the mistake you are living with right now. Is there a lesson you can learn from this? If so, focus on that. This will help you avoid similar mistakes in the future. And who knows, perhaps someday, you will look back and laugh on this situation.

3. Avoid the urge to dwell on the mistake.

Dwelling on your mistake will only leave you feeling depressed and helpless, which will not help you move forward. Give yourself permission to take your mind off of it. Crank up your stereo and belt out the words to your favorite song. Watch a favorite movie. Take deep breaths. As more time passes, you will realize that your mistake is not ruining your life.

4. Take it one day at a time.

Realize that success isn't going to come overnight. Create some small, reachable goals for each day. Over time, your efforts will add up, enabling you to succeed going forward.

5. Keep a gratitude journal.

Focus on the things you are most grateful for. It is extremely difficult to be grateful for something and feel angry or down on yourself at the same time. Replace your self-pitying thoughts with ones of gratitude and feel the joy that comes washing over you.