

TRIAL & ERROR

by Gretchen Fleener

Learning to Embrace & Learn From Your Mistakes

In this social media saturated world we live in, it is all too easy to let fear of others' judgement stop us from even starting. If we are brave enough to share our ambitions or the fact that we've stepped out on a limb with others, we then must accept that terrifying possibility that if we make a mistake on said risk, everyone soon will find out about that too.

Those who know me well know that when I have an idea, it's not long before I run with it. Whether it's an idea for a new product, an ambitious creative or business project, or yet another book idea, I have a somewhat reckless drive to try it out. And while I can't ever seem to NOT be in the midst of creating something, this means I can't ever NOT be making mistakes along the way.

I love this meme that I saved years ago (I wish I knew the artist!), as it sums up my past year so well! Last year when I decided to make my dream of creating a face & body art magazine a reality, it was just the beginning of my now quarterly schedule of making mistakes! Despite the hours upon hours spent pouring over details and running spell check, I have made countless mistakes...misspelling my dear friend Tamina Muhammad's name on the front cover of all places, accidentally leaving out an artist's name in the body painting gallery, and leaving out entire submissions from my article on collaboration groups, to name a FEW! I even misspelled the magazine's website URL in some early issues, printing the URL that I had as a placeholder until I purchased the actual domain name! I literally lost sleep on many of these mistakes. Thank goodness you fellow painters are SO understanding and forgiving, and thank goodness for print-on-demand publishing and the ability to edit and upload new print files!

Print errors are only one category of mistakes I've made in this business. I've learned so many

things the hard way in my 22+ years of face painting from so many mistakes! I've written down the wrong time for a gig and arrived late, I've gotten lost on a new freeway that didn't exist in my GPS's current software, and I've burned myself by blindly believing "the customer is always right," before investigating my own defense first.



One of the biggest mistakes you can make in life is not accepting your mistakes as the priceless gifts they are! There are two steps to making the most of your mistakes.

Learn From Them!

What's the difference between a new face painter and an experienced face painter? Mistakes! Oscar Wilde once said, "Experience is simply the name we give our mistakes."

I really beat myself up over these mistakes over the years, but the only real mistakes are the ones we don't learn from. Our mistakes are our best learning opportunities! As Richard Branson said, "You don't learn to walk by following rules. You learn by doing, and by falling over." So fall over, fall over often, and once you brush yourself off, make it all worthwhile by learning a lesson to take going forward!

Admit Them To Others!

Learning from mistakes is vital, but if you're ignoring this second step, you're missing out on another huge benefit that your mistakes can bring. Another wise person once said, "A mistake which makes you humble is better than an achievement that makes you arrogant." Stay humble, and admit your mistakes! You might be surprised how far a little humility can go.

Admitting your mistakes not only keeps you humble, but enables others to learn from them as well. Samuel Levenson put it so well when he said "You must learn from the mistakes of others. You can't possibly live long enough to make them all yourself." Don't you wish you knew earlier on some of the things you know now? You can be that wise mentor for another new artist and save them some headaches!

The poll question in the upcoming spring issue of Wet Paint Magazine asks artists what they would say to themselves as a new face painter if they could go back and give themselves advice. As I currently work on wrapping up the spring issue of Wet Paint Magazine, I now know to expect and embrace mistakes, accept them as evidence that I'm doing something, and use them to make each issue to come better and better! Now get out there and get ready to fall on your face, get back up, brush yourself off, and get better! 🎨

What's News?

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CREEPER



On the Blog

I've just wrapped up 365 days of daily posts! Read my story and that of 6 others' challenges in the next Wet Paint Magazine!



January Jam:

Paintertainment will be hosting another monthly jam on the 29th, for those of you who live in/around the Twin Cities!



See You in Belgium!

I'm thrilled to announce that I'll be teaching at the JAMvention's 10th anniversary this October! Hope to see you there!

January Coupon Code!

10%
off

Enter code **OOPS** at checkout. Shopping cart must total \$25 or more before shipping and taxes. Offer expires 1/31/18.