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Success brings its own set of challenges. Emily Melton, partner at the venture capital firm Threshold (formerly DFJ), explains how slowing down and being methodical in your actions and decisions is especially important once you attain success. Melton advises that leaders surround themselves with those who provide honest feedback.



Transcript

- The other thing that's really interesting is that going down was a very different physical phenomenon.. You think it's really challenging to go up, and it is.. It's an exertion, you are going everything you can to try to climb that hill.. And then you get there, and you start heading down, and you're no longer fighting gravity, right? Gravity is now your friend.. But that wait had a whole new set of problems, alright? That hurt your knees, and my hips, and it was really treacherous, 'cause if you fall on the way down, you don't just kind of fall forward and catch yourself, you go rolling, right? And, I sometimes feel like success is this for people.. It's gravity, so it's a little bit, you should think it should make it easier, right? You've actually gotten there.. You have gravity on your side.. But it can also be a real burden and strain, and sometimes the implications of that become even bigger.. When you get to a point and you think gravity, you think, I can just fly down.. And that never really works..

(laughs) You still have to be methodical.. In some ways you almost have to slow down, and be even more careful, and make sure you have better trail companions to hold your hand, so you don't stumble and fall, because that fall is the one that could really do you in.. When I see different people in different trajectories of success, one of the most important things is keeping that feedback loop.. Making sure there are people that keep them honest.. There's actually been a study that was done, Atlantic wrote a great article about it, that basically showed that people with power, can sometimes experience something that's relative to mental illness.. Where power actually has a thing to physically change your mind.. And, I was telling this to a friend, and she said, "Yeah, well of course.. "Like the only people who throw tantrums "are three-year olds and billionaires." Three-year olds because they're pushing the limits, to see and get told no.. And billionaires because no one ever tells them no anymore, so they lose that idea of how to actually control themselves.. And so, when you think about that wait, you get to different phases of your life sometimes, it's equally important to make sure that you have those people who say no, because as you're going down you feel like, I could run down the hill..

I'm this great person, people say yeah, sure! You get a lot of yes people.. You get a lot sycophants who want to tell you think you wanna hear, and it's really, really critical in those moments to make sure that you have the right people by you, who are keeping you honest, who tell you when to slow down, so you don't actually that deep tumble or deep stumble down the hill..