



# The Every Day Olympian

I recently had an email debate with the Executive VP of a customer whom I hold in very high regard. The debate humorously involved the idea that *“If a teacher is driven by excellence and humility and is willing to remain a student for life, then can the student ever really surpass the teacher????”* (This topic is actually for a different day) But during the debate, he stated one of his favorite biblical truths... *‘Pride goeth before a fall’*.

This one statement brought up a very import barrier to success that many artificially create for themselves. Most religious writings refer to pride negatively as egotism, conceit and self-importance. As a result, most individuals consider them synonymous with pride. Yes, pride can be a source of these character flaws, but I believe that pride should be considered independent of the arrogance that sometimes accompanies it.

Every Day Olympians use pride as the foundation of why they put in a hard day’s work even though they could get by with less effort. They use pride as the footing for what allows them to believe they have the ability to accomplish anything they set their minds to. If used correctly; pride can be the source of the self-confidence that is needed to try new things, take on new challenges, to push on when others quit. *“A soldier will fight long and hard for a bit of colored ribbon”*. Pride is the basis for a personal commitment...an attitude which separates excellence from mediocrity.....

A few weeks ago I walked into a local CrossFit that I had just joined and only attended a couple of times prior. It was an unseasonably warm day with the sun melting the little snow we’ve gotten so far





this winter. I opened the door with a deep rooted exhilaration for the difficult workout ahead. The narrow hallway opens up into a large dark room that had the familiar smell of rubber mats, chalk, and disinfectant. I uncomfortably said hello to the others in the room...as I am the new guy of the group and still had insecurities with it.

Now note; I've pushed myself physically further than most and continue to keep fit. There isn't a fitness program out there more grueling than my past training regimen. (But then again...CrossFit is as hard as you want to make it) The pride in these past experiences is what gave me the confidence to walk through the door and try something completely new. But it was that day which also showed me the difference between myself...someone in pursuit of being an Every Day Olympian...and those who have achieved it.

You see, I let that same pride foster a mindset that I could make up any shortfalls through effort; putting too little focus on the proper techniques of some of the lifts/exercises. I let it cloud my judgment and overlooked the fact that new and different physical demands have a learning curve just like anything else. Reluctantly, I ended up having to stop mid-workout **NOT** because it was too exhausting, but because I was in too much pain from being technically deficient. I had to watch others finish a workout that I wasn't able to finish on that day. It was a tough pill to swallow. That day I received a valuable reminder from the owner...sometimes the only way to shorten the learning curve is to actually slow down, suppress the competitive drive a bit and focus on the basics. The rest will come naturally.

So remember, pride can be the source of success or failure. It's a superpower that can be used for either good or evil. So pick your cape...pick the color of your tights and embrace it rather than fight it. Save the fight for more important aspects of this voyage we call life.