

Intelligent Risking: Taking Innovative Risks  
Presented by Barbara Stoker

No mountains are climbed, no victories won without risk.

Grant me the strength to resist needless risk,  
The courage to take risks that matter,  
And the wisdom to know the difference!

In 5 years business will rely on technologies that have not been invented yet.

The top 10 jobs of 2015 have not been invented yet.

90% of all web content will be video by 2016.

Are those facts alarming, or exciting?

Sideways Risk Taking: A new perspective.

If you've never failed, you've never lived. Think of Michael Jordan who was kicked off his high school team and told he would never be a pro-player! Abraham Lincoln who lost his first 8 bids for public office! Thomas Edison who was told he was an idiot and who dropped out of school in the 7<sup>th</sup> grade! These people continued to push, to take risks and they succeeded, beyond their wildest imaginings.

Do you set yourself up for success OR do you set yourself up not to fail?

Those are 2 very different ideas.

In general, men set themselves up for success, women set themselves up not to fail.

Men take leaps into jobs they are just barely qualified for, while women wait until they are sure they can't lose.

Put it in place – set yourself up for success – apply for the job (life) you want and focus on your strengths.

Sfumato – Leonardo DaVinci's saying "turning to mist"

STOP trying to control – yield to the oncoming force in order to win. Synergistic energy.

Like in Tai Chi, take the energy that is coming and return it for your own purposes.

Intelligent risk = data analysis, information + passion, letting go and trusting!

When you are looking for things to go wrong, things will go wrong because that is what you are looking for, that is what you are seeing.

If you look the other way you increase your chances of success, because you're looking for it and you'll see the opportunities.

"Rehearsing for catastrophe"

4 steps to Intelligent Risking:

- I. Choose your mountain.
  - A. What risk are you taking?
  - B. Whose Mountain is it? (Sometimes it is not your mountain, it's your partner's mountain, or your husband's mountain, or your parent's mountain...)
  - C. How do you define success? You can't find the right route until you know what success looks like. Where are you going? Then you can see how to get there.
- II. Plan your route.
  - A. Who's on the team, who isn't, who should be, who's in your way?
  - B. What, where, when, why, how – contingency plans!!
  - C. Do you need a plan? – YES!
  - D. Do you need a complete, comprehensive plan? – NO! Take incremental risks, build the plan as you go, throw things out and see what sticks!
  - E. Do you need your plan carved in stone? – NO! Be flexible, don't marry the plan. Be willing to adapt.
- III. Build your courage
  - A. The Crux Move – Just when you are exhausted, THIS is do or die time. If you don't make it, you'll come off the mountain, one way or the other. The first time you hit the Crux, you freeze. If you hang on and try to be "safe" you guarantee you'll fall. You're wasting energy just holding on. So, what do you let go of in order to move?
  - B. This is when you start hearing the monsters within.
    1. Doubt
    2. Self Defeat
    3. Anger
    4. Fear
    5. Ego
  - C. The more you listen, the louder it gets and you are likely to fall, or quit.
    1. So – turn Anger into Strength – knowing yourself, being authentic, being your best self.
    2. Turn Fear into Courage – take action.
    3. Turn Ego into Wisdom – be humble, humility will help you to not take stupid risks! Ego is a double edged sword. It drives foolish risk, and it stops us from taking enough risk, we don't want to fail and look foolish...
  - D. It's a choice – operate above the line (Strength, Courage, Wisdom) or below it (Anger, Fear, Ego).
  - E. Acknowledge the choice and step above the line.

The Courage Ratio:

Who would go ice climbing for a day just for fun?

Who would go for a million dollars?

Who would go to save the life of the person you love most in the world?

The risk hasn't changed – the passion has.

## Risk/Reward

Behind risk is fear. Behind reward is Passion.

When passion is greater than your fear you find your courage.

So – find a way to increase your passion, or decrease your fear – or both.

Take incremental risk – maybe just go one step, one foot, one inch. Then another.

We set artificial limits on ourselves, “I can only go x far.” Can you go one more inch?

Yeah? How about one more after that?

Invisible risk is the risk you take when you TRY to avoid taking a risk.

“What would happen if I risk it?” That’s the easy question – and the one that we fill in with worst case scenarios.

BUT –

“What would happen if I DIDN’T risk it?” Don’t forget to ask that question too!!

“And the day came when the risk to remain tight in a bud was more painful than the risk it took to blossom.”

- Anais Nin

If you help a butterfly out of its cocoon it will most likely die, they need the struggle in order to become strong enough to survive. So do we.

Courage Touchstone:

Finding courage is easy. We can all find the courage to take that first step. Holding onto it is harder.

Find a touchstone – a place, a person, a thing, a memory that reminds you and reconnects you to your courage.

One healthy six year old boy to a sick child after a “Make a Wish” date – “You don’t look like you’re dying. Let’s go play.”

Remind yourself, it is worth taking a risk to REALLY live, even if it might break your heart later, even if it might be bumpy or leave you bruised, the risk is worth it.

What is your courage touchstone?

### IV. Climb Strong

A. Commitment – This is the right risk!

1. Take the right risk
2. Is this a healthy choice for you?
  - a. Are you getting sick?
  - b. Are you sleeping?
  - c. Are you energized and excited?

B. At some point, if you climb, you WILL fall.

1. Fall gracefully – fall forward! You’ll be that much closer to your goal!
2. Learn from it.
3. Value it

#### 4. Climb on

Summit Fever – sometimes you have to know when to quit.

Sir. Edmund Hillary: was told he might not be the first to summit Everest when asked how he felt about that he said, “Well, I found it equally important to get back down alive.”

Make a statement, “I commit that by Friday I will...”

Find a partner who is supportive, who will hold you accountable in a kind way.

“Tell me about it, how did it go?”

Great leaders are comfortable being uncomfortable.

When you take the right risk, it feels right.

Now it is time for you to take that risk, to let go, to trust.

Sfumato.