

Messy in the Middle

Kalika: "Hardships often prepare ordinary people for an extraordinary destiny."

CS Lewis.

When you're on the precipice of a new project startup or thing, everyone is enthusiastic. Everything is enchanting. Then you get to the middle. There, you meet Kantor's law, which says in the middle, everything looks like a failure, because in the middle is where all the hard work happens.

I made the mistake recently of looking at a video of my eldest daughter's birth. A C-section. Ouch. My womb was open and I believe I saw my organs, my stomach, and my belly. It was gross. It was messy. Thank goodness Dr. Tristan Bickman, my gynecologist, didn't stop. Thank goodness. She did her job. In the middle of the procedure, I fainted. Why do things seem to get worse before they get better? Well, thank goodness, the anesthesiologists and nurses didn't stop. Thank goodness they did their jobs.

When we're in the middle, we're often far away from any of the fantasies and expectations we've conjured up at the outset. This is a time when discouragement descends down the stairs where lethargy lingers.

You want to be nice, so you keep procrastinating employees on payroll. You didn't make your forecast, so you avoid that meeting with your investor. It's easy for a seasoned entrepreneur to warn new founders, the heavy challenges that lay ahead. Delayed products, terrible employees, unnerving negotiations, blunt confrontations.

So what do you do when you're on the edge of the middle? My advice, do your job. Start that difficult conversation, decide what to do about that dilemma. Take that tough meeting. Master the mundane.

Refuse to get discouraged, pursue, persist, persevere.

What's your advice when you find yourself in the middle?

Do share.