

INSPIRATION
OVATION

BY KAREN EDEN

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Mediocrity vs. Risk-Taking Courage

Girls are tough on each other. I recently asked a good friend of mine, "Why would another woman not like me when she doesn't even know me?"

"Because you seem like you are so together and have no problems. It's kind of annoying," she replied.

"Huh! That's interesting," I responded.

The truth is, by no means have I had an easy journey on this path we call life. As a matter of fact, I feel pretty sure that my life has been much harder than most. Over the years of my early adulthood, I often wondered why some people tend to have every event, every step and every detail fall right in place and stay in place. Conversely, I was left walking alone in the dark, praying that my foot would be stepping in the right direction.

I think I have finally figured it out. Those who have a mediocre life also have a mediocre pay off. That's not necessarily a bad thing, but there are some of us out there who were not designed to live a mediocre life.

Those who have never trained in martial arts may think that someone who *is* in training is someone also in control of his or her life. We, as instructors, know that nothing could be farther from the truth. I can hardly think of one adult student that I'm teaching who is *not* being challenged in some way on his or her own journey.

The difference is, these students have mastered the discipline to show up for class and train *anyway*. Sometimes, it's a sacrifice. Sometimes, you don't feel like leaving the house when life gets tough. But the beauty of martial arts is it teaches us that if you apply yourself – even when you don't feel like it – there is no journey that can't be completed.

Many times, I've told my young students, "Your Sabomnim [Master] didn't have an easy life. But she is where she's at today not because she did everything right, but because she never quit trying."

It's true. I never stepped in the right direction 100 percent of the time. But I never stopped putting one foot in front of the other when things got tough or scary, either. Even if I had to stop momentarily and take the slowest calculated step of my life, it was still a step!

To this day, I will wake up and remind myself that this day was not meant to be a mediocre one. I will attack the day like a warrior and embrace whatever may be in my path. I have to let go and just trust that putting forth my best efforts will work for me. I have to believe that this journey is mine exclusively, and that it has always been in place to, ultimately, make a difference in the lives of other people.

"Do you want me to introduce you to these women so you can try to put yourself out there?" my dear friend asked me.

"Absolutely *not*," I replied. "I don't feel the need to have to convince anyone of anything."

I have discovered that those who were meant to be in my life's orbit will find themselves in my path, and vice-versa. And 99% of the time, it's because either they were there to tell me, or I was there to tell them, this:

"Don't worry if your life seems to be out of order right now. It's *not* because you're a failure, it's because you were *not* meant to be mediocre." ✈️