

Faulty Edges

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Chronological:

As the sun glimmered off the freshly groomed ski tracks I leaned forward, decompressed into my outriggers, halted myself back onto the ski lift, and settled my body into the monoski that cradled me tightly. The chair advanced up the hill carefully accompanied by the chilling sound of the cable bouncing over the brittle bar. Gazing over the terrain I would soon be engulfed in, I felt a new found confidence fill my body. The conditions appeared perfect for a beginner skier like me. The snow appeared soft, but not slushy. I knew snow of this sort would cushion my ski as I glided down the hill, but wouldn't grip me too tightly. When the end of the chairlift came into sight, I carefully outfitted the base of my outriggers from the crutch position to the smooth flat blade, necessary for leading into fluid turns that were awaiting me. When the time came the bar was lifted, I threw my body back to prepare for the contact with the ground, and as my ski brushed the snow I pitched my body forward proactively into the skier position. As my body rose from the chair and gravity pulled me down to the base beneath me, I focused on my center of gravity.

My previous ski expeditions up to this point had shown increments of improvement, and the ever incapacitating emotion of fear would continually hinder any progression I made. Today the whisper of fear escaped my consciousness. The monoski that held me mirrored a snugly fit ski boot and I felt the years of trained muscle memory resettle in a place too long abandoned. As I leaned into the first turn I felt my competence grow. Just as an ankle angles towards the hill and the edge of the ski cuts clear into the ground beneath, so too did my hip jet into resistance and lead the ski beneath my bottom. The turns continued in this way, one right after the other, constantly searching for the balance of the flat ski beneath my body. Run after run my abilities

were solidified and my capacity to ski alongside my experienced siblings increased. I felt the limitless of speed as the wind swept across my face, leaving my cheeks rosy and my smile full.

Lunch came before long and my giddy laugh continued throughout the meal. I felt the boundless joy that accompanies the resurgence of a long missed hobby and was left I utter shock at how well the morning went. After the greasy quesadillas were consumed and my bodies hydration was replenished, my family and I returned to the calling of the mountain.

The afternoon was spent advancing technique, and testing my aptitude to swiftly shift from side edge to side edge, limiting my time in the safety net that was the “flat ski.” Trusting the edge meant finding comfort in lightening my tightly held grip on my outriggers, and grounding my movements in the weight shift of my core. As I narrowed in my focus on the task at hand my concept of distance shortened and I found myself positioned not just on the edge of my ski, but the edge of the hill side. Too little concept of space, accompanied by too little time, and fear slapped me pale as I flew beyond the ski area boundary.

Thump, I plopped perfectly parallel to the slope I had just soared over, I landed in a daze feeling thankful for the soft snow I had acknowledged during my first trip up the hill. Now a new type of shock consumed my being, as the moments before the fall condensed in my memory. Was I hurt no, was I scared, slightly. My fear only increased as I stared blankly at the tree only a few inches downhill. A tree that could have just as likely been the object gravity attracted me to. Did I mean to do this no, but as I sat against the hills edge I felt the mistake hold me tight. The awful feeling only increased as I heard my brothers shaking voice call from above as he unclicked his boots and made his way over the edge. “I’m sorry” my voice unintentionally personified his, featuring a very similar shaky delivery. As he made his way down to my side, and the unexpected position of my bodies placement in the padded snow came into his view,

relief began to replace the fear that had moments before held his expression hostage. He began to carefully assist me as we maneuvered our way through the brush along the uncharted territory, forging rhythmically the path of our own creation. The ski area boundary returned to view and I re-entered the protection that accompanied the relief of regulation.

Variation of Time:

Thump, I plopped perfectly parallel to the slope I had just soared over, I landed in a daze feeling thankful for the soft snow I had acknowledged during my first trip up the hill. Now a new type of shock consumed my being, as the moments before the fall condensed in my memory. Was I hurt no, was I scared, slightly. My fear only increased as I stared blankly at the tree only a few inches downhill. A tree that could have just as likely been the object gravity pulled me into as the place where my body currently remained. Did I mean to do this no, but as I sat against the hills edge I felt the mistake hold me tight. The awful feeling only increased as I heard my brothers shaking voice call from above as he unclicked his boots and made his way over the edge. "I'm sorry" my voice unintentionally personified his, featuring a very similar shaky delivery. As he made his way down to my side, and the unexpected position of my bodies placement in the padded snow came into his view, relief began to replace the fear that had moments before held his expression hostage. He began to carefully assist me as we maneuvered our way through the brush along the uncharted territory, forging rhythmically the path of our own creation. The ski area boundary returned to view and I re-entered the protection that accompanied the relief of regulation.

The beginning of the day provided little fair warning of the reckless predicament I had just created for myself. As the sun glimmered off the freshly groomed ski tracks this very

morning, I leaned forward, decompressed into my methodically placed outriggers, halted myself back onto the ski lift, and settled my body into the monoski that cradled me tightly. As the chair advanced up the hill, and the ring of cable bouncing over the brittle bar floated into my ear, I imagined that the day ahead of me would be filled with new improvements, and planned lessons, not unexpected risks.

As I gazed over the terrain from my seated position high above the face of the slope, I felt a new found confidence fill my body. The conditions appeared perfect for a beginner skier like me. The snow appeared soft. I knew snow of this sort would cushion my ski as I glided down the hill. When the end of the chairlift came into sight, I carefully outfitted the base of my outriggers from the crutch position to the smooth flat blade necessary for leading into fluid turns that were awaiting me. When the time came the bar was lifted, I threw my body back to prepare for the contact with the ground, and as my ski brushed the snow I pitched my body forward proactively into the skier position. As my body rose from the chair and gravity pulled me down to the landing I focused on my center of gravity and completed my first independent downloading from the chair lift.

My previous ski expeditions up to this point had shown increments of improvement, followed by the ever incapacitating emotion of fear. Today the whisper of fear escaped my consciousness. The monoski that held me mirrored a snugly fit ski boot and I felt the years of trained muscle memory resettle in a place too long abandoned. As I leaned into the first turn I felt my competence grow. Just as an ankle angles towards the hill and the edge of the ski cuts a mark clear into the ground beneath, so too did my hip jet into resistance and lead the ski beneath my bottom. The turns continued in this way, one right after the other, constantly searching for the balance of the flat ski beneath my body. Run after run my abilities were solidified and my

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In the moment I had hit my stopping point at the base of the short fall, I quickly realized that my nudged body in the hill while rather unconventional in the unwelcoming terrain, it was also gripped tight and I wasn't going slip further. This security was followed by an overwhelming grasp of the hypocrisy of my gloating at the lunch table. My lunch was spent filled with my giddy laugh. My previous attempts at monoskiing had paled in comparison to runs I laid down today and I was tempted to question this improvement, but a greater part of me rested happily in the moment of triumph. I felt the boundless joy that accompanied the resurgence of a long missed hobby and was left in utter shock at how well the morning went. This shock was displayed vocally, and my family began to ground my growing confidence that was about to be too hard to tame. The overconfidence that was stewing in the echoes of my excitement masked the events that would quickly follow the innocent consumption of greasy quesadillas.