

Shaking a Fist at Everest

Sir Edmund Hillary was the first man to climb Mount Everest. On May 29, 1953, he scaled the highest mountain on Earth – 29,029 feet straight up.

He was knighted for his efforts. He even made American Express card commercials because of it.

His book, *High Adventure*, discloses, however, that Hillary had to grow into this success.

In 1952, he started up Mount Everest on his first attempt and he failed. A few weeks later, a group in England asked him to address its members.

Hillary walked on the stage to thunderous applause. The audience was recognizing an attempt at greatness, but Hillary saw himself as a failure.



He moved away from the microphone and walked to the edge of the platform. He made a fist and pointed at a picture of the mountain. In a loud voice, he proclaimed, “Mount Everest, you beat me the first time, but I’ll beat you the next time because you’ve grown all you are going to grow ... but I’m still growing.”

The story is instructive for us.

All of us experience failures of one kind or another – in our personal, professional and spiritual lives – because we are imperfect human beings.

In each instance, we must ask ourselves: What did we learn from what just happened? How do we benefit? How do we grow?

Truly successful people can acknowledge that failure is a great classroom for accomplishment.

– Beecher Hunter