

## **David Fielding's Story – Written 2019**

**Trek – Spain**

**Trek Age – 52**

**Writing Age – 52**

### **Advice**

Your journey is hard, but that's ok. You chose this journey. Work hard at it, but don't forget to enjoy it (tapas)!

### **Story**

Just after the half-way mark of our trek, Layne taught us about Endurance. He wanted us to find our biggest frustration. I was actually enjoying the trek and really couldn't think of anything that was frustrating me. There were others in the group that made the same comment. As I cycled that day, I dug deep to find something that was bothering me. I finally came up with something! I realized that each day when we discussed the day's journey, we would usually at some point talk about the elevation we would be climbing that day. I found myself hoping there would be no climbs or that the elevation would be at a minimum. I decided this would be my topic. I didn't realize how powerful this decision would be for me.

I went through the exercises provided to discover my focal point. I didn't like the work required! My legs hurt! I was tired! I had no energy! So much work! I realized the villain was work and the victim was me. I said the villain was work because it was trying to make me grow and overcome myself. And I justified myself as the victim because I was lazy and this was hard. My Hero was another teammate, Russell Bretz. He said the hills were no big deal. It was just one pedal in front of the other. He was always so focused and he just kept on going.

I realized the facts were that there was a hill (or several of them) between me and my destination and they weren't going anywhere. My story was that I needed to get to the other side and I didn't want to hold back the team. As a victim I didn't want to do the work and I secretly hoped that I might get out of it or we would go around it. Then I saw my Hero, Russell. He always just got up and got ready for the day. He always had a positive attitude!

The part of the exercise that was amazing was when we were asked to flip the story around. I acknowledged that the hill was still going to be there, but I could remove the thought of it being difficult. I realized that I had chosen to come on this Trek. I chose to follow and complete the route. I also realized that I wanted to grow into a new person. As a result of all this, I wanted to do whatever it took to complete the trek. I wanted to make it!

I was blown away by the power of this exercise! That day, and for the remainder of the trek, the hills were no longer an obstacle. I just went up them. If they were hard, oh well, I needed to get to the top so I could reach my destination. I had chosen this. I no longer minded how many feet we climbed or how many miles we biked. It was an amazing transformation.

So, the reason for the talisman of "Tapas!" is because the very next day, I determined I was just going to go. I started off strong. Russell was still out front and gaining on me. I was gaining on the rest of the group, but not as fast as Russell. At one point, I had been biking by myself for some time. Cranking out the hills because they were no big deal any more to me. But I also realized I was all alone. I didn't like that. I enjoyed stopping periodically and grabbing tapas with the team. I enjoyed sitting there relaxing with them over food and good conversation as much as the biking to get to our next destination. It was then that I relaxed and enjoyed the camaraderie, the ride, the hills, the beauties around me, and being in Spain! What a great trip!

There are so many corollaries with life that I learned. Life is hard. There are hills and mountains in our individual journeys. But we chose our journey. We chose to come here knowing it would be hard. We need to do the work required one step at a time and enjoy the associations (tapas) along the way. Life is awesome if we choose it to be that way!