



# *Tips to keep you airborne!*



Surfing the waves  
March 2025

After a quick dunk in the ocean the other afternoon when the westerlies were whipping up a wave or 3, I sat on the sand to gaze.

There were people about, given the beautiful day that was in it, and after some unfocussed scanning, my attention was drawn to a young lad of about 5 years of age having a surfing session with his dad.

Dad would pull the boy and his board out far enough before turning them both around and letting them rip with the wave.

The keen surfer went from prone position to attempting to kneel on one knee, only to be knocked off and thrashed in the surf.

Many attempts later he'd pull off the move about 40% of the time until finally he managed to hold both arms out straight to perfect his poise, resulting in a seamless ride to shore.

I was delighted with his success and secretly flashed him an invisible 10.

Both father and child seemed non-plussed with this demonstration of excellence, only focussed on the next wave, which of course knocked him in a nano second.

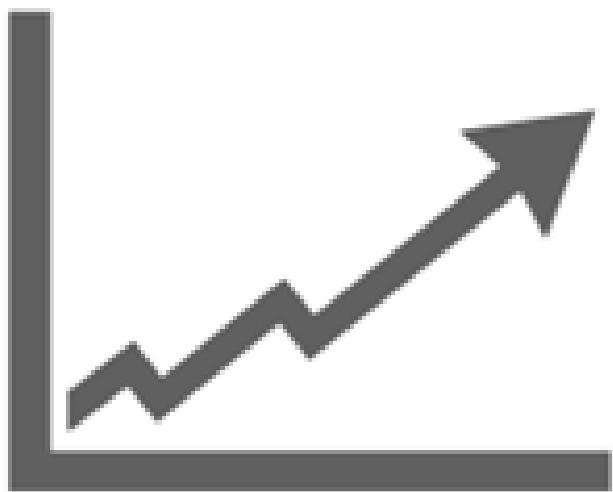
Not to mention the next, and the next...

Truth is, the child was buoyed by all his attempts, despite the apparent 'failures'. There was no question of setbacks. The focus was on the next wave to come.



**Caroline Crosbie**  
**CONSULTING**  
Tapping into Personal and Professional Wellness

Caroline Crosbie Consulting  
[www.carolinecrosbie.com.au](http://www.carolinecrosbie.com.au)  
[info@carolinecrosbie.com.au](mailto:info@carolinecrosbie.com.au)  
0416 154 259



I don't know how long this 'rinse and repeat' routine went on (long after I had left, I can imagine) but it reminded me of the following...

For us to grow into resilient beings, we require equal amount of challenge and support, which is exactly what I saw playing out in the waves.

It also reminded me of Joh Kabat-Zin, professor emeritus of medicine and creator of the Stress Reduction Clinic and Centre for Mindfulness in Medicine and his famous phrase: "You can't stop the waves, but you can learn to surf".

I don't doubt that the young lad will grow to become a great surfer in time, given the level support and pressure in his current mix, and hopefully he'll become a resilient young adult.

Life is tough and there will be challenges (e.g. developing successful relationships, coping with redundancy, experiencing financial stress etc.) that we'll need to face, changes we'll need to adapt to and setbacks we'll need to recover and grow from.

So the question is, how comfortable are you getting uncomfortable, and who are your supports?

Till next month when we massage this theme a little more, here's to considering how you surf the waves and the tricks you have up your sleeve to keep you aboard.

*Caroline*

*PS - Consider working with me directly if you are interested in some wellbeing coaching. Hit the reply button to this email with "yes, more information please".*

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[www.carolinecrosbie.com.au](http://www.carolinecrosbie.com.au)  
[info@carolinecrosbie.com.au](mailto:info@carolinecrosbie.com.au)  
0416 154 259