



Your Experiences Don't Dictate Your Story

Jess Ekstrom

There are two ways to interpret life's unexpected moments, said [Headbands of Hope](#) founder and CEO Jess Ekstrom at [Leadercast Women](#) 2018: You can *fear them*, or you can *seek the possibilities within them*. Jess shared that while we cannot control the **experiences** we go through, we can decide what **stories** emerge from them.

For example, when Jess was getting her company off the ground as a junior in college, she submitted \$10,000 to a potential producer. Unfortunately, the company didn't follow through and she lost all of her money with nothing to show from it.

When she shared this at Leadercast Women, she challenged the audience asking, **"When bad things happen, do you hide or are you energized by the prospect of change?"** Taking from her example, Jess saw the failed production deal as an opportunity to connect with other potential partners.

Top Takeaways

- Bad stuff can either be the excuse to why we do **less** or the reason we do **more**.
- You shouldn't have to choose between **making a living** and **making a difference**.
- Every expert was once a beginner.
- You have to **stay true to your aim** and **connected to your cause**.
- Don't confuse your attention for alignment. Don't get so worried about what people will see that you forget how they will feel.
- If we didn't really care about the end result, **failures would legitimize quitting**.