



RiverBender Blog: Rolling With the Punches

by Sydney Sinks, News Reporter
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BAM — the sound my body made as I crashed into the concrete. This is the risk of roller skating.

With warmer temperatures here (for the time being, at least), I'm looking for ways to get outside, and roller skating seemed like a fun, unique hobby to take up. This weekend, I found myself armed with an iced coffee, a good attitude and a pair of roller skates that I splurged on last year as a graduation gift to myself.

To clarify: I do not know how to roller skate. I get the general mechanics, and I can figure it out if I'm at the YMCA. I might hug the wall, but I can still make it around the rink once or twice.

But this was freeform roller skating, with no wall to hug. This was outdoors, on concrete with cracks and rocks and other natural hazards. Could I do it?

To tell the truth, it didn't matter whether or not I *could* do it. I was *going* to do it, because I had already bought the roller skates. I had something to prove and nothing to lose, except maybe the top layer of skin on my knees.

The first lap went well. I managed to stay upright. It was the second lap that did me wrong. A previously unseen twig sprung up out of nowhere, and I toppled. BAM.

I'm 24 now, which is by no means old. I'm young and in relatively good shape. But I can tell I'm getting older, because I did not spring back up. That fall knocked me down. I sat on the concrete for a moment, taking stock, confidence rattled. My ego and my knees were bruised.

But hey, your character is not measured by how often you fall, but how you get up — or something like that. I pulled myself up like a newborn deer taking its first steps. Shaky and awkward and praying my feet didn't roll off in opposite directions, I managed to get upright and skate off. And then I fell again.

I ended up back at the bench where I started, officially done with roller skating for the day. Life is all about bouncing back, but you can only fall so many times before you need a break (or Neosporin).

There's probably a great lesson wrapped into this about trying again and learning as you go and rolling with the punches (pun intended), and I'm sure I'd appreciate that a lot more if I didn't wake up sore today. But as it is, I'm less interested in morals and more interested in what the hell I was thinking.

I'm trying to find a new hobby, something to mix up my days and keep things interesting. Roller skating is just the latest in a long list of hobbies I've tried, from [painting](#) to [yoga](#). Admittedly, this is the most painful of them all, but it's been fun. And I'm not giving up; before long, I'll be whizzing through downtown Alton on my skates, just you wait.

In the meantime, I'm nursing both my injuries and my ego. The warmer weather can't come soon enough, but I might need a week or so before I head out again. But no

worries, dear reader. It's the [Year of Yes](#), so there are plenty of adventures ahead of me, and plenty of bruises. That's the risk of living life. It's a risk worth taking.