

GROWERTALKS

Inside Look

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The Journey Down Our Own Path

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Now that I'm approaching ... ahem ... middle age, I've become very reflective. Recent changes have forced me to step back and really look at my life, professionally and personally—where I am right now, how I got here, where I want to go.

It's not an easy exercise. It makes you face the decisions you've made, which can make you angry and frustrated at the ones that ended up not working out. But on the flipside of that, the positive outcomes from what ended up being good decisions make you feel pleased and grateful.

Some of us choose the easy path, which I've learned is very rocky and has hairpin twists and turns. On this path, you accept things as they come. You have no control over anything because you don't put any effort to change course. This path is stressful, paved with regrets and dotted with unexpected pitfalls.

The more difficult path is uphill. It takes a lot of blood, sweat and tears to navigate, but the path can be relatively smooth. And along the way there are small and large successes that help you keep moving forward.

At the time, you're not sure if the choices you make will end up with good outcomes or bad consequences. You just do the best you can at the time with the information you have. And many times, fear and a lack of confidence get in the way of taking a risk that could end up being the best decision.

Drew Groezinger didn't let anything get in the way of his goals. And because he was willing to take risks and choose the hard path, his reward is a flourishing cut flower business. It's one of the reasons why he's the winner of this year's *GrowerTalks*/Ball Horticultural Company Young Grower Award.

He's done more in 26 years than a lot of people accomplish in a lifetime. It helped that he was such an active kid and started building small ventures so young. It helped that he had a determined attitude and a good head on his shoulders. He truly believes in himself and there's so much power in that. It gave him the faith he needed to build a business from the ground up—all while navigating having to gain acceptance from others. He changed his appearance on the outside to give the impression that he was older. But he left the inside—the part that loves to share the joy of flowers and really doesn't care what you think about him—perfectly intact.

We've got lots of big features in this issue, but I promise they're worth the time—especially our expanded Culture Notes part and our coverage of Cultivate'24.

Going back to Drew, one thing he said really struck me: “ ... I have the ability to make that choice and that decision for what brings me joy and how I implement that into my life.” It’s such a mature way of looking at things and it made me a little envious that he already knows what took me 20-plus years to figure out. Thankfully, I’m taking a page out of Drew’s book and have readjusted my life GPS so that I’m now on a different, better path. **GT**