

THERE'S
ALWAYS
TIME
FOR
BETTER



BY **JEFF EGGLESTON** | 1973-2016

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On my journey to the place no one wants to go until they have to, I found a secret in plain sight, a treasure with no X to mark the spot.

My revelation didn't come with hallelujahs and angels singing, no gold halos shining to announce its arrival.

I found it in the humdrum of living and working.

Many people who tell stories of discovering redemption or revival speak of the momentous. Mine was simply a moment.

After doctors diagnosed me with a rare form of cancer in 2007, I refused self-pity and depression. I chose to fight. I took on a superhero theme and wore superhero t-shirts. Friends and co-workers hung onto it and so did I, as I went through surgeries and treatments. It carried me through the medical challenges and I was able to work until December 2015.

Yet even superheroes lose faith or motivation momentarily. When I found myself running out of treatment options late last year, so it was with me.

I felt like I wasn't fighting as hard, and I was starting to slip in my motivation and my health and felt like it was bleeding over into my work, family and friends. Little things at work or with my work gave it away. I was preparing a presentation and didn't give it my all. I was doing an analysis and it wasn't up to snuff.

I wasn't up to my own standards. I wasn't really getting depressed per se, but maybe my mindset had changed, knowing it was going to get tougher.

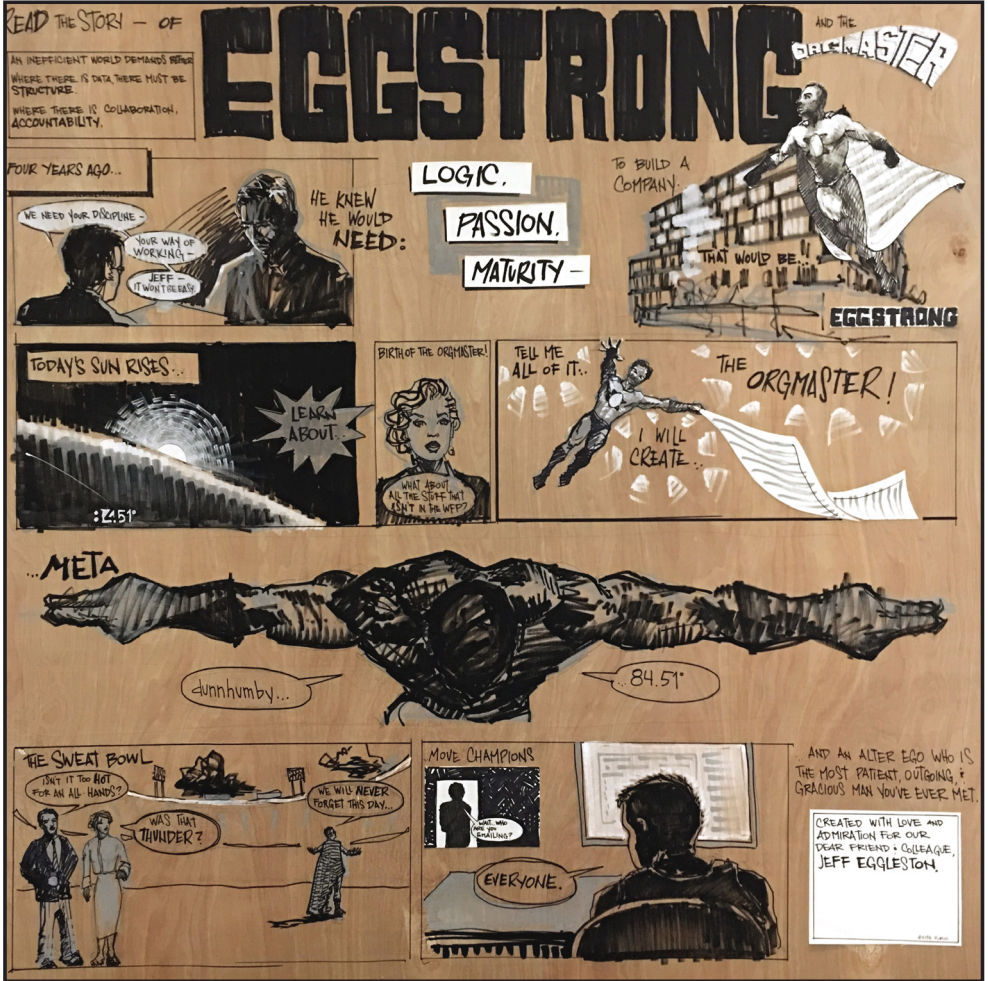
I gave myself a kick in the pants. It wasn't a wake-up-and-look-in-the-mirror kind of thing – it was just when I caught myself, maybe once or twice a day. I told myself "C'mon man, you can do better than this, you're better than this. You're not meeting your own standards."

"You can do better. You can be better."

If I was being grumpy, I chose to be friendly. If I was unfocused, I focused.

I made it a reflex: Do better, be better.

It changed my mood every time. It was my own kind of re-energizer and re-motivator. I would definitely do better or be better after every day.



By doing better and being better, I had a head start on getting to comfort in the face of my mortality, the place no one wants to go unless they must. It gave me the sense that I fought as hard as I could, that I did everything I could, and tried to be the best person I could be.

It helped with shifting from fighter mode to bravery mode.

Superheroes fight hard but they're also brave. Brave means standing up when the odds are insurmountable.

For me, insurmountable came in January 2016. My doctors told me the options to beat my cancer were depleted. My diagnosis became terminal.

Since then, I have worked hard to come to peace with my future and reflect. When you know your days are numbered, you don't count them, you examine them in detail.

It's so easy to get stuck in your daily routine. You just go about your life and work. Those are simple things – life, work. Yet there is a bigger concept that's even simpler to grasp, the highest common denominator tying those two spheres together.

So take a moment to step back and ask yourself: can I be better? Am I doing the best I can?

Trust me when I say your life and work will improve immeasurably. Can you be a better father, brother, sister, son, daughter, uncle, aunt, friend, co-worker, person? I'd wager that every one of us would answer yes to the question, and the Vegas odds are very much with me on that.

So draw the cards. Ask the question. Trust me, I know you'll draw a winning hand.

It's simply a challenge from me to you. When you feel yourself slipping, say to yourself: "Do Better, Be Better." I know you will be happy with the results.

My life is more finite and truncated than most. Does that mean I get a pass to be less better, because physically I'm not better nor am I going to be better?

My answer is a resounding no.

You can tell that I am at peace with my future if you met me; everyone that comes to visit me knows that. Feels it.

When I tell you I am at peace, I tell you that I chose not resignation, but acceptance. I chose to seek comfort inside.

With that, I bought something priceless: the secret to living well no matter your fate: Do better, be better.

That mantra will not save my life. But it saved the life I have left.

And that makes it a lifesaver.