

# 'May your road be rough'

Let's not sugar-coat things. Farming is going to get tougher before it gets better.

Conscientious consumers and new environmental legislation will sort the wheat from the chaff. And the only way things get better is when we get better because when we don't subject ourselves to stress, we get weak.

We stop growing. Instead of learning, we're defending our performance plateaus. We take the easy road because it's easy.

As Ceri Evans, All Blacks psychiatrist (and yep, even our best rugby team need help, especially right now), says:

"You have to get comfortable with being uncomfortable."

The quote I like even more is from Mike Tyson when he said "Everyone has a plan till they get punched in the face."

And punched in the face we have been.

Covid-19, war, global supply chains and astronomical rises in input costs are testing us to our core.

So I want you to ask yourself these four questions:

- Will you see it as a threat or as a challenge?
- Will you shy away from it or walk towards it?
- Will you learn its lessons?

- Will you be open to what it reveals about you and your farming model?

The answer will depend on how you're wired and the mindset you decide to take.

It's really up to you how you respond. What I am enjoying most over the past few months is seeing people's true character come out from behind all the bullshit.

What they said and what they now do tells me everything I need to know. What they do tells me what and where their priorities now lie.

What matters most is the action people take. Massive action preferably.

Some of you might be freezing and freaking out sitting in the middle of the road about to get run over.

Others of you might be enjoying what this crisis is teaching you and what it opens up, thinking it's the best thing to happen since sliced bread and knowing you will come out bigger, better and stronger for it.

I hope you are in the latter category and, if not, I encourage you to give it a go because your attitude is everything.

Here's the truth: if we are addicted to complete comfort we will always suffer.

We will always benefit from shocks to the system just like our mate Nassim Nicholas Taleb tells us in his brilliant books *Antifragile* and *The Black Swan*.

The scenario we're facing now is one more shock that can make us stronger — if we allow it to.

Bad can be good. Suffering can be good too.

Why? Because it wakes us up from our slumber when we've been sleepwalking.

We need to make sure we learn from its lessons or we will learn nothing.

I'll leave you with the words that inspired this issue's editorial (highlights are mine):

"Tai Solarin was Nigeria's under-celebrated educationist, social critic and visionary reformer. He wrote an article 55 years ago to usher in 1964. His simply-titled essay was called 'May your road be rough'. It was the great man's prayer that the going should be tough and rough for his compatriots during the year.

'You cannot make omelettes without breaking eggs, throughout the world; there is no paeon (triumph) without pain. Jawaharlal Nehru has put it so well . . . He wants to meet his troubles in a frontal attack. He wants to see himself tossed into the aperture between the two horns of the bull. Being there, he determines he is going to win and, therefore, such a fight requires all his faculties . . . I found, by hard experience, that all that is noble and laudable was to be achieved only through difficulties and trials

and tears and dangers. There are no other roads. Life, if it is going to be abundant, must have plenty of hills and vales. It must have plenty of sunshine and rough weather. It must be rich in obfuscation and perspicacity. It must be packed with days of danger and of apprehension."

Like weather, we're in a rough patch but the weather will change as it always does, bringing a new front and high with it.

Ships weren't meant for harbours and nor were you.

Just like exercise, seek out pain and pressure and I promise you'll become better and stronger because of it.

Keep going. Keep pushing.

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