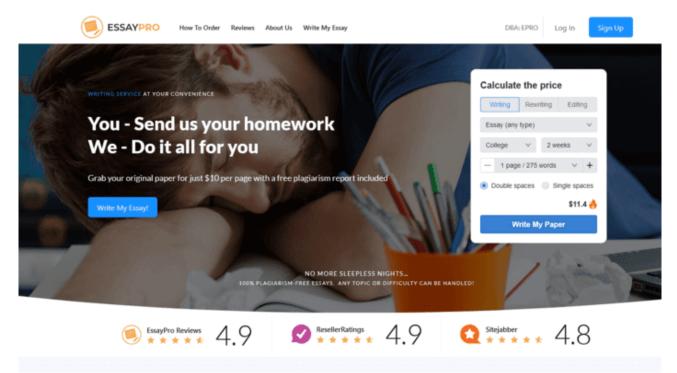
Personal Narrative - Learn The Hard Way



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Learn The Hard Way

Learn it the hard way. That is the way I learned the old adage "no pain, no gain". It was my first dirt bike race. My heart had been pounding like a drum in a high school band for three days before the race. The race was in the middle of nowhere in Tucson, Az. I arrived on a Friday, my race was on Saturday.

It was sunny out, but there was a slight breeze blowing the tent around, making it hard to set up. Friday evening was the practice run, where all the riders got the chance to pre-run the course for the race the next day. When the announcer announced that it was my class' turn to practice my stomach dropped. It felt as if I was going 100 mph and just hit a dip in the road. I felt like it was time to race. I put on my helmet and difficulty strapped the chin strap. It was difficult with my hands trembling. My knees were weak and I felt like I was going to drop my bike when I was starting it. I gave it a good kick and a fair amount of throttle and it fired up. I could instantly smell the fumes of high quality race gas. That seemed to calm me down. I pulled out of the pits and up to the starting line. All of the riders began to start their bikes. The roar of the engines made me nervous. My hands were sweating and my mouth was dry. The official said, "Remember this is just practice,

don't kill yourself." That relaxed me reminding me that I could just putt around out there having no worries of winning, losing, or most importantly, crashing.

Well, we took off and left a cloud of dirt in our rear. I could taste the dirt as people in front of me took off. It made my cotton mouth even worse. It was my turn and I hit the gas and took off. I was trying to stay calm but my <u>nerves</u> we...

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...". So I stood up not caring how bad I hurt. I ask him to give me a push. He had a worried look on his face as he said, "sure". I think he saw the blood running down my face and my jersey ripped open with my cut filled with dirt and blood forming bloody mud. He started my bike and I crawled on. He pulled the clutch in since I couldn't move my arm and pushed me down a hill and released it. I felt a quick jerk as it kicked into gear. I stayed in first gear as I pulled into the pits.

My step-dad saw what was going on and he ran to me and caught the bike as I almost fell off. I just said I'm fine and went and sat in a chair. It turns out I had a broken arm and cuts and bruises. I did learn it the hard way, but I also learned from the race. I learned you can't give up. I kept racing and turned into a better more experienced rider. The tough way was the best way to go.

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