



By **DANA FORD** | CNN | May 23, 2014

# U.S. climber survives 70-foot fall in Nepal: “Any mistake... I was going to die”



(CNN) -- A Western Kentucky University professor is “broken” but alive after surviving a 70-foot fall into a crevasse while climbing in Nepal.

John All said he managed to make it out and to his tent, where he was picked up by a helicopter.

“It probably took me four or five hours to climb out. I kept moving sideways, slightly up, sideways, slightly up, until I found an area where there was enough hard snow that I could get an ax in and pull myself up and over,” he told HLN’s “RightThisMinute” on Thursday.

Climber survives 70-foot fall in Nepal

“I knew that if I fell at any time in that entire four or five hours, I, of course, was going to fall all the way to the bottom of the crevasse. Any mistake, or any sort of rest or anything, I was going to die.”

All fell into the crevasse Monday while conducting climate research on Mount Himlung in the Himalayas. He shot a short video immediately after the fall.

In it, All’s voice rises and falls with pain as drops of his blood speckle the white snow. He scans to the top of the crevasse, a narrow hole of light, and to its bottom, a seemingly bottomless pit. A ledge had stopped his fall.

“Biggest problem was, because my ribs were so broken in my right side, I had to do everything with just my right foot, but not the upper part of my right leg, and my left leg, and then my left arm,” he said.

After he managed to make his way out of the crevasse, All said he rolled as much as he walked back to the tent.

There, he called for a helicopter, which arrived within 16 to 18 hours, said All, who was alone when he fell.

“If somebody else had been with me, we both would have died. There’s no question. Because I would have fallen in the crevasse, they would have fallen on top of me, and we would have killed each other,” he said.

According to the crisis response firm that rescued All, he was flown to Kathmandu and transferred to a hospital there. Global Rescue said it was alerted to his situation via satellite text message relayed over the Internet.

Asked by HLN how he is feeling, All replied “I am broken.”

Happily, he added: “It’s amazing how broken a body can be and still be functioning.”