

Synopsis

Success, In Spite of Myself, tells the raw and gripping story of this adopted kid from the streets of Chicago. Homeless and against all odds, I lived an extraordinary life of adventure, adversity and triumph. This “living on the edge” lifestyle resulted in stories that are nearly unbelievable, from escaping two police stations in one night to riding Arabian horses around the Egyptian pyramids at sunset, the latter while maintaining a critically important international position of maintaining the Egyptian Air Defense radars.

It begins with the Loras College in Dubuque, Iowa experience, where pushing the Loras College security jeep over a cliff seemed a logical thing to do as a freshman. During my summers in Dubuque, I worked as a nightman for Egelhoff and Casper Funeral Home, picking up the dearly departed. After my unceremonious exit from Loras my senior year, I found myself homeless, living in my car in Chicago. Homelessness has a unique way of making you come to grips with the reality “you are on your own” and “no one cares.” I know firsthand. Chicago winter, February 1977, minus 6 degrees. I had nowhere to go to keep warm, so I went to the retirement home/village my dad lived. My dad worked the switchboard from 10 p.m. to 4 a.m. At 3:45 a.m. he came up to me and said I had to leave, he couldn’t have guests.

I remember walking out of the front doors of Royal Achers at 4 a.m. knowing I couldn’t hitchhike at that time of the morning. I saw they were adding a new building to Royal Achers. I needed to get out of the wind so I went inside of the new construction area. There were 20 full bales of hay. I stacked them into a cube, got inside and sealed the cube with a bale. I slept pretty well, but you should have seen the faces of the workers at 7:45 a.m. when the bale of hay moved and I emerged! It was pretty funny! I had to do whatever I could to survive. With an unwavering desire to make something of myself, I changed my college transcripts and secured an accounting position in the roughest part of Chicago.

With a great job and a pocket full of money, and given the drug culture of my friends in Chicago at that time, my experimenting became a normal occurrence, which led to unemployment. At 22, with nothing but party friends shaping your future, your “path forward” was really just a slow slide backward into a string of bad decisions. Case in point; using my ill-gotten American Express card, I booked a trip to Europe and funded my European extravaganza by going to 30+ different colleges/universities around Chicago, securing student ID’s from most and then proceed to cash \$25 checks in the bookstores, amassing around \$800 traveling money. What I realized when I returning from Europe, I was in a worse state before I left and my future existence in Chicago would end in prison or the morgue. I needed to get out of Chicago, but how, I had no family to fall back on. Then while playing rugby for the Southside Irish Rugby Football Club, I witnessed a USCG helicopter swoop in and evacuate a severely injured person. It was like God put the largest advertisement on a path out of Chicago.

I joined the USCG and had a successful career. Good decision. Bad decision, my USCG career started out a bit rocky when I reported to boot camp in Alameda California with an ounce of pot

in my crouch, but ended with me graduating #1 in my company. The USCG gave me the tools to become self-sufficient. God rewards you when you choose the road less traveled. He rewarded me with going to the tropical island of Saipan. On Saipan, another shipmate and I received the USCG Distinguished Service medal for saving a Japanese newlywed couple that were swept out to sea. Hence one of many unbelievable story's that will entertain the reader from the beginning to the end of the book. After the USCG, I was hired by a Seneca Gorham telephone company where I met and fell in love with a women 14 years older. I was 27, she was 41, and she made me a man in ways I would have never imagined. It was the epitome of an incredibly intense forbidden love story. As I will come to find out the hard way, dating the most desirable woman at your place of employment typically leads to unemployment, but what a ride!

This book will show how life takes you on many different paths if you let it. Next stop General Electric in Syracuse where I worked on mine sweeping sonar and air defense radars. I married a nurse from Buffalo and together we "Walked like an Egyptian" when I took a long-term assignment in Cairo, Egypt to support the Egyptian Air Defense radars. A tumultuous time, we were evacuated out of Egypt to Amsterdam when the Egyptian Riot police, go figure, decided to riot. In those two years we saw the world, only to come home and find my father-in-law had a tax scam that he had included his children and it led to our getting divorced. I learned the hard way, sometimes things out of your control can devastate your life, you just have to continue on.

Still working in Egypt, I met, feel in love with the daughter of the former Governor of Cairo. Our whirlwind romance began by riding horses around the pyramids at sunset, diving shipwrecks in the Red Sea and me converting to Islam (twice). We were married in the Egyptian Ambassadors chamber in New York and when the relationship did not grow as expected, I seriously thought I might be murdered when I divorced out of this powerful Egyptian family.

Relocated back to the states, where I played basketball with the New York State police and grew 30 lbs. of pot. A neighbor discovered some of the pot plants and because of my friendship with the NY State police teammates, I was only charged with a health violation. Fired from GE for trying to secure a cleaning contract for my girlfriend, only to find myself on the unemployment line, again.

Started a successful environmental company specializing in asbestos and radon removal company; Allstate Environment Safety Corporation (AES) became a very successful business. Right up until the point when a major disaster at a large contract AES was working on occurred. I covered the repair costs out of pocket, realized I was a heartbeat way from financial ruin and sold the company. This book will show you how resilience, perseverance and a will to exceed will conquer adversity.

Knowing I wanted change in my direction, I became a broker for Merrill Lynch in Syracuse where I passed the licensing tests to sell securities and insurance. Left Merrill Lynch in Syracuse and moved to Virginia where I worked for Oracle Financial Application group and was very successful. I left Oracle to take a senior position with a French company Systar. Learned I was

going to be a father of twins and that I had Hepatitis C. I was accepted into several National Institute of Health (NIH) clinical trials where I was a 6' 4" lab rat taking experimental protocols, but on the second trial, a cure for Hep-C was found. My life changed when I became a father of twin boys. I gained custody of the boys when they were 4 years old and was a single father. Now I had two young boys that depended on me, its funny how what were your priorities dissolve and the only thing important is providing for your boys. This is my only true family.

My experience working with Systar enabled me to take a senior position with Fujitsu Consulting. There I started the Sarbanes-Oxley consulting practice and wrote multiple articles on the subject of Sarbanes Oxley for *CIO* and *BusinessWeek* magazines. In 2002, after seeing the demand for Sarbanes-Oxley (SOX) consultive services, I formed TrumbullCrow Consulting. My companies first contract was with Nextel. After the tidal wave of SOX ended, TrumbullCrow was hired by the Department of the Interior to perform Federal Information Security and Modernization Act (FISMA) service. This launched TrumbullCrow into the Federal Government arena and secured the longevity of the company until I sold it in 2023.

From being an adopted child, homeless at 18 and living in my car during the winter, to eventually turning my life around to become a respectable father and successful businessman, this is my non-fiction story—turbulent, open and honest. I believe my escapades good and bad will invigorate and entertain as well as provide humor and sustenance when times get dark. It's proof that with hard work and, in my case, in spite of myself, one can still build an extraordinary life. These are only a few snippets of a life well lived.

Would you be interested in representing *Success, In Spite of Myself*?