

So This Is Reality!?

By
Patti Phillips

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Dedication

This book is dedicated to my loving son Michael, and my wonderful father Edward. I love them so deeply, it's like they are the only people in the world.

When my father died, I didn't think I was going to make it. There were times that I hoped I wouldn't. But I did. At that time, I only had my son to rely on. I'm grateful every single day, and care about him more than words could ever say. We will forever have love and faith for each other.



About the Author

Hello everyone, I'm Patti Phillips. Though you already know that by now. I have been writing for nineteen years, and I am currently working on my fifth non-fiction novel. I love telling stories and creating something that allows people on a journey of the mind and heart. I didn't write to impress anyone; I wrote to help myself survive and hopefully make a positive difference in someone else's life. I always approach every endeavor with the strong desire to excel. My driving force is to be a good human being and that will always make me a winner.

Besides writing, my other passion is travel. I love the adventures and learning experiences of going to new places and meeting new people so much that I actually had a job traveling cross-country. I was working for an airline full-time, ten-hour days, four days a week. The other three days my son and I were on a plane from L.A. to another state to pick up a vehicle and deliver it to a different state, then fly back home. Those were the happiest memories of our lives.

That's also why in my over twenty-year career with the airlines I was willing to move twice from our home to another state to keep my job. I have been to many, many countries and every state in the U.S. except Maine, Vermont, and North Dakota. But they are still on my bucket list. I have taken thousands of pictures of places I adored, and if I had followed my true calling, I know I would have been a terrific photographer. I also love cooking so much, that I think I could have owned a successful restaurant. But more than anything else, I love raising my amazing only son Michael as a single parent. That is truly my greatest accomplishment.

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One

What I'm about to tell you is the *truth*, the whole *truth*, and nothing but the *truth*, so help me God. The truth is a rare thing, it is delightful to tell it.⁽¹⁾ In the movie "A Dark Truth" with Andy Garcia he says, "at the end of the day all we can do is search for the truth, learn from it, and most importantly defend it." I don't have to be under oath to tell the truth, I just do. We should all tell the truth as easily as breathing, instead of complicating everything with lies. In telling these *true* stories I have faith they will set me free. I work very hard to have hope and faith. As I think you will soon see, even when there were so many times so much was going wrong to such gentle, caring persons as myself and my son Michael, we still had faith.

In this book I invite you, as challenged people tend to be, to find new ways to look at yourself and others in this world. I hope in reading these stories you'll be willing to expand outside your comfort zone and open your eyes and mind to someone else's point of view. When you gain a new perspective of things, that's when life is at its best. I pray to God this book will touch your heart and help make people the persons we're all meant to be. Good, honest, caring, human beings. That in the course of reading this it could change your life, for it truly did change mine.

I take great pride in not asking anyone for a favor, until now. I'm asking for God's acknowledgement, power, love, and understanding in exposing our story to others. And in helping me tell it like it is, tell it like it was. Search for the truth is the noblest occupation of man; its publication is a duty.⁽²⁾ I'm asking for your interest and wisdom in believing in our series of events and understanding my need to tell these stories. It has been said that every man has a story. I want to openly share all that we've seen, heard, and learned. I want so badly to connect to the world of others. I pray to God this book will touch your heart and help make people the persons we're all meant to be. Good, honest, caring, human beings.

Though I cannot give on the level that some people can, I love helping others. That is one of the things I like most about myself, and that is when I'm my happiest. I am an Aquarius. And from what little I know about astronomical signs; I believe we are supposed to be the people of *this world* who are true humanitarians. I know that I am. I give as much as I possibly can. I've helped so many people emotionally, spiritually, and financially, never asking anything in return. Here are a few examples of those people who are said to be more likely to be socially conscience, go unselfishly out of their way to enrich other's lives, and focus on making the world a better place. True Aquarius's

Activist.....Rosa Parks

Actors.....Paul Newman, John Travolta, Tom Selleck, & Clark Gable

Actresses.....Jennifer Aniston, & Diane Lane

Artists.....Eduard Mehmet & Jackson Pollock

Astrologer.....Charles E.O. Carter

Astronauts.....Edwin Aldine & Evangeline Adams

Astronomer.....Galileo

Baseball Player.....Babe Ruth
Basketball Player.....Michael Jordon
Chef.....Guy Fieri
Civil Rights Leader.....Martin Luther King, Jr.
Comedians.....Jack Benny, Chris Rock, & Jimmy Durante
Composers.....Wolfgang Mozart, & Franz Schubert
Dancer.....Anna Pavlov
Economists.....Thomas Malthus, & C. A. Lindbergh
Entertainers.....Gypsy Rose Lee, & Hal Holbrook
Evolutionist.....Charles Darwin
Feminists.....Germaine Greer, & Betty Friedan
General/Military.....Douglas MacArthur
Industrialist.....Charles M. Schwab
Journalist.....Carl Bernstein
Musicians.....Andres Segovia, & Graham Nash
Occultist.....Emanuel Swedenborg
Pilot.....Charles Lindbergh
Poets.....Robert Burns, & Lord Byron
Prime Minister.....Harold MacMillan
Psychiatrist.....Alfred Adler
Publisher.....Helen Gurley Brown
Radical.....Angela Davis
Religious.....Oral Roberts
Royalty.....Queen Ann, & Princess Beatrix
Singers.....Carol King, Phil Collins, & Alicia Keys
T.V. Hosts.....Oprah Winfrey, Dick Martin, Hugh Downs,
& Ellen DeGeneres
Union Leaders.....James Hoffa, & John L. Lewis
U.S. Presidents.....Abraham Lincoln, Franklin D.
Roosevelt, & Ronald Regan
& Writers.....Louis Carroll, Virginia Wolf, Sinclair Lewis,
& Jules Vern

How fortunate I am to have lived in the day and age of some of these great human beings. I am truly blessed, and I bow down to them. To hear and learn of their noble causes, intelligent words of love and wisdom, and to help join in their humanitarian traits enriching people's lives. To shine your brightest when you are putting yourself out there for others. They, like me, and every one of us has the capacity to express ourselves. To do whatever you can to get your divine truth within yourself out. To stand up for what's right, pure, pertinent, and meaningful. Helping and encouraging others, however and whenever I can, has always been one of my life's goals. The purpose of life is a life of purpose.⁽³⁾

Almost half a century has passed, and a few of the details I'm writing may be a bit blurred, but the memories of my heart and mind are as alive today as then were back then. I remember all too well. Sometimes I wish my retention of things years gone by wasn't as good as it is. But be that as it may, they are very good. And so is my burning desire to tell it like it is. It's the memories that are hardest to forget that seem easier to remember.

There is no greater agony than bearing an untold *story* inside you.⁽⁴⁾ That's why I started writing this book. The stories I had inside me I felt compelled to get out. I needed to speak my mind, from the heart. The creative spirit thrives on freedom and a daring will. And what we do not claim remains invisible. And though I so often felt invisible, I no longer wanted to remain that way. I felt I had something important to say and was hoping someone would listen. Each life has a story behind it.

We are all pencils in the hand of God writing love letters to the world.⁽⁵⁾ Though I wish this book projected a little more goodness in it. Originally, I was going to title it: Drama, drama, then more drama. Which was appropriate for our lives. Writing this book has been my driving force, my goal, my passion, my challenge, and my belief in myself. It's what we as humans need to keep us going, goals. I don't just want to *exist* in life, I want to *excel*. Like all people, I want to feel good about myself. And I feel I need to get these stories off my chest.

Though for me personally, I need to feel I accomplished something with my life. For that matter, even with my day. I need to feel productive, it's one of the most important things to me and completes who I am. I know I have the courage and determination to strive to bring out the best in myself. Courage is a kind of salvation.⁽⁶⁾ You can't kill the human spirit, it's something that's locked deep inside every one of us.

I TRULY BELIEVE if I express my inner strengths in the written word, and become successful in doing so, it doesn't mean I'm smarter than anyone else. It just means I'm fortunate because God gave me that strength and the ability to express myself that way. I TRULY BELIEVE that by telling these stories it will help others survive, become stronger, and open up to others as well. I TRULY BELIEVE that means we should all be willing to share our experiences with others, which I am.

"There are moments that mark your life. Moments you realize nothing will ever be the same *again*, and time is divided into two parts.....before this, and after this." That was a quote from the movie "Fallen." I have so many before and after thoughts I feel compelled to write about. I have a very deep-rooted desire to express myself. I want to leave the world a better place because I was there. I want to show others who lose their way, get their heart's broken, and lose faith, that you can survive and find that inner peace no matter what you're going through. No matter what life throws your way.

I've lost out on a lot of things in my life through bad luck, or bad choices, but I wouldn't give up on the idea of my book being exposed to others until it is in print. Where there's a will, there's a way. ⁽⁷⁾ I feel it will be mine and hopefully others salvation. Computers, word of mouth, television, and books are a powerful source for attaining information and expressing one's own self. When you know what you want, and you want it bad enough, you will find a way to get it. ⁽⁸⁾

You can bury the story, but you can't hide the truth. I want my book to enlighten people, and hopefully bring about some serious, important changes. It isn't easy reaching for your dreams. All our dreams can come true, if we have the courage to pursue them. ⁽⁹⁾ It takes hope, courage, and strength to believe that you can have the ability to reach for the stars and touch the heavens. Though I'm afraid we were far from touching the heavens.

I TRULY BELIEVE with all my heart and soul what I'm about to say. But most importantly it has always kept me going. Never settle for less than we all deserve. People need three things in life: someone to love, (my son) something to love, (my writing) and something to look forward to. (finding a peaceful place to live)

Those thoughts and beliefs will make your future brighter, even at the darkest of times. Suffering produces endurance, endurance produces character, and character produces hope. *Hope* is the driving force that keeps us moving forward. Learn from yesterday, live for today, hope for tomorrow.⁽¹⁰⁾ The most important thing is to stop questioning that and believe it. I believe every life has a story, whether it's lovely or not. And even more important, when it's more realistic than you ever wanted or felt it could be. Your story is what you carry with you through life, that you rightfully own. This is my story.

Two

I've long since passed the stage of being surprised by anything, or anyone. Though it does not cease to amaze me how often I am stunned by life experiences. Numerous times in my life my family tried to humor me with this little saying of theirs. My maiden-name is ARLICK, and we'd all laugh whenever things went wrong. Then we'd say, "you know when it comes to bad luck, it's just ARE LUCK." Some humor a day keeps the doctor away. And don't ever let stupid things happening in your life break down that happiness within you.

Though even the first doctor involved in my life, I was never exposed to, wasn't there for me. As that story goes and as fate would have it, when I was rushed to the hospital at birth, my mother's doctor never arrived in time. So, believe it or not, I was delivered by a practicing nurse. It seemed to be my *bad* luck had become my closest ally from the moment I was born. Unlucky from the first day I came into this world. But thank God she knew what she was doing, or I wouldn't even be here to tell my story. And I'm dying to tell my stories.

One of my craziest memories about my bad luck, early on, involves cars and relationships. And so many lawsuits with so many wasted days in court. Though I know we can all relate to problems with relationships. When aren't they difficult? Please don't misunderstand me, I love cars. I'm kind of like a guy when it comes to the wheels I drive. Cars are exciting and make your adrenaline race. It's men, unfortunately, I'm not so crazy about. Because they all drove me in the wrong direction my whole life, making me crash and burn.

My father, Edward, bought me my first car when I was in High School. It was a really, fine red hot, 1968 Ford Mustang in really, great shape. Boy, don't I wish I still had that car. *Feel the love?* Sense the closeness? Daddy's little girl. All his girls meant everything to him. He always worked very hard because he never wanted us to go without. He told us that giving from the heart was what life was all about. But more importantly he taught us that love, kindness, and being honest, were of the utmost importance. He loved his family so much.

Spread love everywhere you go. Let no one ever come to you without leaving happier. ⁽¹¹⁾ *That was* the sort of thing my father's words were all about. *This was* the man that gave everything and then some, from the bottom of his heart, never worrying about his own needs first. *That was* the strongest bond I've ever had with anyone in my whole life and will probably always be. *That is* what love is all about. I miss him so much *it hurts*. My father's *guiding hand* on my shoulder, his *loving arms* in our embrace, and his *intelligent body* of knowledge, will remain with me forever. I love you dad, more than words could ever possibly say.



My father was the most loving, sensitive, honest, decent man, that showed nothing but love for his family and this world. Like me, he was always trying to please people. Like me, he was never appreciated. My father always taught me that helping people out was a good thing, but later in life I sadly learned otherwise. For even if you love giving to others, more often than not, people will lie to you or take advantage of you. And that is what takes away all your enjoyment of wanting to help others. But it seems to be inbred in me, that I can't resist the need and desire to want to help people. It's such a wonderful feeling inside. I have never been able to understand why people don't feel that.

Like my father, my whole life has been about wanting so badly to be able to trust people. Yet far too often, being let down. I guess I must have the genetic condition that causes people to love and trust everyone, known as the Williams syndrome. And how ironic, because my first boyfriend I believed truly loved me had the last name Williams. But that beyond any doubt turned out to be a heartbreak and a lie.

Here's how those stories go. On my own, years later, I always bought my own cars. At twenty-years-old I got married to Robert Williams, and we bought a brand spanking new, white, Pontiac Trans Am. That was the first year they came out with that model, and it was a doozy. And yes, don't I wish I still had that car also. But unfortunately, my name is not Jay Leno. Ha, ha. It was so exciting to own that automobile. I was in love with the man of my dreams, and the car of my desire. I thought.



Robert had swept me off my feet with all his promises of love. But that excitement ended less than a year later when I found out he was still married when he married me. Yes, you heard me right. And he was cheating on me to boot! That was a real eye opener, and a kick in my butt no less. A really, enormous let down. It's amazing how fast someone you cared about, and thought cared about you too, can become a stranger in nothing flat.

I know what you're thinking, and the answer is yes. Some of my worse luck started when I was very young. So as bad luck would have it, I said goodbye to a bigamist husband and that shiny, new car. At that point, I didn't give a shit about any of it. There's no point holding on to someone who's already let you go. One of the happiest moments ever is when you find the courage to let go of what you can't change. The key to success is to focus on goals, not obstacles.

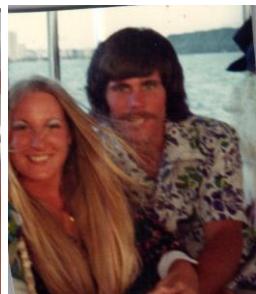
Relationships never die a natural death. They are always murdered by attitude, ego, behavior, or ignorance. I wanted to be as far away from the idea of a relationship with a man as possible. For many, many years after that had happened, I no longer had the desire to try and develop a close, trusting relationship with a guy, for fear of being hurt and abandoned *again*. I pretty much gave up on that whole idea all together. Happiness is in the heart, not in the circumstances.

After that relationship ended in an annulment, he took the car and I took the houses. Yes, we were in the process of buying our first home, living what in marriage is supposed to be a happy life, and adopting his four-year-old daughter, Billy Denise. But all of that came to a screeching halt, except for the purchase of these two houses on a lot in Manhattan Beach. When we were no longer together, he only wanted that car, and I intelligently took on the bigger responsibility. I said I was gullible, not dumb.

I have been gullible, naive, soft, and pliable all my life. That's why I got taken advantage of too often. To survive, you have to have tough skin.⁽¹²⁾ And great things seldom come from comfort zones. Boy, don't I know about those two things. At least there's something I'm wise about. Wisdom comes alone through suffering.⁽¹³⁾ And hard times teach us many valuable life lessons. Tough times reveal what really matters. Your true friends, resourcefulness, resilience, and how amazingly strong you can be.

It wasn't until I was twenty-five-years-old that I started dating again and met Charlie Phillips at a company Christmas party. He soon became my boyfriend. He sold me his blue, well-maintained, classic Volvo P1800. I loved that car too. And yes, I also loved him. Enough to keep his last name. He was my second marriage which sadly ended in a divorce. There is no loneliness like that of a failed marriage.⁽¹⁴⁾ Sometimes no matter how carefully, or how much effort goes into your plans, there is no right tract for what awaits you.

And how ironic, for my first flight ever was with him on United Airlines, no less. And our honeymoon was to Honolulu, no less. How ironic can something possibly be? I know that sounds confusing to say, but I'll be explaining what that all means in my soon-to-be third book called "So This Is Aloha!?" Charlie was a good man, but at that time not the right one for me. For those silly, young girl notices that a man had to move mountains romantically were stuck in my head. Or at least I foolishly thought that at that time. He was more like a friend, not a lover. But we all make poor decisions, for I later came to understand how a good man is so terribly hard to find.



On that note, I probably made one of the biggest mistakes of my lifetime that I'll regret forever. If only I could turn back the clock. We all look back on our lives and wonder if things could have been any different. If we had not gone down that specific road. If we were thinking with our thinking cap on. If we would have taken a different path. If it were humanly possible for me to stop the clock of life, it would have been at that moment in time. For I now know my life with him would have led me to far more beautiful contentment and greener meadows.

I guess I'll never know what "feeling madly in love is all about?" You are a wonderful man, Charlie Phillips, and don't you ever forget it. God bless you, wherever you are, from the bottom of my heart. Remember the existence of the ones who truly loved you. And never forget the mark that they left in your mind, but even more importantly on your heart and soul.



That car never needed any work, *but then* some minor problem happened that turned into a major problem. *But then* I've already explained to you my misfortunes with LUCK. At that time a lot of bad luck had rocked our world, in both of our lives. For when push came to shove, I took that Volvo to this auto repair shop in Hermosa Beach that I hoped knew what they were doing. But instead, it got stolen. *Oops*. It always seems that what I want, versus what I get, are never the same. Their always two very different situations.

Within a blink of an eye, it just vanished. And so did our marriage. One day they both were there, the next day they both were not. Don't minimize the importance of luck in determining life's course.⁽¹⁵⁾ What a journey life can be, smooth sailing or a stormy ride. My son and I have had such a crazy life journey, yet I'm hoping these true stories about our outcomes can inspire others along the way. Life is crazy. Life is changes and chances. Growth is optional. Choose wisely. But also remember luck has a lot to do with the whole process.

While losing that stolen car wasn't bad enough to bear, no one wanted to take responsibility for my loss. Just another person pulling my leg. While investigating that problem I learned the owner had overdosed on cocaine and his mother had sold his shop. Timings everything. She claimed she wasn't at fault and the new owners said they weren't at fault either. I *guess* it was my fault for picking that particular repair shop, at that particular time. Just my bad luck *again*.

Much of what we do in life has a huge component of luck.⁽¹⁶⁾ The owner and I went around and around in crazy circles with that whole issue until I finally gave up. That was clearly a day where I was so out of sync and not at all sure of myself. I felt I had to accept another defeat. My ache about loss, that had only just started to diminish, had filled me again. So many disappointments and heartaches, and so early in life. But what else was new?

My third vehicle was a new, orange Volkswagen camper from Westphalia, Germany. I flew all the way to Frankfurt to pick it up at their production factory and drove it all around Europe with my youngest sister, Josette, accompanying me. For which I totally paid for. That adventure was one of the most awesome experiences of my life. Then we flew to New York City to visit my mother's relatives and do some sightseeing.

During that time my mother paid for my other sister, Dodie, to flew out there to join us. When the camper arrived from Europe at the docks in the New York City waterfront the three of us drove cross county back to California. Those were some of my earlier, happy moments and memories with my sisters. Yet we still sadly drifted apart, for some unfortunate reason, even when the trip had gone so well.

But who hadn't yet drifted apart was me and Charlie, who was my boyfriend at that time. He had been taking care of my other car, and my homes in Manhattan Beach, while I was away on that trip to Europe. As a matter of fact, he was living in the front house, paying my mortgage payment, collecting the rent from the tenants in the back house, maintaining the upkeep of both properties, paying for my utility bills, and keeping me from all that worry and those obligations. I don't know what I would have done without him. Love is shown more in deeds than in words. (17)

He was the first exposure in my life (besides my father) to a truly wonderful, responsible, caring, honest, unselfish man. And when I returned from that trip, since I didn't think I was a stupid girl, I said "yes" to his proposal of marriage. Plus, the timing seemed perfect. The mystery of human existence lies not in just staying alive, but in finding something to live for. (18)

I had dreams like everyone else. We were in total agreement about so many of our future ideas together, I thought we could fulfill them. My dreams were: to find a great guy to marry, who had a decent job, that I highly respected. And that isn't so easy to do. But, to my amazement, I found that in Charlie. To be independent and own my own house. That I had already accomplished by myself. To have children and be a stay-at-home mom so I could be with them all the time. That I prayed for. To start a licensed day care in my home so our children could have company, learn to interact with people, and make friends. That I'd work hard to make happen. How wonderful is life when it's filled with your dreams and passions that you continue to strive for?

But about a year after our marriage things went terribly wrong. I tried to get out of bed one morning, but this awful pain was so excruciating I couldn't. I was rushed by ambulance to emergency hospital, only to find out I had this massive cyst on my female organs. The doctor explained to me that it had gotten that big from being there for quite some time. He also explained it was from my having intercourse with someone who had a venereal disease and passed it on to me. Well, there was my awful bad luck again. I couldn't believe that for I had only had sex with my two husbands and no one else. I was in shock, confused, and half crazed with fear, though I had a gut feeling who had done that to me. I'm not stupid, I knew which one of those guys had cheated on me.

We proceeded to make immediate arrangements to surgically remove it, along with one of my fallopian tubes, and ninety-five percent of my ovaries. So, under the knife and scared to death, within the next day, I was operated on. Thank God, my mother, father, and Charlie were all standing beside my bed when I awoke. I needed that. I remember them all saying, "you'll be o.k. now." But would I be?

I kept wondering how I could have gotten that cyst. I laid in bed for days, before I was released, trying to figure it out. On one evening, while still in the hospital, Charlie came to see me. As we talked about things, this and that, I finally said "Charlie I need to know how this happened to me?" With tears in his eyes, he proceeded to settle into the chair beside me while his expression was abruptly serious. He sat silent for a moment, hands clasped in front of him, like a respectful mourner at a funeral.

Acting like he was frozen, he finally started to speak. He proceeded to say to me in a very questioning way "this can't be right. What have you done to yourself?" Done to myself!? What he was implying really hurt my feelings. Whatever I then knew, or didn't know, wasn't going to be enough to resolve that horrible situation for either one of us. I had no illusions about what had created my awful physical and mental condition for I knew I hadn't. If it hadn't been him then it had to be my first, bigamist husband I hadn't seen in many, many years. I thought to myself "what is really going on here?"

We both felt genuinely sad and beside ourselves with confusion. I looked down at him from my hospital bed, my gaze falling on his placid face. My heart broke all over *again*, but that time I didn't think I would ever be able to piece it together. Though I appreciated him for being so upfront with me, I was at a loss for words and things didn't seem right to me from that point on. Even knowing it wasn't his fault, everything still went downhill after that. I felt like such a misplaced person, not really realizing what to do. Though shortly thereafter I asked for a divorce. Being sensitive, yet having tough skin is quite a juggling act.

After that mess calmed down a little, I ended up leasing my first car ever. At that time in my life, I was alone *again*. Being independent, feeling better health wise, I found myself working towards new goals and pushed myself on to bigger and better things. I had gotten my license to work in real estate with my father, which I adored doing and was helping me keep my mind off my heartache about my divorce from Charlie. And I was doing quite well for myself. Well enough that I could afford *my own* shiny, new, Pontiac Trans Am, like the white one I fell in love with in my first marriage. Only red.



I kept that Pontiac for fifteen years, then sold it for only \$500 dollars to this guy I didn't know very well. Or should I say, I gave it away, for he agreed to make payments, but he disappeared with the car, and I got stiffed. *Oops*. I trusted he was honest, and I wanted to help him. I've always been motivated to give of myself to others. The value of a man resides in what he gives and not in what he is capable of receiving. ⁽¹⁹⁾

What I'm not so good at is helping myself. I tend to see most people as selfish, which most people are. And since I don't like seeing that, I tend to be a giver and not a receiver. On the other extreme of receiving, I will not ask anyone for the simplest of favors. I become withdrawn and afraid of disappointment. It seems to me most people's hearts are not in the right place, and I will get upset if they'd say "no" when I asked for help. So, I refuse to put myself in that position.

I'm afraid I've seen on T.V., or read way too many times in the newspaper, books, and magazines, that people ignore others cry for help. Which is so wrong. In my life there are so many people who have struck an actual core of fear in me. But I do believe; to conquer fear is the beginning of wisdom.⁽²⁰⁾ And I do feel we should all help guide each other through our sorrows, and to help each other understand that "this too will pass." But most importantly to emphasize "the sun will come up tomorrow." Faith consists in believing when it is beyond the power of reason to believe.⁽²¹⁾ I'd like to think my contribution to this world makes me a better person.

At twenty-seven years old I owned three vehicles at the same time. Yes, I did say three. I was independent and doing rather well for myself. I've always had a lot of troubles but kept plugging along life's highway, wanting desperately to succeed. At that time with four different engines in motion, an automobile, a boat, a camper, and myself. The latter of the four always working the hardest. The car was a used, but very nice, yellow, convertible Fiat Spider that was later stolen from a parking lot. Yes, I did say stolen. Sound familiar!?



The boat was a sexy, orange and yellow, jet ski boat which I let a boyfriend at the time, Christopher, borrow to go skiing at Lake Havasu. Yes, I was even that trusting early on, thanks to my father's influence that people are nice and *should* be able to be trusted. I feel that to be trusted by others, and to trust others, is a greater compliment than to be admired. So, while trusting him to do the right thing he had accidentally parked it partially on his next-door neighbor's yard. That neighbor got mad and had it hauled anyway. *Oops.* Christopher never tried to retrieve it for me from the impound yard, so it was also gone for good.

Every time I trusted a person, they would end up reminding me why I shouldn't trust anyone at all. What more can I say, "another man rocking my world." I never did get down to the bottom of that ironic tale of woe either for he was living in Arizona, and I was living in California. Need I say more? And don't ask me how many times my heart broke from people steering me wrong I thought I could trust. I couldn't begin to count. There's that sense of humor of mine vigorously trying to break free. Ha, ha.

I've experienced a lot of losses early on. I've sold a lot of things to people with an agreement to pay me back, even in writing, yet it never happened. I believed they would be honest like me, then sure enough I'd get burned and that hurt. Control over your own fate is hard to do when people are deceiving you all the time. Someone who thinks the world is always cheating him is right. He is missing that wonderful feeling of trust in someone, or something.⁽²²⁾ My mother would so often say to me "Pat don't trust people so much." She knew better. My intentions are always good. Why don't others act the same way? It's amazing how much you can learn if your intentions are truly earnest.⁽²³⁾

A note to myself. Nobody is worth stressing over. Move on. It's o.k. to leave people behind. Go find yourself. The world is yours. Life goes on. At forty-two-years-old I owned a nice, black, older, pop-up top Mercedes-Benz. My friend/financial partner, Francisco, found it for me. I spent quite a bit of money on painting it and fixing it up. Then, a few years later, I sold that car to a neighbor dirt cheap after I had done all the work on it.
My loss, his gain.

At forty-four-years-old I bought a used, shiny, black, Dodge Stealth from a car dealership. It was in mint condition and was just a few years old. It was without doubt a keeper. I was in heaven driving around on those wheels. Then three years later I was in a car accident when I was under a lot of stress. Ted was my boyfriend at the time, and you know how boyfriends can be. Those guys you give your heart to, but too often will eat you alive. I found out he was cheating on me with his ex-girlfriend. That too was a bad relationship. But then, I've never known any that weren't. And most of my friend's relationships were like that also. Though we were trying. The best feeling in the world is being loved back by the person you love.

One evening I decided to go to the gym to unwind after hearing the bad news about Ted's affair. But I wasn't trying hard enough to stay focused while driving it out of my driveway. I was very upset and wasn't concentrating well enough because of what I had just learned he had done to me. My brain was so frazzled, and I didn't want to believe he was unfaithful. I loved him too much to cause him that kind of sadness, and it would be excruciatingly painful if it were true. But I was wrong *again* when it came to love. That man ended up costing me more emotionally and financially then all the bad relationships I've ever had put together.

Don't trust things will get easier, simpler, or better. Life will always be complicated. Keep moving forward even if the odds appear to be against you. It was late at night that evening, dark and dreary. Like the way I was feeling. The rain was coming down in buckets, while both my concentration and my heart were weak. And wouldn't yea know it, with my bad luck, a big black truck came around the corner from out of nowhere and hit me. *Oops*. It was the first and only car accident I've ever had.

I've learned from a lifetime of bad luck for I've had an awful lot of experience in that department. My older sister used to say to me "you know Pat, if you didn't have bad luck, you'd have no luck at all." Bad luck is a fact as true in life as it is in poker. More often than not you'll get a bad hand. Though I was always trying to believe I'd became older, stronger, and hopefully a little wiser because of it. And I would never let it get the best of me.

So instead of going to the gym to unwind and feel better, I was rushed to emergency by ambulance and felt worse. Boy can stress do a number on your brain. I broke my arm, got a whip lash, it ruined my day, and my spirits were shot. And so was the car and that romantic relationship, everything was totaled. I left that hospital by cab, with a high cost of medical bills, feeling drained, emotionally frustrated, stuck in a financial loss without a car to get around, and terribly sad. Control over your own fate is hard to do when you're perplexed and distraught, and being deceived by someone you love only makes it that much worse.



Then at forty-seven-years-old I bought a well-kept, blue, convertible, Nissan 300ZX, which was a car I ended up leaving in Hawaii. *Oops*. If you ever read my book "So This Is Aloha!?" you'll hear about that escapade. Leaving that car that day was difficult to do. Unfair, like so much of life can sometimes be, especially after all I'd been through with all the other cars scenarios. But always try to find humorous things to make you smile when you can. Apologize when you should, be grateful of what you do have, and let go of what you can't change. Play hard, give it your all, believe in yourself, move past all of life's wrongdoings, take chances, and have no regrets. Life is too short to be anything but happy.