

How Ordeals Became Opportunities: True Stories of People who Turned Misfortunes into Personal Successes

For lovers of intelligent, nonfictional, dramatic, but inspiring stories.

These are encouraging stories about real people and actual events. Excellent reading for anyone going through rough times when dealing with disability, the loss of loved ones, a traumatic experience, or any other misfortune.

This book is not about people who were born poor and then became rich. This book consists of true stories about extraordinary human beings, who despite, rather because of, the terrible ordeals that life has thrown at them, achieved personal successes and became healers, educators, advocates for the abused, inspirational speakers, motivational symbols of survival, and achievers of sacred dreams. These tales will encourage people who are dealing with challenges that the ruthless twists of fate present to them. This book will be the most helpful for people who are wandering in a labyrinth of despair, grief, uncertainty, and maybe even help those dreaming of being released from this life. While reading about these incredible earthlings, who found the strength, not only to overcome ordeals, but also to become influential examples for others, you will reconsider your perception of whatever you are facing now. You will stop feeling helpless and lost because these stories will change your mind, clarify your soul and inspire you to stand up and cope. If these people can thrive after terrible traumas, why can't you?

The influence of these stories can make a difference in the world by showing paths that our hearts can take. We can become advocates for human rights, stop the abuse of innocent animals, defend helpless children living in third world countries, prevent the destruction of our planet, and do many other things. Like a big river that originates from the merger of small creeks, we can be the little drops that help create a forceful stream of water blasting out of the way hatred and violence.

EXCERPT FROM STORIES:

Africa and humanitarian work were Jessica's dream. She was born in USA, but her desire to help the most unfortunate motivated her. Africa was always in Jessica's heart. In order to fulfil her dreams, Jessica became a teacher. She received her degree at Walley Forge Christian College in the state of Pennsylvania. In the summer of 2006, she left her comfortable and secured life and went to Africa, devoting her life to the African people. She was only in her middle twenties, blond, slim and fragile looking, yet courageous young woman. She traveled through African countries, being engaged in her volunteer work. Finally, she settled down in Kenya, getting a teaching job. Miraculously, Jessica found her love on a foreign continent. She met Erik Landemalm, a native Swede, who worked with legislating institutions in East Africa. In 2009, Jessica married that wonderful man and with her dreams of starting a family, she moved with him to Hargeisa, Somalia. Their future could not have been brighter.

On October 25, 2011, while on a routine field mission in Somalia, Jessica, along with a sixty-year-old colleague named Poul Hagen Thisted, who worked with the Danish Refugee Council, were both abducted at gunpoint and held for ransom by a group of Somali land pirates. Attempts by the Council to enlist local Somali elders and traditional leaders to assist in freeing the hostages were unsuccessful, and the pirates refused a ransom offer of US \$1.5 million. The future of the hostages looked extremely grim.

In the news:

“Austrian police are investigating the disappearance of ten years old Natascha Kampusch who has been seen last on March 2 in Vienna’s Donaustadt district. Natascha is 145 cm tall, with blue eyes and ash blond hair with fringe; she was missing for more than 48 hours. All efforts to locate her were unsuccessful and police were widening their search. When she was missing, she was on her way to school. It is a walk of over two kilometers from the Rennbahn apartment building complex.”

A massive nationwide search was launched, police started with the place where Natascha lived. Concerned citizens were coming in with information. Soon, the police had evidence of an abduction. On her way to school, on Monday March 2, at approximately 7:20 a.m., another girl saw something. She told police that she saw a girl in a red anorak being pulled into a white van, which was parked on the right-hand side of the road. The statement of this witness triggered enormous investigation. Police questioned 1520 owners of white vans and 650 other people, including a man from Strasshof; a small town located half an hour from the centre of Vienna. Strasshof, prosperous suburb of Vienna, had only one main street and no real center, and 8,000 residents. The man’s name was Wolfgang Priklopil, an unmarried 35-year-old communication technician with no criminal record. He lived in his mother’s house. When investigators questioned him, his truck was full of construction materials. He claimed to be at home at the time when the crime occurred, but nobody could confirm his story. Police had no probable cause to search his house or suspect him; Wolfgang Priklopil charmed them into believing that he had nothing to do with Natascha’s abduction. However, behind the mask was a sadistic control freak who relentlessly abused his victim and forced her to be his slave. Police officers took photos of Mr. Priklopil’s van, wrote a report and left. At that time, Natascha was imprisoned in the cell under house.

Hate is one of the most powerful emotion; its tenacious and vicious paws grab the bearer of it, depleting from their vitality and making the person cognitively impaired. I can’t give this satisfaction to people who lost their human faces and void of simple moral principles. I forgave them, but I didn’t forget, and justice must prevail. I said to myself again, “I refuse to be a victim.”