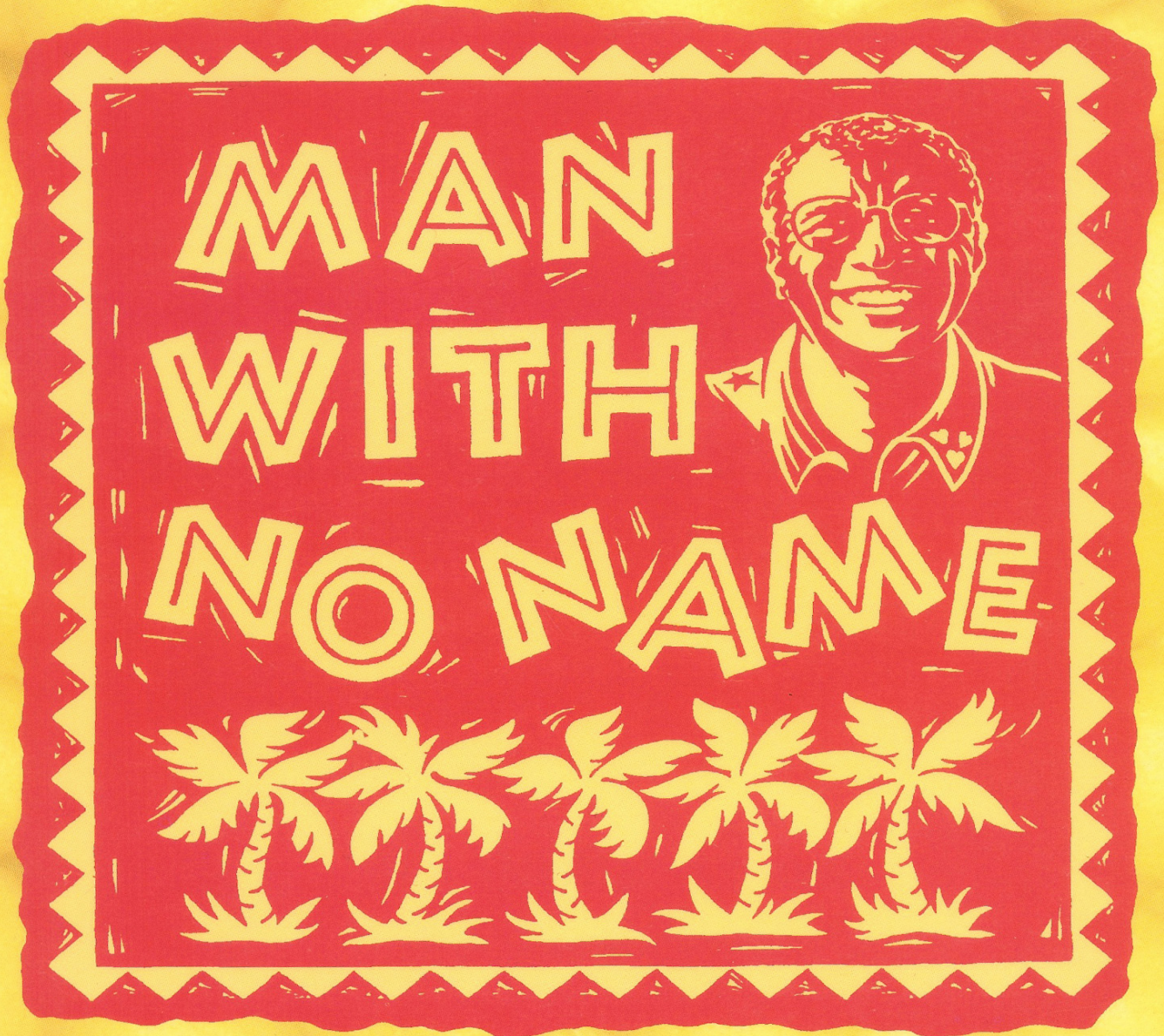


How the founder of the **CENSORED*** Cookie Company lost everything,
including his name — and turned adversity into opportunity

**by court order*



WALLY AMOS
WITH CAMILLA DENTON

Man with No Name

Turn Lemons Into Lemonade

by Wally Amos

with Camilla Denton



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*This book is dedicated to
the memory of
Howard Hausman,
who demonstrated to me
the meaning of friendship.*



**Thank You,
Thank You,
Thank You**

If life is anything, it's people helping people. Truly, no man or woman is an island. We are all connected and we all need each other. My friend O. C. Smith says, "We are each other."

Let me first thank my wife, Christine, and my daughter Sarah for their love, support and patience throughout this experience. It definitely brought us closer together and gave us a deeper understanding of Love.

The lawsuit with The (Nameless) Amos Cookie Company was my first experience with litigation of any kind, and I hope it's my last. I would like to offer my heartfelt thanks to the following friends, without whom I never would have gotten through it: Roger Brossy, Rona Elliot, Joe Mancuso, Walter Starcke, Tom Bradley, Rinaldo and Lalla Brutoco, Wayne and Marcia Dyer, Patricia Fripp, Gerald Jampolsky, Diane Cirincione, Sue and Al Zelickson, Nat and Corky Shulman, Walter and Loretta Anderson, Earl Babbie, Richard Courson, Paul Cobb, Jerry Dunfey, Nadine Hack, Francis Roberts, Jr., Alice Burkhardt, Gerald Coffee, Michael and Anne Castine, Joe and Lillian Vasey, Newt and Sunny Rapp, David McEwan, Trammell and Margaret Crow, Kurt and Helen Wissehr, Janet Morse, Margaret Byrne, Pat Byrne, Alan Harvith, Barry Bremen, Art Buchwald, Marty and Amy



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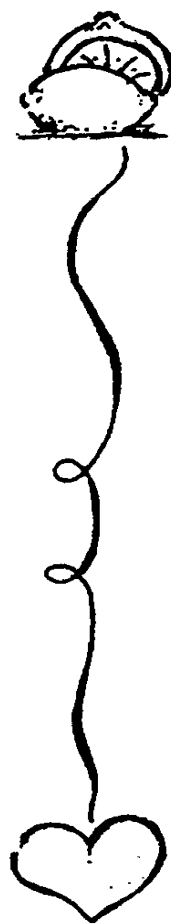
I am humbled that each of you cared enough for me and my family to be there for us when we needed you the most. We thank you. We appreciate you. We love you and we thank God for you.

Publishers and editors are the ones who bring life to a book, and I've had the best in the husband and wife team of Dawson Church and Brenda Plowman, who own Aslan Publishing. Dawson's insightful and steady editing, and Brenda's careful hand guiding the book through the various stages to publication, made

working on this book a real pleasure. I thank the two of you and your associates for making this book possible.

This is my third book, and I still do not consider myself an author. Without the help of Camilla Denton, you would not be holding this book in your hands. Thanks, Camilla, for helping to get my thoughts and feelings onto paper.

There is one last group I must thank, because without them this book would not have been possible. A great big thank you to the owners of The (Nameless) Amos Cookie Company, and their attorneys, for providing the lemons for my lemonade.





Introduction

Aloha,

All of my life experiences have culminated in the opening of The Uncle Nonamé Cookie Company and the writing of this book. During the years, I have accumulated enough lemons to make lemonade for the entire southern population in the United States, who seem to have a greater appreciation for this refreshing drink than other regions.

I have chosen to share, in particular, the experience of litigating ownership of my likeness and legal name, Wally Amos, with The (Nameless) Amos Chocolate Chip Cookie Company, which I founded and promoted to fame.

Under the terms of a settlement agreement with my former company, I am unable to associate my name with its name. I cannot in fact write its full name anywhere in this book if I am to comply scrupulously with a court order entered in connection with the settlement agreement. So I have substituted the word "(Nameless)" for the forbidden reference. I hope you will forgive and understand this substitution. I have also changed many of

the names of people, places, times and dates to annoy the innocent and protect the guilty.

When, during the course of the litigation, people heard that The (Nameless) Amos Chocolate Chip Cookie Company was suing me over ownership of my likeness and name, their response was always one of great shock and dismay at my loss. This response led me to the understanding that most of us view the loss of our identity and name second only to death. Since I can now speak as a person who has been there, I can say with assurance that if you lose your identity, you do not lose yourself! Moreover, deprivation of anything which you think is rightfully yours is no more than a detour to a higher plateau. One Unity prayer goes like this: "God, please give me this—or something better!" The truth is, there is no loss in the universe. Every experience has the capacity to nourish your soul.

My wish is that in reading of my experiences your memory will be jarred, stirring up personal memories of all the times you turned lemons into lemonade. Then you will see yourself clearly in William James' quote, "Success is having the courage to be yourself, however peculiar that may be. Then you will be able to say, I have found my hero and he is me."

So, make yourself a pitcher of cool, refreshing lemonade, grab a few Uncle Nonamé cookies and find a real comfortable chair while I tell you a story.

Mahalo,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Wally Amos". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Wally Amos



There Are No Facts on the Future

On a muggy April Fools Day in 1992, I found myself walking through the 24-hour action of LAX airport toward my flight home to Hawaii. Hilarious thoughts coursed through my head, and I could not keep from smiling. Every now and then my high spirits would burst to the surface in an audible chuckle.

Minutes before, at the tail-end of a telephone conversation with my friend and attorney, Leroy Wulfmeier III, we had joked about the possibility of me not being able to use my real name in business. The two of us laughed uncontrollably over the absurd names we could substitute for Wally Amos, names like No-Name Amos, Famous No-Name Amos, and a few more. The winning suggestion—Non-Famous Nonamos—sent me giggling to my plane.

As I waited for the ticket agent to make the boarding announcement, I noticed a friend, Gene Axelrod, who had just arrived from Hawaii on an incoming flight. We stood together for a moment catching up with each other. Talking to him boosted my spirits even more. I could not have been in a more joyful mood.

Then across the departure lounge, a hefty young man in a blue polo shirt came striding toward me. He looked serious, like a student right before his final exams.

"Are you Wally Amos?" he asked. People ask me that question frequently, so I looked at him, a grin still on my face, and replied, "Yes I am." Without a change in expression, the young man handed me a weighty bundle of papers two inches thick. "These are for you," he said curtly, and turned and left.

My first thought was "Uh-oh, one of my many creditors has at last tracked me down." I looked closely at the papers in my hand. They were an order from The United States Ninth District Court in San Francisco, served on me on behalf of The (Nameless) Amos Chocolate Chip Cookie Company.

Three years before my unexpected meeting with Mr. Polo Shirt in Los Angeles, the divorce between me and the nationally renowned cookie company I had founded and built had become final. It was painful to lose my connection with the cookies that had been the main passion of my life till that point. I loved the cookie business because chocolate chip cookies represent good things to people. But my employment agreement with (Nameless) Amos contained a non-compete clause that prevented me from re-entering the cookie business for a period of two years.

I set out to dedicate the two years ahead to improving my world in ways other than selling cookies. I balanced my time between teaching the benefits of a positive attitude, and assisting literacy programs and other charities. Without the day-to-day concerns of a cookie company to deal with, I could now devote more time to helping those in need and to sharing my personal beliefs about the secrets of successful living.

The transition was complex and difficult. A fifteen-year love affair between me and the promotion of my favorite food had come to an end. It took me a long time to accept the new shape of my life. I had always believed that challenging situations are op-

portunities for growth and for progress, and now I had a chance to treat my life as a living laboratory and put this theory to the test. I resolved to be easy on myself and to approach the future with a positive attitude. I gradually came to terms with the fact that change is the one constant in life, and every turn of events has a purpose. I could not see into the future, but I reached a point of peace where I rejoiced in the opportunity to move on to new challenges and new opportunities.

My career had taught me faith in my inner power and talents, and it had given me a strong sense of self-worth. As I delved deep into myself after leaving (Nameless) Amos, I realized that I had plenty to offer, just as all people do. I knew I would make it. I saw leaving (Nameless) Amos as a test of my belief that God is the source of everything in my life.

In 1985, (Nameless) Amos began a long slide into financial difficulties. The problems mounted and grew steadily till I felt besieged. But in the middle of my challenges, I told myself, "Wally, you are not dealing with a one-idea God. He gave you the idea for (Nameless) Amos, and he will give you another!" So I was convinced that I had the ability to create a joyful and meaningful life for myself, whatever my circumstances, just as everyone on this earth has the power to tap into their own greatness and the laws of the universe to find joy and fulfillment.

As I experimented with my new role as a motivational speaker, there were times when I did not feel like a success. I had made many mistakes in the previous few years. They piled up until I lost the company that bore my name. Yet even sharing my mistakes with people was valuable: I could demonstrate that losing

Everyone on this earth has the power to tap into their own greatness and the laws of the universe to find joy and fulfillment.

your business is not the end of the world. Sharing my story proved to be wonderful therapy. The audience became the doctor, and I, the patient. And while I completed the healing process, the (Nameless) Amos Cookie Company went on with its business.

On a balmy June evening in 1990, I decided to bake a batch of chocolate chip cookies for the first time in almost a year. As my fingers worked the familiar batter, I reflected on how much I loved chocolate chip cookies. Making cookies was what Joseph Campbell would have called the “path of my bliss.” He taught that if we honestly follow our own unique dreams, we will be blessed with fulfillment and the means to continue. I knew that if I followed my calling to spread love and good taste, I would be supported.

Fifteen years of following my bliss had given me an enormous following. The goodwill that the (Nameless) Amos Cookie Company enjoyed was the end product of the relationships I had built up with the people I served. I reflected how silly it would be to let this asset lie dormant. And my lust for promotion almost equaled my passion for cookies. If I started selling cookies again after my non-compete clause expired, I could capitalize on my high visibility and long association with a product I had helped turn into a national necessity!

As these thoughts swirled through my head, I suddenly made up my mind. I was going back into the cookie business. I called out to my wife Christine, “Sweetheart, we’re going to form a new company called ‘Wally Amos Presents Chip & Cookie!’” Her ecstatic response confirmed my resolution: “What a great idea!” she shouted with excitement.

Chip and Cookie were two children of mine from way back. They started life in 1976, just a year after I opened the first (Nameless) Amos store in Hollywood. Christine, a fabric collage artist and printmaker, embroidered several cookie faces on the back of my jean jacket. She began using them on invitations to events at

our stores and progressed to featuring them on greeting cards and decorative stuffed dolls. By 1986, Cookie had developed into a girl doing the hula and Chip had become a little boy playing the ukulele. In 1987, a friend saw Christine's drawings, and convinced us to develop a commercial product line with them. She felt certain she could get the dolls mass-produced. She arranged for some prototypes to be made, and we drew up marketing plans.

As I coped with the changing fortunes of the (Nameless) Amos Company, there never seemed to be enough time to devote attention to the new line. Chip & Cookie sputtered along without ever taking flight. We had no money available to promote them. The firm that made the prototypes lost interest. And after leaving (Nameless) Amos, I lost interest in everything connected with chocolate chip cookies. So Chip & Cookie stayed on the shelf, ready to be picked up when the time was right.

And that time was now! My resolution to return to work in the cookie business filled me with enthusiasm, and I devoted my newfound energy to getting Chip & Cookie off the ground at last.

Shortly after the launch of Wally Amos Presents Chip & Cookie, I happened to taste a (Nameless) Amos cookie. I was puzzled; it didn't taste the same as it used to. I looked on the wrapper. It said these cookies were still made using my original recipe. Something was wrong here!

I asked my attorney and friend, Leroy, to write to (Nameless) Amos protesting this claim. I had built my fame and reputation on the quality of my unique recipe, and if the cookies were going to be changed, I didn't want the company claiming the new version as mine. The response was not at all what I expected; four months later, the man in the blue polo shirt walked into my life and changed it forever.

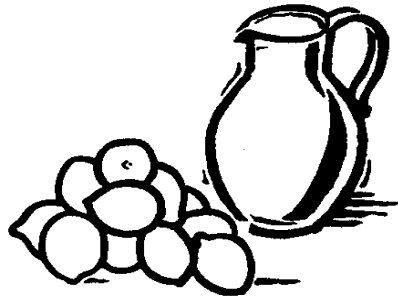
My thoughts raced as I flipped through the pages of the thick wad of papers he had handed me. (Nameless) Amos, the company I conceived and created, was now demanding that I cease and desist from using my likeness and my name, Wally Amos, in any commercial venture. They claimed ownership of my name and likeness for just about every purpose short of telephoning my wife, and they said I was infringing on their trademark and copyright. It seemed clear they did not want me in the cookie business.

Over the next year, fighting this case became a nightmare for me, or rather one of several nightmares. Personal and professional ruin stared me in the face. But I managed to triumph over financial misfortune because I drew on the power within to turn a seemingly hopeless situation into an absolute winner.

I have learned that crises can turn out to be glorious benefits if we draw on universal wisdom to handle them. And problems, or challenges as I have learned to call them, are more than simply part of every human being's journey; they are valuable catalysts for our personal growth.

I share my experiences in this book in the hope that they will inspire you, especially if you are faced with situations to which you see no solution. You can indeed come through the worst of hardships with your life better than ever before, triumphing through your troubles. You will find in every apparent disaster the seeds of new choices and an incredible future.

Crises can turn out to be glorious benefits if we draw on universal wisdom to handle them. And problems, or challenges as I have learned to call them, are more than simply part of every human being's journey; they are valuable catalysts for our personal growth.



2

No Matter Where You've Come From, You're Always Going Somewhere

Have you ever had a life-changing experience? Launching The (Nameless) Amos Chocolate Chip Cookie Company changed my life—and it also changed the face of American business.

I opened the first gourmet chocolate chip cookie store in the world and set off a culinary explosion still reverberating to this day. Because I was the first, my name became synonymous with chocolate chip cookies. One hundred and fifty million Americans—sixty percent of the population—still know me as “The Cookie Man.” They say, with apologies to Mrs. Fields and Pepperidge Farm, that I am the world’s most eminent cookie maker.

I came to the decision that chocolate chip cookies were worthy of their own stores, in a roundabout way. I certainly had no idea of it when I was born at 1 A.M. on July 1, 1936, and my screams signalled the arrival of the only son of Wallace and Ruby Amos. In their tiny three-room house, located twenty-five yards from the railroad tracks in the black section of Tallahassee, Florida, happiness and prayers prevailed. America was just emerging from the Great Depression, and that meant Ruby could not spend too much time at home recuperating or enjoying her new son,

Wallace, Jr. These were hard times, and for Ruby and Wallace, who could not read or write, keeping their jobs came first.

Having two working parents did not deprive me of the breeding that comes with being southern-born. No matter what conditions were in the world outside of the South, my life was one of strict religious instruction and good manners. And because both Wallace and Ruby were serious about religion, they kept my training in the area continuous as I grew up. This meant very few days off, as most people know them. Anything that appeared to be fun, like dancing, was a sin in the Amos home. And if I occasioned to sin, I paid a high price.

At a tender age, I learned how to size up my parents. Wallace had more bark than bite. Ruby barked the loudest, and had a bite to match. She was the chief disciplinarian. The ample rations of discipline meted out to me had nothing to do with my being particularly wayward or mischievous. It was a matter of principle. Ruby was always firm in her instructions to me—or to anyone else for that matter. If her instructions were not followed to the letter, you could bet on a decisive and unpleasant response. But, despite my advance knowledge of the consequences of crossing Ruby, I made the mistake of antagonizing her from time to time. And that was not too smart of me, because I would never end up the winner, just the recipient of a sore behind.

Winning, I'm certain now, was not what I needed at the time. As a child, winning against Ruby would have contributed to my losing when I became an adult. I don't think I would be the person I am today if she had not been so committed to my turning out as a decent human being. Today I realize that there is more

When you get to the essence of the matter, it's not a person's name, but what's inside them that counts.

than a little of Ruby Amos in me. Although I was named for Wallace Senior, I had little in common with him.

When you get to the essence of the matter, it's not a person's name, but what's inside them that counts. My father was acknowledged by all those who knew him, for a number of reasons, as a good person. The most apparent was his willingness to always remain faithful to himself and to offer his all in whatever he did. He had no education to speak of, but he was a hard-working man. He was a laborer at the local gas plant, a job he remained in for his entire working life. Wallace was not aggressive like Ruby, and he never made an effort to challenge her position as top dog. This did not mean Wallace was not capable of severe damage if I fell afoul of him. These events were known as "beatings."

One of those rare beatings illuminated much about our respective roles. The psychological blows hit heavier for me than the physical ones. When Wallace pulled his belt from his waist with rage in his eyes, I thought the end was nigh. His raised hand holding the belt seemed bigger than my whole body.

I yelled with all my might, raising my wail an octave each time it appeared the belt would fall. Finally, when Wallace did strike me, I hardly felt the blow. I had discovered an exciting behavioral principle: the louder I wailed, the lighter the blow would be. Thereafter, when threatened with a beating, I performed better than a newborn baby that has just been turned upside down and given its first whack by the doctor.

After the so-called "beating," I held the secret knowledge that I had put one over on Wallace, and I felt proud of myself. But Ruby was in the adjoining room, and Wallace knew that Ruby strongly believed in beatings as the severest form of discipline. Therefore, Wallace had actually put one over on me and Ruby. Beatings were just not consistent with Wallace's approach to life.

Just like beatings, father and son moments were quite limited between Wallace and me. But when we did get to spend time to-

gether it was always special for me. No matter what it was—visiting him at the plant, taking a shower with his Lava soap and almost removing my skin, having him take me for my monthly Saturday haircut—I treasured those rare moments of being alone with my father. He was affectionately and respectfully called “Mr. Wallace” by the kids in the neighborhood for what he was: a man doing the best he could with what he had to work with. And, although I was not heavily influenced by him, I picked up that same trait.

Ruby didn’t have any more to work with than Wallace, but she was in a class by herself. While I have a great deal of affection for her and today I call her Ruby, I dared not call her by her first name as a child. While now I have a keen appreciation for Ruby’s commitment and consistency, as a child I had a more limited perspective. She was always full of life. She willingly took on all of life’s challenges and never complained once.

It seemed as though Ruby had decided at an early age that she would have to work hard all of her life, and if that was the way it was going to be, then she was going to be the best and hardest worker there was. The only non-farm work available to a black woman in the South who did not read or write was as a domestic servant. So that meant Ruby helped support the family by washing someone else’s windows, floors, clothes, and children. It didn’t matter what Ruby was called upon to do, she would do it with fervor and professionalism.

Ruby was one of the most in-demand domestics working in Tallahassee, which made her one of the highest-paid in her field, and the busiest. It also meant that she was absent from her own home for most of the days of the week, something that didn’t bother Wallace, who also seemed to be spending a lot of time away from home, even when Ruby was not working. Had I been aware of such things, I would have realized that the reason for Wallace’s and Ruby’s absenteeism was that they were becoming

more incompatible day by day. However, I was too young to know about that word, and Ruby and Wallace wouldn't have known what it meant had they heard it.

Despite the absence of both parents from my home, I was not an abandoned child. Our neighbors made sure of that. They acted just like members of the family. Our community consisted of only twenty families, but I had twenty replacements for Wallace and Ruby, and twenty reminders that Ruby's commandments should not be broken. An important part of southern breeding was always practicing good manners and exercising respect for your elders. It was taken for granted and practiced daily. For an energetic young man like me, being courteous sometimes got in the way of the games my friends and I were playing. It was like having a job, the only difference being that I was not paid for minding my manners, only if I forgot to.

No matter what time of day it was or what I was doing at the time, if I saw someone older than me entering or leaving a home in the community, I had better speak. "Yes, ma'am," "No, sir," "Hello, ma'am," "Good-bye, sir," and "Thank you, ma'am" were the allowed responses. And if you saw the same person coming in and out of the house three or four times within a twenty-minute period, from the vantage point of the lot where we played baseball, for instance, their presence had to be acknowledged. Some days it took more than nine innings to get through a game. But this was the law of the land—Ruby's land. And there was no breaking that law, even in Ruby's absence, because she always found out. I soon became very willing to give up my chance at the baseball bat; it was a lot better than going home and being hit by Ruby.

Being courteous wasn't always fun for me as a boy, but it certainly turned out to be rewarding during my adult life, both personally and professionally. It was Ruby's Friday night fish fries

which first showed me how good manners could contribute to good business.

In just about every black community in the South, Friday night was traditionally set aside for fish fries, as these combination dinners and social events were called. Actually, fish wasn't the only food available. There would be plenty of fried chicken, potato salad, collard greens, black-eyed peas and rice ("hoppin' John"), corn bread and hot rolls, as well as various cakes and sweet potato pie, which was all washed down with red soda water. It was a soul food feast, which everyone was ready and able to partake of because Friday was also the day "the eagle flew"—the black American colloquialism for payday. And when Ruby got to work frying up fish and chicken, letting the satisfying aroma of these rich foods waft through the community, it was the signal to run to the Friday night fish fry.

The fish fries were good for socializing. Most of the people who came to buy Ruby's fish also came to visit with the friends whom they had not seen since the previous week. And for those who did not want to leave home, Ruby delivered, which was where I came in. I didn't mind the work; I got my share of fish "samiches" and all the other goodies. This was also where my manners, thanks to Ruby, came in: I made great tips. I looked forward to this day as though it were Christmas.

Other young men my age looked forward not to Friday but to Saturday night. That was their opportunity to "do the Devil's work," as the more religious townspeople put it. They would go out drinking and chasing women. But come Sunday, those same young men could be found in church, learning the Lord's lessons.

Being courteous wasn't always fun for me as a boy, but it certainly turned out to be rewarding during my adult life, both personally and professionally.

Going to church on Sunday morning, and letting the preacher see them there, was their penance for the previous twenty-four hours. The cure lasted a full five days, till the next Saturday.

While I was too young to experiment with doing the Devil's work, I was never too young to appear in church every Sunday. I was there because Wallace and Ruby insisted upon it, not because my soul needed cleansing. As I grew into my early teens, I did have reason for penance because of my thoughts about girls, which I dared not let Ruby find out. Ruby and Wallace were seeing to my getting a good Christian education because they had decided early in my youth that my calling was the pulpit.

There had been a number of reasons for believing that I would one day be a preacher. First was the fact that I not only attended church every Sunday, I went to the Wednesday night prayer meetings as well, a sign of unusual sanctity. And by the time I was eight years old, I had learned all the books of the Bible, including both the Old and New Testaments. If we were to visit a neighboring church, I would be called upon to demonstrate this skill. Also, my favorite part of the chicken was the drumstick which, according to the prevailing old wives' wisdom, indicated the vocation of preacher. I was even baptized at an early age—a ceremony known as “getting religion.”

The truth is, I never really did get religion in the sense of understanding it. I could never bring myself to see or feel what the older members of the church were talking about. And when I walked up to the baptismal tub, it had less to do with my getting religion than it had to do with religion getting me. I didn't want to stand out week after week as one who had not yet “got religion,” so I got it, too. Yet with all these positive portents, I could never hear that voice calling me to become a preacher-man.

Just as important as my religious education was the more formal education of reading, writing, and arithmetic. Many of the black parents in the South did not have the opportunity of going

to school, so for their children it was a must, even if it meant a segregated school. A segregated education was the only thing available to blacks in the South during my youth. There was only one school, the Lincoln School, a combination elementary and high school four miles from where I lived. There were no school buses for the black school, so we all walked. On bad-weather days I was allowed to ride the city bus. But, even with these inconveniences, kids went to school every day, and you had better not forget what you learned at home, especially good manners.

Our teachers were just as demanding as our parents and did not tolerate insolence of any kind. Anyone who decided to challenge this—and there were very few challengers—earned either a paddling on the behind or a whack across the palm of the hands with a ruler. On top of this painful experience was a note that would go home with you. A note meant an instant licking. Ruby didn't tolerate bad manners or disrespect to anyone.

Ruby was the kind of person who didn't go along with too many things that she had not started herself. Segregation was not something she had started and, given the right reason, she was not above changing the law of the land, which she came close to doing one Sunday when she and I were returning home from church.

The law of the land at the time was that black people sat in the back of the bus, while white people sat in the front. This particular day Ruby decided to sit in the front of the bus, since it was empty except for a young white woman who was the bus driver's girlfriend. Ruby felt justified in her decision because we had done a lot of walking that day and her feet were hurting. The white woman immediately complained to the bus driver, who turned to Ruby and told her to move to the rear of the bus. The problem with this was that Ruby usually did the telling.

"I paid my money and I'm gonna sit where I please," was Ruby's militant response to the driver. I anticipated trouble. And,

sure enough, as soon as the bus reached the next depot on its route, the driver went inside to get help in handling this “uppity nigger.” The driver returned alone. This being Sunday, which was usually an uneventful day, he had been unable to find an ally. So the driver told Ruby once again to move to the rear of the bus. Once again Ruby stoutly refused.

There was a standoff. The driver had two options: physically move Ruby to where he demanded she go, or go about his business of driving the bus. The driver noticed that several other passengers had boarded. They were all young black men wearing the uniform of the U.S. Army, and they were sitting quietly, waiting for the driver's next move. He decided that discretion was the better part of valor and climbed back into the driver's seat.

During this incident I sat quiet and frightened. I was not scared about what the driver might have done to Ruby or what the black soldiers might have done to protect Ruby. Whenever Ruby raised her voice, I became frightened for the person who was defying my mother. That day I saw Ruby display a courage I was proud of. I was reminded of the incident when, ten years later, Rosa Parks refused to give up her seat to a white passenger in Montgomery, Alabama, triggering a famous bus boycott led by Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

Some of the parents at Ruby's church wanted more for their children than what the segregated city school had to offer. They started an elementary school in the church, and when I was ten years old I began attending it. Although the school was a part of the church, it was not bound by parochial rules. It was the first school of its kind in Tallahassee, and it was unique in other ways. Classes were smaller than those at Lincoln, meaning greater opportunities to learn. Unlike Lincoln, students received individual attention. And I no longer had to make that long walk twice a day.

At the little church school we were blessed with two dedicated teachers, Mrs. Moore and Mrs. Woodbury. They were commit-

ted to our young minds, and to opening them up to a world we would one day influence. We were made to think, and to be curious about why things were the way they were. We were taught to seek solutions rather than add to the problem.

Due to the tight rein Ruby always kept on me, I became very curious about taboo activities and subjects. The subject most prohibited was that of girls. This greatly amplified my curiosity, especially when one of the girls in my neighborhood told me she wanted me to wrestle with her. I was never sure about her motives, but I did know that her body felt very good against mine.

Curiosity wouldn't let me stop there. A couple of years earlier I had met some older girls who had told me how cute I was. It was difficult not to be flattered by such comments. They had told me that they would wait for me until I got older. So when my curiosity about the opposite sex became too strong to ignore, I went looking for them to find out more about that promise. I discovered that they had moved to another city, which left me disappointed. I decided not to listen to any promises I could not cash in on right away.

Then I met a girl named Kitty, who became my first girlfriend. We had a standing date to meet Saturdays at the movies, which were the major entertainment for blacks in Tallahassee at the time. I fell into the throes of puppy love. The dark theater was the perfect place for Kitty and me to carry on our torrid explorations.

After a few months of this, I began to dream about the things I could enjoy if only I had more money. I decided to use my Saturdays making money instead of trying to make out in the theater. I put together my very first business venture: I built a shoeshine box.

I chose good locations to set up in, and I hustled. My reputation for great shoeshines soon spread throughout our community. My little business flourished. Ruby's industrious habits had

rubbed off on me, and I soon decided to deliver the local newspaper, the *Tallahassee Democrat*, as well.

My hard work and pain did not go unnoticed by Wallace and Ruby. One day, proud of my accomplishments, they surprised me with my first set of wheels—a beautiful red two-wheel bicycle. I didn't know how to ride, but I was committed to my newspaper route, so I learned quickly. I became one of the most productive newspaper boys the *Tallahassee Democrat* ever had.

My childhood in Tallahassee was like that of kids everywhere: living life to the fullest every day, going to bed every night tired and happy, and looking forward to the next day's experiences with great anticipation. Then one morning during the summer of 1948, I awakened to a day I had not anticipated. I found out that I would be moving to Orlando, Florida, to live with Ruby's mother. Wallace would not be going with us. Ruby and Wallace's marriage was over.

The decision to separate was overdue. Their occasional arguments had turned into frequent, bitter fights. They had rarely done anything together. Wallace had his friends and Ruby had hers. They didn't even practice religion together; Wallace was Baptist, Ruby was Methodist, and my religious instruction came from both churches, although the one I attended was Ruby's—of course.

There were very few times that I can remember when Ruby and Wallace showed any warmth and affection toward each other, or for me. They were two serious people, and laughter was seldom heard in our home. That's probably why I enjoy laughing

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so much and have become such a great audience for anything that smacks of humor. But not Ruby and Wallace. They were too busy trying to make a living and bring me up right. And during that struggle they lost sight of the love that must have brought them together, the love that went into producing me, and the love that might have kept our family together.



Only Those Who See the Invisible Can Do the Impossible

When I was twelve years old Ruby and I moved to Orlando, but a month after that she decided I should move to New York City to live with her sister Della. Ruby would come along too, once she had saved up enough money.

The idea of going to The Big Apple appealed to me. I had visited Aunt Della there during the two previous summers, and for a southern-born, southern-bred, scared-to-death, skinny black kid, New York was a breathtaking experience. The tallest building I had ever seen before was five stories, and there were very few of those in Tallahassee. I felt as though the Empire State Building and all the rest of them were looking down at me with the warning: "Rise above all of this, or get out of the way!"

Ruby and her mother told me how great the "opportunities for blacks" were in New York City. I was thrilled by the prospect of a long train ride. And the fact that I would be making the trip alone was the best part of all; I felt as though I had reached my manhood. Clutching my shoeshine box, I boarded the Silver Meteor, a classy, sleek-looking, bullet-like train operated by the Pennsylvania Railroad.

In 1948, this train was famous for being able to make the trip to New York's Pennsylvania Station in twenty-four hours. For blacks traveling on the Silver Meteor, the opportunity to sit in the large, roomy seats of the coaches almost compensated for the fact that segregated seating was still in effect while traveling in the South. Once we crossed the Mason-Dixon line, however, racial integration went into effect.

When I said good-bye to Ruby and Grandma Julia in Orlando, I don't know if I was more excited about the train trip or the shoe box full of food Ruby had prepared for me. In those days, blacks traveling on public conveyances would always bring their meals with them. Because of the segregation laws, food in the depots was off-limits to blacks, and many times the drinking fountain and restrooms were, too. What Ruby and other black mothers could do with an ordinary shoe box was amazing. Had the shoe manufacturers realized what was going on, they would have charged extra for the box when selling shoes to black people in the South.

My box contained a meal fit for a king—well, a twelve-year-old king. It consisted of fried chicken—a drumstick, of course—boiled eggs, rich yellow pound cake, cheese, and some fruit. Simple. Tasty. This would be my breakfast, lunch, and dinner until I reached my destination. About the only thing missing was something to drink, which I had money to purchase from the vendor on the train. I had the great opportunity to decide on and purchase my own drink, a heady privilege!

When I stepped off the train at Penn Station, my little body was lost in the happy embrace of Aunt Della and that of another relative living in New York City, Aunt Lillie. Aunt Della's apartment turned out to be even smaller than our tiny Tallahassee home. Aunt Della and Uncle Fred had the only bedroom, and I shared my cousin Joe's bedroom, which became the living room

by day. Despite her modest means, Aunt Della gave to me without reservation.

Unlike Ruby, Aunt Della was happy and jovial all the time. She was also forever battling to lose weight, which was not easy because she loved to eat and to cook. She had an irrepressible sense of humor and was a connoisseur of practical jokes—with me a regular customer. Noticing how obsessed I was with money, she offered to pay me if I would kiss her feet. After a brief deliberation with myself, I rationalized, “What the heck. They’re clean feet,” and made some “easy money.” Being the butt of her jokes was not without educational value.

In addition to teaching me to use good sense in my judgment of people and in my obsession for money, Aunt Della reunited me with her delicious homemade chocolate chip cookies. I had first experienced these cookies, which were like no other cookies I had ever tasted before, on a summer visit two years earlier. Ruby, who always baked delicious cakes and pies for her fish fries in Tallahassee, had never baked cookies, particularly not chocolate chip cookies like Aunt Della’s. And because I couldn’t have Aunt Della’s chocolate chip cookies, I would never eat any others sold in the stores of Tallahassee. My taste buds refused any cookie that did not have the original taste of Aunt Della’s. So when I wasn’t off learning how to operate on the mean streets of New York City, I was hanging around Aunt Della’s mixing bowl.

A thrill of expectation would course through me when she began gathering the ingredients to bake a batch. The experience

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included many sensory pleasures beside the taste of the cookies: the soft touch of the dough and the exquisite trespass of snitching some before it was baked; the sweet smell that came from the oven as the cookies turned brown; the heat of a fresh-baked cookie melting in your mouth; the oozy softness of a little pool of chocolate before it had time to cool; the warmth of the kitchen on a snowy New York day. All of this culminated in the great cookie ritual: the licking of the bowl. Although I didn't know it then, I was committing my future career to my taste buds' memory. Today I find myself repeating that experience for friends when I bake cookies at home.

I found myself in a new school, and I made new friends. I was exposed to a palette of races I had never encountered before: Chinese, Puerto Ricans, Jews. Outside the school, I had to deal with the gangs which were prevalent in New York. One day, a muscular, tough-looking boy came up to me and asked that I "loan" him a nickel. I was thrown off. I thought to myself, "I don't even know him, so why should I loan him anything?" Besides, at the time I only had a quarter, and I wasn't going to give that up. So, appearing brave, I said, "I ain't got no money."

"All I find, I have?" was the reply of the tough boy, the common expression used when making a shakedown. It was also a warning that if he searched me and found I had been lying, I would be out of money and maybe some teeth, too. Considering the possibilities, I chose to part with my money and keep my teeth.

I had no idea how I would avoid this boy in the future. As it turned out, I didn't have to do anything. It was soon learned by the tough boy and his gang members that Joe was my cousin. And because Joe was as big and as old as the largest gang member, the word went out to keep hands off me. In fact, the tough boy became my friend, although he didn't return my quarter. But

he didn't take any more of my money, nor did any other gang members, either.

Some friends and I experimented with alcohol one day. We had only a vague idea of what to buy, and we drank way too much of whatever it was. We got sick. I staggered home feeling steady but nauseated. Dinner was on the table, and I was expected to eat. If I didn't eat I would be subjected to a lot of questions I was not prepared to answer, so I ate a little—just enough to create a small inferno in my stomach. I ran to the bathroom. My loud vomiting had everyone concerned except Joe, who knew why I was sick and proceeded to tell Aunt Della. Once again, Aunt Della did not punish me; the discomfort I was having was punishment enough. So much for becoming a wino.

That first year was filled with invaluable learning experiences, and very soon what Tallahassee roots I had brought with me had been replaced by New York ones. I had never learned to dance in Tallahassee, and in New York you had to dance, particularly at parties. I went to all the parties anyway, of course, and learned to fake a slow dance and to "grind." The grind was a popular dance that involved leaning against a wall and moving sensuously against your partner. Even I could do that. But I still had a long way to the next step: talking.

This was a real problem when it came to my dealings with girls. I was good at getting a girl's attention, but I couldn't hold it. One reason was my shyness, and another was my poor self-image. I had a deep fear of rejection. Not having nice clothes or enough money were excuses I made for my obvious inferiority

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complex, a condition which today we call “low self-esteem.” I told myself that if I were going to continue my active social life, I would need money. That meant I would have to go to work.

I started delivering the New York newspapers. I had to get up at 5 A.M. and deliver my papers before I went to school. Sunday papers were the biggest chore. They were as thick as a classified directory, and it took many trips to complete my deliveries. The other problem was the snow. It took only one winter in New York to help me decide that my newspaper delivery career should come to an end.

My next jobs were not any better or any easier, nor did they give me a lot of money for all the work involved. Then a recruiter for Food Trades Vocational High School said the magic words: “Cooks make a lot of money.”

It didn’t matter that I had never thought of myself as a cook, nor that I might be making a flimsy, narrow-minded decision based on my obsession with money. It was my decision, and it was based on what I wanted for me. Neither Wallace, Ruby, nor Aunt Della told me what to decide. They influenced me, but the ultimate decision was mine. I was now a lot more ambitious and independent, and was no longer the nervous, naïve kid who shuddered whenever Ruby raised her voice. Whether that was true or not was going to be determined when I faced Ruby, who had finally made plans to move from Orlando to New York.

Leaving Aunt Della was hard. My consolation was that Ruby was going to find an apartment big enough for me to have my own room, after fifteen years of sharing. It was not a private room, since everyone had to pass through it to get to the bathroom and kitchen. But that two-bedroom apartment in Harlem was the best that could be found in a short time and within our price range.

Ruby was very productive from the moment she hit New York. She found a good-paying job as a live-in domestic in Forest Hills, Long Island. I started my new school, Food Trades Voca-

tional High School, which I enjoyed very much. I felt like an adult going to work, since I rode the subway every day. And in a way it was a job making new friends and reconciling myself to high school procedures and terminology. But it was fun, stockpiling recipes and learning my way around the school's well-equipped kitchen. It required my full concentration. My school days were divided between my vocational training and my academic subjects, which were not a priority in a vocational school. In our second year we were put into a work-experience class, which meant we alternated a week of school with on-the-job training. And that training paid real money!

I was assigned to the pantry of the Essex House Hotel in downtown Manhattan. I wasn't happy about the assignment. I thought I would be placed behind the ranges cooking the main dishes, but they had me preparing salads, desserts, pancakes, and waffles. And, although I got to wear a white chef's uniform, I could not wear the hat since I was not behind a range. I felt that if I were ever going to qualify for the highest money as a cook, I needed to get my training at the chef level. So I took my complaint to my counselor. I was told the pantry was temporary, and since I was already in the kitchen I would be first in line when an opening came up behind the ranges. That was encouraging, so I took the pantry job and became the best pancake maker at the Essex House, a skill I fell back on many times in the years to follow.

When a job behind the range became available, it was given to a white student who had started after me. A few months later, another job came open, and I and the other pantry worker, Bob Williams, who was also black, were again passed over for a white student. My resolve to be a cook diminished in the face of obvious racism, and my sense of direction wavered.

About that time my best friend, Walter Carter, who had joined the Air Force, came visiting while he was home on leave from two-months' basic training. I was impressed with the reception he

received and how good he looked in his blue Air Force uniform. I was looking for an identity, and this one shone. I joined up as soon as I could persuade Ruby to sign the papers.

Even though I was based a long way from home, Aunt Della sent me care packages stuffed with her delicious chocolate chip cookies. My Air Force friends and I waited like hovering vultures for a fix of her treats. The pause in the day for the ritual of eating, the wonderful taste, and the warm feelings I felt for the person who made them made for a memorable experience.

After a four-year stint in the service, I returned to New York City in search of a job. I didn't have a clue as to what I should do with my life, but I landed a position as a stock clerk in the supply department at Saks Fifth Avenue during the holiday season of 1957. I worked resourcefully and diligently. Since I had matured a little since my time in high school, I took to my job with a much more positive attitude than I had shown in cooking classes.

Even in the early stages of my career, I approached my assignments with the spirit that everything I touched bore Wally Amos's signature. I realized that I would carry my work record with me into the future and to my fertile mind, the sky was the limit. Success doesn't come to you; you go to it. With a winning attitude, anything is possible.

One of my favorite sayings comes from Franklin Delano Roosevelt who said that "The only limit to our realization of tomorrow will be our doubt of today." I believe he meant that if we give ourselves wholeheartedly to every assignment, we can reach astonishing heights. Each task at Saks offered me something to learn which I might draw on one day. Every new thing I learned

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provided me with an opportunity to improve myself in the future. We are always in training, preparing for a time yet to come.

In 1958 I met Maria, a lovely West Indian lady who became my first full-time girlfriend. There had been other relationships, but they were short-term affairs. Maria became the real thing and made it official by telling her friends that the two of us were “going together”—two magic words which said a lot in those days. We introduced each other to our families.

For the next several months Maria and I were inseparable. During that time we did the usual—we went to parties, dances, the movies—and found pleasure in each other’s body. Then Maria told me her period was late and she might be pregnant. We discussed it and decided to wait and see if things would change. I became apprehensive about continuing the relationship. During the nine months I had been out of the Air Force, there had never been any thought of marriage or children. However, I did enjoy being with Maria, and I decided I would continue seeing her. A few days after my decision, she had her period.

The next month her period was late again. But this time Maria was pregnant. I felt responsible, and I told her we should get married. There had been no discussion or plans about marriage when we learned she was pregnant. It was just that I made up my mind that I was not going to be one of those guys who got a girl pregnant and then deserted her. My child would have my name and would not be born out of wedlock. Maria, however, did not agree. She did not feel I had to marry her just because she was pregnant. But I explained to her it wasn’t just her being pregnant. I loved her, and eventually we would get married anyway. We were merely expediting the inevitable.

Therefore the inevitable happened. Maria and I were married in a small private ceremony at the home of the pastor of the church Ruby attended. Our reception was small, with only family and a few friends, and was held at Harlem’s Wells Restaurant,

famous for its delicious chicken and waffles. Our honeymoon was spent in my tiny bedroom in Ruby's apartment because we both had to go to work the next day.

One thing I realized about marriage almost immediately was that there had been nothing in my life to prepare me for it. I don't mean my role of being a provider; having to work was, by now, second nature to me. I provided as much as my income allowed. Marriage, on the other hand, requires a firm commitment, a serious partnership, and the giving of yourself to another human being. At twenty-two years of age, I had no idea of what that kind of commitment meant.

Despite my shortcomings, our marriage proceeded along quite nicely. I continued to work and achieve at Saks, and Maria remained at her job until she was too far along in her pregnancy to continue.

I was soon promoted to managing the supply department at Saks. I wanted to show my superiors I was executive material, so I attacked the entire 1,500 square foot stock room. The room was given a thorough cleaning by the clerks who worked with me, and I worked as hard as they to make it the way I wanted it. Then we rearranged the whole operation. Saks returned the compliment by paying for me to attend a retail and merchandising class at New York University.

I was motivated partly by a desire to disprove the myth that black people were lazy and lacking in ambition. It wasn't that I saw myself as a pioneer for black rights, a task that was being handled very well by Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and the NAACP. I just felt I owed it to my race, and to myself, because I knew I was none of those things because my skin color was black.

Shortly after the promotion, Maria and I welcomed the arrival of Michael Anthony, our first son. I was ecstatic when I got my first look at Michael, and I did what so many thousands of other fathers had done before me: I stared, made faces at Michael,

waved at him, and I let everyone know I was the father by pointing into the hospital nursery and saying, "The one over there is mine."

I even attempted to guess whether Michael looked like me or Maria. That was nonsense because, as I and most parents have come to learn, newborn babies don't look like either parent—they look like themselves. But the most important thing was my realization that something very special had taken place. One day Michael was in Maria's womb using her life-support system; the next day he was a brand-new human being with everything he would need to survive. To me, giving birth is one of the very definite proofs that there is a God. I read a quote once that said, "A baby is God's opinion that the world should go on."

After a few days, Maria and Michael were able to come home. That first day home I was able to hold him in the palms of my hands. He seemed so fragile that I was afraid to handle him. And despite his tiny size, he made our tiny room seem even smaller. His crib was one of our dresser drawers. I became an expert at changing his diapers and bathing him once I got over the fear of breaking his tiny body. He grew rapidly.

About the same time I was making such great progress at work, I started having second thoughts about being married to Maria. I kept imagining greener grass on the other side of the fence. The other side was represented by some friends I hung out with after work who were not encumbered by attachments like wives and children. I began flirting with various ladies from work

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and elsewhere. With each new affair my guilt increased, along with my inability to communicate my true feelings to Maria.

My unhappiness was not merely confined to my home. I guess I needed something else to be unhappy about, so I became disenchanted with my job. The supply department started looking like a dead end. In fact, I saw it as not just a dead end but as a low-paying dead end. I was making eighty-five dollars per week, which Saks thought was a good salary. I thought it needed improvement. After all my hard work, I wanted monetary recognition for doing a good job. Then Maria became pregnant again and my eighty-five dollars needed support.

I asked for an increase of ten dollars more per week. However, my Plan A was that I was prepared to accept a counteroffer of half that amount, with the hope of better things to come. Well, Saks did not want to give me any false hopes, so they denied my request, including a counteroffer. I put Plan B into effect: I gave Saks two weeks' notice. I figured this would shake them up and let them know that I really meant business. Saks held firm, forcing me to move forward with Plan B.

It was now a matter of principle. I felt I was worth more than I was receiving, and for me to continue working for less than I deserved would have been against all I believed in. And heading the list of my beliefs was standing up for my worth. It was not my intention to let myself be abused. So with my wife pregnant, no other job in sight but with my pride still intact, I left Saks four years after starting work there.

After I left, I periodically went back to Saks to say hello to a few friends. And on each of these occasions I realized how important it was that I had the courage to stand up for my worth. I believed strongly enough in my innate abilities to make a life-changing decision. I believed that there was more promise for me somewhere else, and I stepped into the future with confidence.



4

The Grass Is Greenest Right Where You Are

I have received abundant rewards for going out of my way to give more than is required of me, and I make it a habit to always give just that little bit extra. In every job I held, I became known as someone who would always do more than just enough to get by. I learned that if we habitually invest only minimum amounts of energy into our obligations, we end up with a life that is minimally happy. Our existence becomes uninspiring, because that is the spirit we bring to our environment. One of the best ways to advance your career is to go that extra mile.

With a powerful belief in my own abilities, I soon landed a job in the mail room at the William Morris Agency. The mail room was, and still is, the level where most trainees entered this legendary talent agency.

My work seemed limited: sorting mail and running errands. But I set targets for myself that went beyond the boundaries of the mailroom walls. I read memos that came through the mailroom. I reorganized our cramped little office. I immersed myself in learning about the activity around me. I went out of my way to cooperate with the people I worked with. I put my heart and soul into

my work. Within two months of joining the agency, I was promoted to substitute secretary.

In my new position, I again shared my resources before I was asked. If I saw that something needed attention, I applied myself to it, even if it was not part of my job to do so. I recognized that all the members of an organization are in pursuit of the same goals. When I helped my colleagues, I was helping myself also.

My attitude enhanced my value to William Morris and my fledgling career. And just as important, it increased my sense of self-worth and self-esteem as I began to see the results of my actions. Needless to say, it also increased my paycheck. I realized that I could achieve what I wanted in life. I had grand expectations for Wally Amos even though I was not clear yet just where I was headed. But I had a sense that if I performed at my highest level, the opportunities would follow. I learned that service to others would bring the best to my own life.

My philosophy evolved into one of production, promotion and service. I was serious about taking responsibility for my job, and I developed a credo: "It will not be done if I do not do it." I took pride in my work; my life was my art, and my work was my medium. I imagined a day when I would reflect on my accomplishments as if they were paintings, and I wanted to see masterpieces.

Before the end of my first year with the William Morris Agency, I had been promoted to be the agency's first-ever black talent agent. I became a founding member of a new rock and roll music division. This was a new challenge for all of us, since there were no precedents for me to follow. Yet there are no rules for leaping

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into the new, because no one has ever been there before! There were so few opportunities for black people when I started out that I felt a very real responsibility to be the best I could be. The truth of the situation hit me squarely between the eyes: The only thing that could stop me from succeeding was myself—me—Wally Amos! I took a deep breath and dove into the unknown.

I had the honor of managing some incredible acts. A producer friend, Tom Wilson, introduced me to Simon and Garfunkel when they were completely unknown and were playing in small, dingy clubs. I thought they were fabulous; they looked very different and they sounded fantastic. I knew that they were going to be big, so I brought them into our agency. I reckoned we would help each other down the road to superstar status. Unfortunately, I was the only person at William Morris who saw their great talent! I worked tremendously hard to get my colleagues to support me in advancing their career, but it was very slow going. By the time music lovers discovered their genius, Simon and Garfunkel had lost faith in our agency and had moved on.

Although that particular big fish got away, I received immense benefits from the experience. My company realized that I had an eye for talent. I earned new respect and credibility among my peers in the industry. And Simon and Garfunkel bore no hard feelings toward me. They acknowledged my support and saw me as a friend.

Later, I went on to book and promote The Supremes, The Temptations, Dionne Warwick, Helen Reddy, and Marvin Gaye, to mention a few. I worked with some of the most extraordinary artists of our time. I took the utmost care to respect these relationships and honor my clients. While at the time I did not realize what a strong foundation I was building, my concern for honest and caring business relationships turned out to be a priceless asset in the long years ahead.

My zealous desire to succeed as an agent was much stronger than my intentions of succeeding as a good husband. I often had to attend a different nightclub each evening and concerts on the weekend. Maria wanted to come along to socialize. I discouraged her, partly because I wanted Michael and Gregory to have the benefit of at least one parent at home, but mainly because I wanted the freedom to fraternize with other women.

I never really committed myself to family life. I convinced myself that I was unhappy at home and that marriage was no longer for me. This justified my staying out at night. I was thoroughly seduced by the glitter of show business life. I began to sleep with other women whenever I could manage it.

One day, I opened a package of shirts just back from the local Chinese laundry. The top shirt, a favorite of mine, was slashed to ribbons. I noticed lipstick stains on the collar. I realized that Maria had seen them too and in a fit of rage, had cut the shirt. I had a choice: clean up my act or leave. I made the easy choice in what was to become a pattern in my relationships with women: I left.

The reasons I gave Maria for leaving were that I no longer wanted to be married and that our marriage was not working—another pattern I would repeat many times. The most difficult part was leaving Michael and Gregory. Their expressions showed a child's attempt to make sense of something that I, as an adult, could not find the words to make clear to their mother. In these situations, the partner staying often thinks that the partner leaving feels nothing about what he or she is doing. That was not true of me. I was in pain—agonizing pain—because I knew I was hurting three people. The pain was compounded because I didn't know of any other way to handle the situation.

Maria and I found a lawyer who helped us settle our affairs in an amicable way. I did not resent paying alimony and child support. Maria could see my deep love for Michael and Gregory, and

she placed no restrictions on my seeing them. Gregory was two and Michael was four at the time of our separation.

I found my own apartment: a one-bedroom place with a balcony on Central Park West. I pursued every woman who crossed my path as though I had been stranded on a desert island with no female company for ten years. The chase was always more exciting than the catch. The thrill of romance captured my attention, and I developed a courting style that was very successful. I would send flowers and thoughtful cards, and occasionally pick up my date in a limousine. I took ladies to television shows or nightclubs, and often took them backstage to meet the stars.

After a couple of years, I began to find this lifestyle unsatisfying. And the bills began to mount. I was faced with a choice of spending money on my girlfriends or my sons. I retreated into closer association with the two people I really loved: Michael and Gregory. Having my own apartment to bring them to was terrific. I enjoyed cooking for them, although they had to settle for lots of pancakes and French toast, which were my specialties from Food Trades school days.

My attention to my sons did not continue for long. I met a beautiful and shapely lady from Raleigh, North Carolina, named Shirlee Ellis. We grew closer and closer over the course of a long courtship. I nervously introduced Shirlee to Michael and Gregory. They got along famously, and I asked Shirlee to marry me. I vowed that this time, things would be different.

For a time, I was devoted to Shirlee. But eventually I began cheating on her, repeating my old patterns. Cheating on her meant lying to her as well. My work managing bands on road trips took me to many distant cities. I would often extend these excursions for a day or two in order to be with girlfriends. There were many times in my relationship with Shirlee when I simply had to get my own way, even at the expense of damaging her feelings. I was greedy, deceitful, and devious, all of which derived

from feelings of fear and a lack of inner peace. I had not yet come to grips with knowing, loving and accepting myself. This made it impossible to love anyone else.

Despite my obvious shortcomings, Shirlee and I continued to work at our relationship. This was helped by the fact that she had a new life within her. The birth date was scheduled for sometime in September, 1967.

I had gained so much experience and confidence working at the William Morris Agency, that I decided to quit and go out on my own. I decided we would move to Los Angeles to further my career. In those days, I never considered making decisions jointly with my spouse. My only regrets in making the move were that I would not be able to see Michael and Gregory regularly, and that I was leaving Ruby. However, since Ruby and I were not getting along that well, being miles apart might help our relationship. This would be a good test to see if absence really makes the heart grow fonder.

Shirlee gave birth to a bouncing baby boy on September 13, 1967. We named him Shawn Ellis. Our joy was tempered when we learned that Shawn had yellow jaundice and would require a complete blood replacement. Both Shirlee and I were very concerned about our baby, but the doctor allayed our fears when he explained there was no danger and that the transfusion was routine. Shirlee came home without Shawn, who had to remain in the hospital an extra week.

Shirlee, unlike most new mothers, was not able to spend the first month getting to know her baby and recuperating from childbirth. She spent her time packing boxes and coordinating our arrangements to move to Los Angeles. I also chipped in, and because of my prior experience I was able to help by changing diapers, making formula, and bathing Shawn. We headed for California, as so many had before, with high hopes of making our fortune.

Los Angeles provided me with a whole new feeling of enthusiasm. We lived in a house in the Hollywood Hills with two bedrooms and a nice little backyard—quite a change from apartment living in New York. I was on a special high. Shirlee and I began to go places together and make friends. We joined the United Church of Christ; while I had not been involved with a church for a long time, it was important to Shirlee. We spent happy times at home. But the old shadows of my past behavior soon returned to haunt the relationship.

Many times when Shirlee and I were alone together, I would not talk to her. My mind was always on the business. I had many internal hang-ups that made it impossible for me to hold a meaningful conversation with her. Shirlee would plead with me to talk to her, saying that she needed to talk to someone other than Shawn. I gave her no support. Eventually, the stress and tension of it all—moving, having a baby, trying to find a sounding board and support and companionship—got to Shirlee and she had to be hospitalized for nervous exhaustion. Suddenly there was no one to look after our three-month-old baby while I worked.

Our relationship got better after her return from the hospital. But during the following months, as Shirlee grew stronger, I began to stray again. To hide my guilt, I would nit-pick her, and criticize everything she said or did. Although I knew it was because I didn't want to be married anymore, I wouldn't admit that.

The only commitments I kept were to my sons and to my clients. I never wanted to lose touch with my sons, because I never wanted them to forget that I was their father. When Shawn was born, I decided I would make sure that he, Michael and Gregory developed a good relationship. Maintaining a close relationship with my sons made it easier for me to move farther away from Shirlee—something I realize now, but didn't at that time of my life.

I wound up moving out of the house for a time to escape the meaningless treadmill our marriage had become. Then we patched things up and I moved back in. But all the old problems came right back in the door with me. Nothing had been resolved, and it was obvious that there was little keeping us together. I decided that leaving for good would be the best for Shirlee, Shawn and me. As my friend Tim Hansel, author of *You Gotta Keep Dancing*, says, "The tests of life are not to break us but to make us." The biggest test of this stage of my life was in the area of personal relationships.

In 1970, I began baking chocolate chip cookies at home regularly. I discovered that the whole exercise of preparing a batch was a therapeutic exercise after a long day at work. I was revived by the art that went into the making, and by the pleasure in the faces of those who ate them. I also used my cookies as a calling card in meetings with producers and Hollywood executives. My chocolate chip treats were a sure way to make people feel at ease in my presence, and I rarely went anywhere without a package in hand. My business associates began to expect them. More often than not the first greeting I received was "Hey, man! Where are my cookies?"

Talk about a receptive audience! With every new taste test, the accolades flowed: "Wow, Wally, you are a genius—man, these are fantastic!" My edible gifts became the hit of the town. They opened doors that would otherwise have been closed to me. I would sometimes find myself in meetings with Hollywood

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heavyweights who rarely saw strangers. "It's the Cookie Man?" they would ask their secretaries. "Sure thing! Let's give him some time!" My cookies were famous long before I started to sell them.

For several years I built my talent agency, and I invested all of myself in the people I managed. But none of my new clients ever succeeded to the point where I had a steady income stream. I loaned money to one of them and was never repaid. Eventually, I found myself in a financial bind. The lies, hypocrisy and politics of show business were getting to me, and I became increasingly disillusioned with my choice of career.

I decided to reinvent myself completely. Hollywood was already addicted to my cookies. And by this time I was well known by many in the business for my treats and my enthusiasm. One day, while casually munching and chatting with B. J. Gilmore, Quincy Jones's personal secretary, she looked up at me and suggested that we should go into the cookie business. She said she had a friend who would finance our project. Something inside me recognized that this would be one great thing to get going. Then and there I made the commitment to open the first store in the world to exclusively sell chocolate chip cookies.

Some people tried to discourage me because the idea was so different, but many of my friends were thrilled by the concept. The more I thought about opening a cookie store, the more compelling the idea became.

Deciding to do something is one thing, but any great venture requires total commitment. I set to work with all the determination and energy I could muster. And I found great support. With \$25,000 invested by my friends Helen Reddy and her husband Jeff Wald, Marvin Gaye and United Artists' president Artie Mogull, I set forth on my venture. I also received huge donations of sweat equity from many other friends.

March 10, 1975 was the day of the grand opening of the (Nameless) Amos Chocolate Chip Cookie Company in a small

store in the Sunset Strip, on the corner of Sunset Boulevard and Formosa Avenue. The guests arrived early. Happy feet left their Rollses, VWs, Benzes, and Hondas in the care of young men in red jackets and then stormed the red carpet leading up to the entrance of the shop as though they had found the trail leading to Oz.

Guccis, Nikes, earth shoes, and sandals danced or moved in happy harmony into the shop, which was the first stop on the way to the festival already underway outside. Inside the shop, the recipients of the 2,500 invitations—many of which had been hand-delivered—signed the guest register and at the same time got a glimpse of the home of the brown and beige fantasy whose birth they had come to celebrate.

Out back, in the tented, AstroTurf parking area, champagne and milk flowed freely. Huge numbers of chocolate chip cookies were brought out on large cookie trays at regular intervals and were quickly seized by the many hands that had waited in anticipation for the tasty morsels. Space for the overflow of worshippers, like the precious morsels on the cookie trays, was at a premium. But that didn't matter to the happy celebrants, all of whom were in sync with either the rhythm of their excited hearts, the West Indian Steel Drum Band, the roving Dixieland Jazz Ensemble, or the movement of the dancers.

This carnival of dancers had contracted brown fever. The symptoms were evident in the way they danced to whatever rhythm was nearest while carrying their drinks in one hand, their

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souvenir balloons and posters in another hand, cramming their mouths with cookies, and chanting, "Have a very brown day." Traffic on Sunset Boulevard slowed to a crawl. Cars parked anywhere they could so that their occupants could get a taste of the action. The mayor, Thomas Bradley, sent greetings and declared that date "Chocolate Chip Cookie Day" in Los Angeles. It was a Hollywood splash with all the glamour and excitement meant for the best of premiers.

The next day, when we officially opened, lines of eager cookie lovers formed at the door long before the staff even got there. My commitment paid off! Wally Amos became the world's first and foremost cookie producer and the father of the gourmet cookie industry. The business took off.

From the beginning, my intention was to build my company on sound principles and high ideals as well as to make money. In the early 1970s, this was an alien idea to most businesspeople. But I kept a positive attitude in the face of skepticism. I held firmly to the twin goals of product excellence and moral excellence. I did not allow negative thoughts of not succeeding to enter my mind. I had faith in my plans, and setbacks did not deter me. These firm convictions helped me triumph over the problems that followed.

I traveled frequently. Every time I boarded an airplane, I came equipped with plenty of cookies to pass out to my fellow travelers and the flight crew. Word of the delicacies spread to each part of the country I flew to. On one flight to New York, as the airplane landed the pilot announced his thanks to "The Cookie Man." Everyone in the cabin applauded!

In the next decade, (Nameless) Amos cookies developed from a fashionable trend in Hollywood to a supermarket basic and favorite all over the country and in some parts of the world. I knew that chocolate chip cookies created a certain magic, but my success grew far beyond expectations. During the years I lived and

worked in Los Angeles, I was amazed to see the creation of a national population of Wally Amos cookie junkies!



5

If You Keep on Thinking What You've Always Thought, You'll Keep on Getting What You've Always Got

Where do you think inspiration and success come from? I believe wholeheartedly that success and inspiration come from a Higher Power. And I trust that Higher Power to guide me in my vision, so I have confidence in my thoughts and ideas. My faith in the future is unshakable, but faith demands risk, because there are no guarantees, no actual facts that are inevitably destined to happen.

Simply resolving to have faith is not enough. Faith demands action. You have to take action to reach the goals that faith inspires you to. P. K. Thomajan hit the nail on the head by saying, "Living faith is a rock with roots." Success is based on experience. I have been shown innumerable times that my faith in a supreme truth is completely well-founded. But I've also had to take committed action to get there, learning from experience along the way. My faith in the eventual outcome provides me with the confidence to accept each chapter in my story as vital to my growth and my journey toward the goal, no matter how difficult that episode may be.

The transition from managing talent to selling cookies is one major example. I was absolutely compelled to give up show busi-

ness, not fully aware that a greater achievement was just around the corner. But my inner voice was insistent, and I got the message. I followed my intuition and went where I was guided. I put entertainment behind me and launched myself one hundred percent into my new career.

I traded in the tailored suits of my show business days for Hawaiian print shirts and Panama hats. My smiling countenance became known as “the face that launched a thousand chips.” I used this happy, effervescent style to attract the attention of consumers to my mouth-watering morsels. My cookies and I became a duo, and we put on a show together. I acted as a foil to my sweet and crispy treats; my lively yet kindly persona introduced the cookies as the stars of the show. I was now personal manager for the cookie!

Promoting myself as part of the image was such a success that my embroidered shirt and Panama hat now reside in the Smithsonian National Museum of American History in the Business Americana Collection. That hat and shirt, adopted as the (Nameless) Amos corporate symbols in 1975, were the first memorabilia to be collected by the museum from a successful black businessman, and also the first from a food company. Douglas E. Evelyn, deputy director of the museum, valued them as symbols of being able to create your own destiny—the American Dream. To me they are a testament to the power of faith, commitment and dedicated effort.

Each person in this world is a jewel in a crown of unequalled beauty. I believe our imagination is the source of our individuali-

Each person in this world is a jewel in a crown of unequalled beauty. I believe our imagination is the source of our individuality, our capacity for glory, and our own, peerless talents.

ty, our capacity for glory, and our own, peerless talents. I use the creative power of my mind to confront and shape my unique reality because I know that my vision is important. Awareness of the uniqueness of my vision involves me emotionally in my activities. I have developed the ability to love and enjoy everything that I do, because I always see my projects and experiences as an extension of myself. This total investment accounts for a large part of my success. Your own dreams and goals will become a reality to the extent that you pour yourself into them.

In meditation I let my imagination run rampant. Once I have dreamed my final goal, I construct mental pictures of the steps towards that goal. Then I go out with a heart filled with passion and actualize what I have seen. These days they call this technique "the power of visualization," and it has been proven effective by many successful people. Andrew Carnegie began as an ordinary laborer in a steel mill, but managed, despite his humble beginnings, to make himself a fortune of over one hundred million dollars. He used his imagination to dream, and then he went after it. Everyone who has achieved greatness or fulfillment in life started out with a dream. Prayer and visualization call up your limitless spiritual resources to move you towards your vision. An unlimited power to create lies within you.

Motivate yourself toward your goal constantly, even when you appear to be failing. When I drop the ball while doing some small assignment, I still discover something important. Total commitment to your cause is like throwing a pebble into a lake; it creates ripples of value and good fortune throughout your life. Worthy results inevitably follow.

If you have boundless enthusiasm for the task at hand, you will invigorate everyone around you and inspire them to take up the challenge even in difficult times. Your faith in the outcome will enable you to bounce back and generate support from others.

When you act according to your highest dreams, the outcome is often far grander than you might imagine. I moved to California with the dream of making it big in the entertainment industry. Yet I found myself going far beyond my first vision to a much greater enterprise. Outcomes are often not what I expect, yet I always find myself feeling completely satisfied with the way things work out.

When you have faith in the outcome, no matter what it may be, you cannot stop yourself from living and working with enthusiasm. As I put what I feel into action, I am filled with vitality and happiness. When you start out with an attitude like that, it enriches your life and mobilizes the people around you.

The success of The (Nameless) Amos Company had as much to do with my reputation as a man of integrity as with the infectious excitement I bring to my ventures. I have had good reason to develop a position of honesty over the years. I work at being good to all people because I have learned that they will serve me in turn. (Nameless) Amos was built on this concept. That is why I do not want to be seen promoting anything less than a superior cookie.

When effort and tenacity team up with integrity, a powerful combination results. If you cultivate heartfelt sincerity in both your personal and business life, you will find yourself empowered as the people around you discover they can trust your intentions. As the network of relationships grows, more and more people discover the pleasure of making a difference. The standard of business goes up. The key players in The (Nameless) Amos

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Company put their competitiveness and ego-attachment aside, and looked ahead together to the goal.

Some years ago I created my own personal mission statement. It says: "My purpose for living is to help people realize their inner strength and greatness, to help them know they are not victims being manipulated by outside forces. I am here to be a guide leading them to the power within, so they can discover their true power and nature, which is LOVE."

Even as The (Nameless) Amos Company grew and thrived, my home life deteriorated. I separated from Shirlee and went through a string of relationships with other women that showed me ever more clearly that I needed to make big changes in my home life. I could tell that my relationships with my children needed fixing too. I needed to develop the same success in my intimate relationships that I was nurturing in my business.

My third wife, Christine, helped me to practice in relationships what I practiced in business: You get what you give. Eighteen years with her have taught me to invest in communication and love. With Christine I have learned to give my whole heart to my loved ones. The rewards are immediate. Now I nurture my family all the time, and I delight in the pleasures I find moment by moment in their company.

I have discovered that the words we use in our intimate relationships either make them or break them. Words, whether used in thought or speech, convey attitudes and meanings to those around us that either nurture or destroy. When I learned this lesson, I made the commitment to nurture my family members with life-affirming verbal and mental messages. I began to use only loving and heartening language. I believe that all the thoughts that emanate from me influence my surroundings, multiplying and returning to me. The effects of practicing verbal and mental hygiene were immense and, late in life, I began to develop close ties with my children whom I had never truly known.

Christine also taught me to look for the positive aspects in any situation and build on those. One of the most powerful nuggets of wisdom I have ever heard is: "Like what you find and you will find what you like." I constantly seek the best everywhere. This is a spiritual law which I do not understand, nor do I need to understand it, but I know that it works. I take care to let the best part of myself manifest through my daily actions; a loving spirit is a magnet that attracts the best in return.

To this day I constantly seek to make a positive contribution in thought, word and deed. We all have much to give and much to gain by giving, because every time we favor others our supply of good fortune is nourished. Just as one and one is two universally, so is the principle of giving and receiving. I decided to give with the conviction that God is the source of every one of our blessings, and that if we give from a belief in that infinite source, we will discover it to be a well of good fortune in our lives.

My experience and philosophy is that everything works out to enhance our lives, even if the appearance of a situation is distinctly the opposite! All we need do is to trust in this natural law as an unfailing truth, and have faith that we will discover what the advantages are of our seeming misfortunes. This involves unlearning the way most people look at things. We go through our lives peeling off layers of our ignorance as we discover that who we deeply and truly are is never threatened by changes that happen. Our suffering is caused by the learned reaction of fearing the inevitable changes in life rather than by embracing them as opportunities to heal and develop. Change is like shedding one's skin—it allows a more beautiful you to emerge.

Every seeming problem in my world has the potential to propel me to my wildest dreams. I can no longer be confined by the expectation of limitation. I expect joy in my life as I surrender to the perfection of universal wisdom. Believing that the power

within me will produce success, I can today trust in the perfection of the people and experiences that are brought across my path.

People who see (Nameless) Amos cookies in vending machines and supermarkets around the world sometimes imagine that I became forever rich when my cookies took off. Unfortunately, the yellow brick road is longer than that! My new troubles began because of my own mismanagement of the company.

Getting (Nameless) Amos to its national position was one thing, but I discovered that keeping it there was another. Despite robust sales, by 1985, my business was losing money and to stop the hemorrhaging, I decided to bring in outside investors. Before long the company had changed hands four times! And on each occasion, the new owners gobbled up more of my share until all of a sudden I found I had lost all ownership in the company I founded.

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Failure Is Someone Else's Opinion of the Outcome of a Situation

The Tate sisters of Reno, Nevada, come from one of the richest families in America, and perhaps the world. The three sisters inherited wealth from a dynasty which got rich off of Nevada's casino boom, and the girls were raised to be canny in increasing their fortunes. One day, while visiting a (Nameless) Amos franchisee in Arizona, I shared with the owner that I had financial problems and was especially concerned about the state of my cash flow. A sympathetic friend, the franchisee suggested I contact the Tate sisters about investing in (Nameless) Amos. We arranged a meeting.

I found myself in discussion with Henry Hoffmeister, a brilliant and humorous individual who oversaw the Tates' investments. I was astounded to find myself in cahoots with such money! We entered into long, drawn out negotiations. The Tates' demands were enormous. I seriously considered bankruptcy as a better alternative. But the way out for The (Nameless) Amos Company was the way through, and in March of 1985, we came to an agreement and signed all the contracts.

They purchased a majority interest in (Nameless) Amos for the sum of one million dollars. This was petty cash to them, but it

solved some of my worst money problems! I felt I had rescued my dream. One of the agreements signed was called a quit claim. It effectively relieved me of the right to use my name or my likeness in any enterprise which had food as its business. I thought this agreement was an amendment to my employment contract, which declared that I was an employee with equity.

The contract stated in the best legalese: "Mr. Wally Amos assigns all rights, title and interest he has or may have, together with the goodwill of the business and reputation of Amos, in and to all words and symbols or combinations thereof which presently identify and symbolize Amos, and Amos's facsimile signature, photograph, caricature, actual or simulated likeness and voice for all commercial uses for use on food and food related goods and services, and food related ingredients and products." In short, so long as the Tates' agreement remained in effect, I was not allowed to associate myself with any other food-related business, especially any business that made chocolate chip cookies!

The agreement left me with just 17% of the company I founded. This was a major reduction from my previous ownership of 48%. The remaining 52% was distributed amongst a collection of friends who had invested near the start of the company. The agreement with the Tate sisters also diluted the stake owned by my friends.

Within a few months of the deal, the Tates lost interest. It transpired that a "little" business like mine was too bothersome and complicated for them to waste time on. I got wind of their feelings and approached Henry Hoffmeister to see if this were true. Sure enough, Henry told me my hunch was on target. The anticipated turnaround of the company was taking more of the Tates' time than they were willing to spend. I was disappointed to discover that the Tates had lost faith in the company. Hoffmeister and I decided to look for a third party to buy out their stake.

In September of 1985, Hoffmeister arranged for the sale of their interest to The Sage Group, headed by Walter Sage, owner of Atlanta Savvy, a large ladies' shoe company. The sale to Sage marked the beginning of my withdrawal from (Nameless) Amos. Mr. Sage did not like to fly, and he never once visited our headquarters in California. Instead he had an associate, Jerry Pollard, oversee operations. Pollard and I did not hit it off—I found him abrasive and petty, and I ended up having very little to do with him or the company.

During the negotiations that preceded the sale to Sage, my equity was reduced to around 14%. Since the new owners demanded a new set of contracts, in March, 1986, I signed a new employment contract and an amendment to the quit claim agreement. With that, my sole responsibility and obligation became simply to promote and publicize the company.

My heart was no longer in it. My employment contract prevented me from pursuing some of my pet projects. I could not engage in any other commercial activity or associate myself with any other corporation without prior consent of The (Nameless) Amos Cookie Company. I began to feel that my arrangement with the company had taken the shape of an owner/slave relationship.

Also part of my contract was a non-compete clause. This barred me, for a period of twenty-four months after the termination of my contract (due to my resignation, discharge or for any other reason), from conducting business on behalf of any other organization engaged in the production or marketing of cookies.

Alan Watson was brought in as president several months after the deal was signed. Fortunately, he and I developed a very close friendship, and we worked as well as we could, given the circumstances. But the company did not thrive.

In the latter part of 1987 and six million dollars later, The Sage Group sold the assets of the corporation to the Johnson family. The Johnsons were friends of mine who lived in Philadelphia. But

in spite of our friendship, the terms of the new agreement were tough. The Johnsons reduced my equity to 0%. They wanted to cut my annual salary from \$225,000 to \$60,000. Just when I thought things couldn't get any worse, they did!

The Johnsons managed (Nameless) Amos for a year. They had a good track record of running service companies, but they were not able to master the demands of a retail operation. The rescue attempt failed, like the others before it. Within a year the Johnsons had lost their hope and their money. The business struggled along as forlornly as ever.

In October, 1988, their fortunes depleted, the Johnsons sold the business to the Portola Group, who owned The (Nameless) Amos Company for the next four years. At the head of the group was Sylvia Portola, a former chief executive officer of Nature's Gateway, an extremely profitable company which sells health products. After leaving Nature's Gateway, Portola set up a venture capital firm to locate struggling companies, buy them, turn them around, then sell them for a profit. The Group's purchase of (Nameless) Amos was one of their first ventures, and their greatest success.

The Portola Group repositioned (Nameless) Amos cookies from a gourmet item to a lower priced commodity product. Their strategy was to take a product in a limited, quality niche and mass-merchandise it. They reorganized the operations of the company and broadened distribution. Their strategy was well thought out, and it worked wonders. Sales soared, and The (Nameless) Amos Company recovered. When Portola acquired the business, sales were six million dollars per year. They built it up to over \$80 million.

Portola capitalized on a name that personified quality. And since I had few responsibilities within the company, I spent much of my time promoting various charities, further enhancing the reputation of the product. In the minds of customers, I still per-

sonified and represented (Nameless) Amos chocolate chip cookies. But the compromises they made to the quality of the product meant that the original (Nameless) Amos cookie had become a shadow of its former self.

One wintry day, in a meeting with Peter Lamsdorf, (Nameless) Amos's new president, he said to me without sentiment, "Wally, you've done such a great job, we don't need you anymore." He inferred that I had created a rock-solid brand name, and that they would still benefit from my continued public appearances in support of good causes. But it no longer mattered to the company whether I continued to play the role of (Nameless) Amos or not. Also, under my employment agreement, they were bound to pay me \$225,000 per year, and they really wanted to eliminate my salary from the company expenses. Peter wanted to negotiate a reduction in responsibilities for a reduction in fees.

I concurred. I was happy to free myself up for my other projects and I wanted to spend more time with non-profit charities. Peter and I began talking back and forth about the terms of my disengagement. The haggling and deal-making seemed to go on forever. I wanted to retain a small ownership stake in the company, but Portola refused. Their negotiation tactics were to reduce their offers each time I made a counteroffer.

Eventually I realized the truth: they wanted me completely out of the picture. I realized that if I stayed, I would have no say in how the company was run. They also wanted control over my activities, and I saw I would be reduced to little more than a puppet. As I witnessed the strength of Portola's resolve to refuse me any stake in, and any profits from, the company I had built, it was obvious I had come to the end of the road as (Nameless) Amos.

On the surface it seemed utterly unfair. But something new inside me began churning and twisting to get out. While it looked like my brainchild had chosen to betray me, my intuition told me a divine plan was at work. I focused and meditated, and worked

on reminding myself that life is a process and everything in it works together for the best. I knew I was not a victim. Finally I came to a place of understanding which turned my heart right around. My suffering and rejection turned into a sense of comfort and peace.

This is what I learned: When things are not to your liking, like them as they are! When we are dissatisfied and depressed by our situation, or we are discontented because our circumstances are not what we think we want, we are standing in our own way. We must be in harmony with whatever happens in our lives if we wish to advance. Everything that comes to us is a gift, a stepping stone for us to reach our ideal. Whether it looks like a caress or a slap, if you maintain a positive mental attitude, it will contribute to your highest good.

When my company rejected me and gave me lemons, I decided to turn those lemons into lemonade. I remembered that doors had slammed in my face before, yet others had always opened to more brilliant prospects. I chose to see my current, seemingly adverse situation as the necessary impetus for creating a fabulous future. So I drew myself up and began to radiate a confident attitude.

I stopped denying what was happening. I no longer belonged to The (Nameless) Amos Chocolate Chip Cookie Company and The (Nameless) Amos Chocolate Chip Cookie Company really and truly no longer belonged to me. It was time to let go of my attachment, disentangle myself, and begin the next chapter of my life. It served no purpose to be tied up with people who did not

Everything that comes to us is a gift, a stepping stone for us to reach our ideal. Whether it looks like a caress or a slap, if you maintain a positive mental attitude, it will contribute to your highest good.

want me around. They were actually acting as agents to turn me towards a happier route. I was confirming that life really is never what it seems; it is always more.

This acceptance recharged me and became a powerful force in my ensuing renewal. I would not allow myself to see this event as defeat. I actually rejoiced in the knowledge that the opportunity to grow through this painful experience could be exciting! I might very well prosper by leaving the company. I could reach for new heights. I decided not to give up or complain about what had happened, or to give in to the ridiculous social notion that I was a failure. Rather I threw aside all the negative beliefs I had been taught in my life and I began to explore the possibilities ahead.

Conventional education does not teach us the truth that change is a positive force in our lives, and that it can act as a voyage of discovery from which great benefit may come. It occurred to me that the God who had given me the idea to create (Nameless) Amos was not a one-idea God. Surely he had at least one more brain wave to give me. I could hardly wait to find out what it was!

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7

You Always Get as Many Second Chances as You Want

One of the realities of existence is this: If you don't get it right the first time, life will give you another chance to master that aspect of things. And if you miss your next chance, that same challenge will again present itself to you. The process continues until you get it right. This inevitable cycle is a curse if you are running away from your problems, and a blessing if you are seeking to grow through them. In every challenge lies an opportunity.

Although I made enormous mistakes in my early relationships, I am profoundly thankful that life and God have given me opportunities to make good, especially when it come to my sons.

While I maintained close ties with them as they were growing up, having a part-time father is rarely enough for a boy. When Michael was born I said, "I'm going to have a great relationship with him that's not going to be like what I had with my dad." But the relationship turned out to have many of the same characteristics, except they were worse. Both Michael and Gregory had to work through the feelings of betrayal and abandonment that my treatment of them occasioned. They knew I wasn't truly and continuously there for them.

As Michael grew older, there was a lot of resentment that he held in and didn't express to me. The longer you hold things in, the thicker the barriers become. As a teenager he continued to live in New York. As the years progressed, I'd often attempt to contact him on my visits to the city. When I tried to really connect with him on a deep human level, he wouldn't respond. He developed a substance abuse problem. Our bond frayed to the point where he had no interest in establishing an adult friendship with me; his sole interest was in getting a few dollars from me whenever I visited, not only because he was abusing, but also because he felt I owed it to him since he was my son.

Just as my relationship with Michael had many of the characteristics of the relationship I had with my dad, Michael's relationships with the women in his life and his children played the same patterns out again. He had two girls with ladies he did not marry. He married the mother of his third child, but the relationship failed.

Michael began to turn around when he started attending Twelve Step fellowship meetings. He took a hard look at why his life wasn't working. He did a great deal of inner work. He stopped blaming his wife and began correcting the aspects of his personality that had consistently blocked his relationships with women. Life always gives us opportunities to deal with aspects of our lives that are not in order.

Michael is good with people, and he began working for an organization called Project Reachout that helps homeless people and indigent psychiatric patients. For the first time, he held a single job for several years. He arrived at work on time and took increasing responsibility. After a few years he outgrew that job and

Life always gives us opportunities to deal with aspects of our lives that are not in order.

went to work for The Industrial Areas Foundation, which does community organizing. They get involved with neighborhoods, empowering the people to control their communities and make them livable. He still works there today. As a bonus, Michael is receiving experiences and lessons on empowering himself. He is learning to take responsibility for his life.

One day, Michael watched one of his co-workers, who was parked in a tight parking space, get into her car. He said to himself, "She can't maneuver the car well enough to get out of that spot." His first impulse was to ask her to get out of the car and let him do the driving, but he realized there was a better way. He stood near the car and gave her directions so that she could get out of the spot herself. He allowed her to have a victorious learning experience. These kinds of insights have allowed Michael to accelerate his inner work and growth.

One of the things that has helped bring Michael and me closer together has been my consistency. I have been consistently positive in my dealings with him. I have never preached to him, and I didn't attempt to run his life. I supported him, loved him, and helped him in any way I could. I also began giving him ample notice of my visits to New York City. Ultimately his view of me came to correspond with the way in which I consistently treated him. It is important to always act from a place of love. Judging and shaming children gets you nowhere. Just being there for them, and holding a loving space, allows the relationship to blossom.

Michael and I talk a lot about our relationship these days. We even discussed my writing about him in this book. We have processed all the pains of our history over the course of the years. This has led to us becoming quite good friends.

Gregory, my second born, is independent and determined by nature. He doesn't always have the tools to get out of a difficult situation. When he was three years old, Gregory, Michael and I were visiting my mother's house in a different part of New York

City from where we lived. Gregory wanted to leave, and no one else did. I said, "Well, we're not ready to leave yet, but if you want to you can go ahead and put on your coat and hat and leave."

Gregory put his coat and hat on and started for the door even though he had no idea where he was going. He's carried this same willingness to pursue his own way through life into adulthood.

A very sensitive person, Gregory borders on being shy and introverted. He doesn't easily express his feelings. When Gregory was five, I moved to California, so I saw much less of him and we became more distant. Our means of communication was letters and telephone. Sometimes we communicated by exchanging audiotapes. We still maintained a relationship, but the distance between us was never entirely bridged. Gregory has always thought of himself as being removed, detached, reserved, and emotionally unconnected. Not that he has aspired towards these traits, however, they have been characteristic of his personality. He is currently making great strides in changing these aspects of his personality.

One year, after a period of regular communication, an old hurt emerged. We were having dinner together on a visit to New York City. He had always sent me a card every year for my birthday, but then they stopped coming. I discovered why. The last card he had sent me, I had found a misspelling. I had corrected the card and sent it back to him in the humorous spirit in which we sometimes conduct our relationship. Gregory did not see it as a joke. He never told me how hurt he felt, and the cards stopped coming.

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space, allows the relationship to blossom.*

I felt just talking about the incident that evening was a breakthrough.

We wrote a book together called *The Power in You*. In it we outlined the ten secret ingredients of a successful life. The project was a catalyst for us. It showed Gregory some of what made me tick. And as his insights flowed into the manuscript, I had a window on his soul.

The book was taken from the transcript of an audio cassette album I had recorded. I gave him the power to add or remove anything he wanted to. Giving Gregory free rein was a big step forward in trust for me. The result was an excellent book. It reflects the growth process that he and I were going through at the time. We both tapped into the power within us as we wrote about it.

Once the book was in print, we went on a promotional tour together. We were inseparable for two weeks. The trip was a gift to us, as we shared experiences and had time for in-depth conversations. After the tour every time I visited Los Angeles, where Gregory lived, I would make it a point to spend time with him.

A couple of years ago, after a motorcycle accident, Gregory went into a state of deep depression. I telephoned him and asked how he was. I could tell by the way he said "I'm okay" that he was very definitely not okay. He told me after a recent meeting with his therapist regarding the anger he had towards me, he had made the decision not to communicate with me until he was ready. He also told me he had been fearful of sharing his decision with me because of how he thought I might respond.

I want for Gregory what he feels is best for himself. So when he told me of his decision, I immediately told him I would support him if that was what he wanted.

We've communicated a few times since then. I sent him a letter last Father's Day. I wanted to make some kind of contact with him because I didn't want our not speaking to go on forever. He

responded and shared some of his feelings. He said he felt deserted as a kid and that our father/son bond never developed. I responded to his letter and sent him Hawaiian protea flowers from Christine, Sarah and me.

I miss him, and when I think about him, I feel regret at not having him be part of my life at present. But I know he has to come to the point of resolving these issues. I have made my peace with my past mistakes, and I can wait for him to come to terms with himself and with me. I am perfectly prepared to give him the time and space to do what he needs to do. We may never be close again, but I accept even that because you can't force someone to be your friend.

I could analyze my current relationship with Gregory. I could see a counselor about it and tie my life up in knots over opportunities missed. But I know that constant gentle loving support is the best policy. My goal is not to get him to talk to me. My goal is to be peaceful, honest and loving with Gregory. I hold him in my prayers and always think of him in a loving way, but I'm going on with my life. The loving feelings I have for him are the best I can do. That might change the situation and it might not, but whatever it does, I am very peaceful and comfortable with Wally Amos. When the time is perfect, Gregory and I can begin to flow into each other's lives again.

You have to get on with your life. Every experience has taught me that. Situations are not always to your liking. They don't always appear to be to your advantage, but you have to accept them. If it's in your power to change them, you do whatever you can to change them. If not, you must accept them as they are and move on with your life. That's the bottom line.

My relationship with Shawn evolved in a way similar to that with Michael and Gregory. But we remained closer, because I was an integral part of his life until he was ten years old. Even when

Shirlee and I separated, we lived in the same city and I saw a great deal of Shawn. He would often stay with me.

When Shawn was ten, Christine and I moved to Honolulu. One of the roughest moments of my life was the day I told Shawn that I was moving to Hawaii. He began to cry uncontrollably. I felt so bad.

Up to that point, Shawn's relationship with Christine was good. They were friends, although there was a degree of distance between them. But once I told him that Christine and I were moving, he decided she was his arch enemy. He disliked her as only a kid can do. Christine was very tolerant and understanding. We had to move through a difficult time together.

When Maria and I got divorced, it was obvious that our relationship had not been healthy. For me to have remained in it for the sake of the kids didn't make sense. I've seen too many people stay in relationships just for their children, but their misery spilled over into the kids, too. A home with nothing but anger and hate and frustration is not a healthy environment for anyone to live in. I was determined not to do that. Leaving your children is a gut-wrenching experience. It eats your heart out if you care about them, and it is one of the most difficult things for a human being to do.

Yet caring for yourself is the source of being able to care for others. I followed the path of my bliss, and it was clearly taking me to Hawaii. The first summer we lived here, all three boys came to visit me and we had a wonderful time, except for Shawn who was very unhappy and decided to return home early. When Shawn was in ninth grade, he moved to Hawaii to live with Christine and me. He had not been doing well in school on the mainland, and I sensed he needed a father in his life full-time.

It was a good decision, and then I blew it. I started going on promotional trips frequently. Sometimes Christine went with me. After making the great decision to bring Shawn to Hawaii, I

began traveling a lot and was unavailable to him. It was one of the dumbest things I've ever done.

We began to grow further and further apart. He wrecked Christine's car. He began drinking, he wasn't happy, and he didn't want to be with me and Christine. I had a hard time comprehending his behavior. He is a very bright person, and because of this I had treated him like an adult from an early age. I never treated him like a kid.

We began meeting with my friend Jerry Jampolsky, author of *Love Is Letting Go of Fear*, for counseling. In one session, Shawn told me that what he needed was a father. I had been trying to be his best friend. He was crying out for some discipline and he wanted me to be available to him in that capacity. Discipline shows that you love and you care; it is a loving form of communication. But I was blind to that, and the damage was done.

When he was 16 years old, while Christine and I were on a trip, Shawn moved back to live with his mom and returned to school on the mainland. His grades deteriorated, and he soon moved out of his mother's house to live with friends of the family. He decided he wanted to go to a boarding school. I told him I'd support him, but that he'd have to get himself accepted by a school on his own merits. He had to fill out all the applications, attend the interviews, and get himself in. He jumped at the opportunity.

Boarding school turned out to be a rewarding experience. For the first time in his life, Shawn identified a future that interested

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him. His attitude changed and he began to like himself. His relationship with Christine and me reflected the changes.

Shawn and I were helped by a process Christine and I had learned in a Marriage Encounter weekend. It's called "Reflection and Dialogue." You take ten minutes in private to write what you feel about a mutually agreed upon subject. Then you come together and exchange the notes, reading them twice—once from the mind and once from the heart. Then you take ten minutes to dialogue on the subject in a safe environment—safe to the degree that both parties understand that their feelings aren't right or wrong, they just are. Each person is entitled to feel the emotions that come up without being judged or hurt.

Shawn and I would identify a subject over the phone and then exchange letters. Upon receipt of the letters, we would dialogue over the phone. Through this process I discovered that I was subconsciously trying to change Shawn. I was trying to live my life over through him. When I gave up on that and loved him unconditionally, and was open and honest with him in a loving way, he began to change. I've discovered the best way to change another person is to change yourself. Your own behavior and attitudes are the only things completely under your control.

It's vital to be *growing* through your life rather than *going* through your life. The object is not to change other people or situations; it's to do the inner work they stimulate. I constantly seek peace of mind. If I can be peaceful with Wally Amos, I can be peaceful with the environment around me. And once I reach that inner state of balance, the environment around me changes.

The biggest thing lacking in my first two marriages was a lack of respect for Wally Amos. Low self-esteem was my disease, and I had a terminal case. Consequently, I had no respect for myself or my children. I was not demonstrating good relationships because Wally Amos did not have one with himself. He had no foundation

of spiritual principles from which to live. Without this basis, there was no other way I could be.

Christine and I moved to Hawaii together in 1977. I was full of resolution that this relationship would not suffer from the same problems as my previous marriages. But one day, before we had even lived together for a year, I said to Christine, "This relationship is not working and I want to get out." I was as afraid of commitment as I had ever been, and I was speaking the same words that I had said to Maria and every woman since.

We had planned a trip to Unity Village together. I went alone. While I was away, she started seeing a counselor. The counselor said her goal should not be to get back together with me, but to heal our friendship. She realized that by doing that she would heal a part of herself.

When I returned to Hawaii, I went to live with another woman. But I missed Christine and often thought of her. The other relationship soon ended and Christine and I slowly came back together. I started going to Christine's therapist. We went separately and also as a couple. Our counselor recommended a book called *On Caring*. It contained a message that burned itself into my brain: "Love is giving your mate or spouse what they feel they want, not what you feel they should have." I began to understand the sequence of what happens in a relationship for the first time. Courting is great. You then get married and start to assert ownership. You tell your spouse how to shape themselves into who you think they ought to be.

I realized that I had been acting like an idiot. In all her actions, Christine showed that she really loved me. Her care showed in a thousand ways, like the amazingly detailed shirts and jackets she embroidered for me. I asked myself, "How many people will you meet in your entire lifetime whom you know will honestly love you through hell and high water?" I knew in my heart that it was time for me to make a deeper commitment to a relationship with

a woman than I had ever made before. I asked Christine to marry me.

A marriage is a growth chamber for both people. The reason you're in that relationship is to grow—to help yourself grow and to help the other person grow, too. After being with Christine now for over fifteen years, I can't imagine being with anyone else. After making all the mistakes a man can make in my first two marriages, I have an acute sense of what my priorities are in this one. I give Christine the time she needs when she needs it. When I'm at home, I don't want to be anywhere else.

This has less to do with Christine than it has to do with me—Wally Amos is a really nice guy and I'm happy being with him. Christine being in my life is an extraordinary bonus! But you have to like yourself first.

My relationship with Christine, like that with anyone else in my life, works best when I'm just giving unconditionally and not expecting anything in return. I feel great when that condition is met. When I'm giving to someone, I have a sense of peace. I know that whatever my needs are, they will be fulfilled.

An extended version of the Reflection and Dialogue technique Christine and I practiced is called "Ninety/Ninety": ninety minutes of writing how you feel followed by a ninety-minute dialogue. During a Marriage Encounter weekend session doing Ninety/Ninety I realized I felt good about having children with Christine. Up to that point I hadn't, since I felt that I had tried before and failed as a father. It also occurred to me that I didn't have the right to determine if Christine should have children or not.

A marriage is a growth chamber for both people. The reason you're in that relationship is to grow—to help yourself grow and to help the other person grow, too.

"If you think what you've always thought, you get what you've always got." By relying on experience as our guide, we relive the past. We are an historical society, constantly perpetuating past errors. Like the stock market, we're always reacting to what happened yesterday or last year. A rock star will have a hit record, and then the next three or four songs sound like the last one. Once a television show becomes a hit, three or four clones appear within a season. It takes real work for me to remember that what happened yesterday has passed. Today is today, bringing a fresh start.

I've got a friend who, when taking a shower in the morning, enjoys more than the water washing his skin. He imagines a clear rain of spiritual water cleansing away everything inside his skin, washing away everything that happened yesterday and leaving him fresh for the challenges and pleasures of the day to come.

I worked on releasing my conviction that I was a failure at being a dad. At the end of the Ninety/Ninety period with Christine, I shared with her that if she'd like to have a child, it was fine with me. Three weeks later, Sarah was conceived.

We were overjoyed. We knew that Christine was carrying a special being. We didn't want to call the baby "it" because we didn't know if it was a boy or a girl, so we decided to refer to the child as "Miracle," because we realized that a miracle was taking place. We went to Lamaze and Bradley birthing classes. We attended study groups for *A Course in Miracles*, and also listened to many inspirational speakers. All of this made the pregnancy a powerful experience for us.

With the help of the loving people in my life, I've shown myself at last that I am capable of breaking the negative and destructive patterns that used to hurt my loved ones, and being a responsible long-term marriage partner and parent.

The delivery was exhilarating. Labor was about nine hours. I saw the little head pop through, and the face looked like that of an old soul. I yelled, "Miracle is a girl! Miracle is a girl!" It was a great moment for us. Another phase of our life had begun. We now had three people in our immediate household. We called our miracle "Sarah." She brought a wonderful new dimension to the relationship between Christine and me, and we became a stronger couple as we parented her together.

Sarah was eight years old when the lawsuit with (Nameless) Amos began. She began to understand that life sometimes gives you lemons. We want her to learn from our example that it is possible to turn them into lemonade. We expose her to the realities of life, while giving her love and support. She is growing up to be a dynamic lady.

For me, relationships with women and children are huge life-issues that have come around again and again. I made enormous mistakes as I stumbled toward learning the skills and attitudes that make relationships successful. I am still learning every day. But I'm higher up on the spiral of experience than I used to be. With the help of the loving people in my life, I've shown myself at last that I am capable of breaking the negative and destructive patterns that used to hurt my loved ones, and of being a responsible long-term marriage partner and parent.



8

I Reached for the Sky But I Missed, So I Grabbed a Few Stars

Success to me means spiritual and emotional well-being. It means profit at home as well as in the workplace. I have discovered that if I lead a life of service to my fellow human beings, honestly devoting my all to that purpose, I never have to worry about being taken care of myself. Countless experiences have taught me the value of compassion. Yet it must be freely offered. People are not tools to use for our own expectation of reward. If we cultivate relationships for selfish ends, we do not tap into the great power of the universe.

When I left (Nameless) Amos Cookies, I did not consider my time my own. I knew that the proper use of this period in my life was to benefit people in need. Charities are vehicles for giving. They offer us chances to serve and contribute to others through money or time. In return, they offer us the joy of giving. There is no greater satisfaction than assisting the world in a positive way. Through helping others, you not only earn the love and support of those who receive; the spirit of giving spreads throughout the universe. One of the greatest rewards I receive from my investment in humanity is that these charities are helping disadvantaged people to prosper. I have invested in humanity for a good

part of my adult life. And I like to reach the widest cross-section and the greatest number of people possible.

Literacy Volunteers of America is a national, non-profit organization which teaches adults to read through a network of community volunteer literacy programs. In 1962, Ruth Colvin of Syracuse, New York, came up with a plan to address the problem of illiteracy in her community. She started a movement which spread nationwide as her methods became successful and widely acknowledged. Her techniques have proven so effective that today more than 120,000 tutors and students are involved in nearly 400 LVA programs in 40 states in America.

Life's a circle, and whatever we give to the circle is returned to us because we are a part of the circle. All through my career I've received much from the circle, and in the days when (Nameless) Amos was flourishing, I was looking for a way to give back to the circle. One day my friend John Rosica told me the frightening statistics about this weakness in our society—that there are approximately 23,000,000 adults unable to read above a fourth-grade level—and I realized that illiteracy was the root cause of countless social problems.

Until my conversation with John, I did not even think about literacy. But when I learned that millions of Americans could not read or write, I approached LVA and offered my services. I became the national spokesperson for the organization in 1979. I was able to serve the project by using my fame—and my name. Since I was a celebrity and an experienced promoter, I attracted attention to the problem and the solutions available.

The lack of basic reading skills prevents 20% of adults in the U.S. from successfully fulfilling the basic tasks of everyday living. Consider not being able to read food packages, instructions on medicine bottles, street signs, grocery lists, love letters or job applications! Each year, the number of non-readers in America increases by around two and a quarter million. This in turn creates

an astounding six-billion-dollar bill for welfare and unemployment compensation. Illiteracy is a problem which affects all ages, races, religions and colors.

Literacy volunteers dedicate a portion of their time to teaching, in a concerted attempt to provide the basic requirements for everyone to achieve their potential. They understand that as our civilization becomes more complex and more technological, reading becomes ever more necessary. They are prepared to put in the effort for the broader goal of economic opportunity and social justice for all.

When I began working for Literacy Volunteers of America and became their national spokesperson, I accomplished three things. First, my involvement kept me and my cookies in the public eye. Second, it served to enrich and promote the organization I served. Third, I received the satisfaction of knowing I had served others. Volunteering is an obvious demonstration that giving equals receiving. It is wise business. A good business serves its community, which in turn supports that business and helps it to grow.

The same is true for any relationship. If one party gives more of themselves than the other and gains less in return, sooner or later they will quit the union. The same cycle applies to economics. The business that shows it cares for its customers, and ensures that consumers get the best deal possible, is bound to be reinforced by the market it serves. Some of the biggest corporations are aware of this now, and some of the most successful firms in the world give back to the people and the planet. Ben and Jerry's Ice Cream and Anita Roddick's The Body Shop have demonstrated that record growth can come from genuinely, vo-

*Volunteering is an obvious demonstration that
giving equals receiving*

cally and practically caring about our collective future. A good business must be a force for social good as well as a profitable enterprise. Ben and Jerry's donates 7.5% of their pretax profits to social projects and community events.

Sharon Darling realized that unless we broke the cycle of inter-generational undereducation, we would never stop illiteracy. Being the caring, dedicated, hard-working person she is, she decided to do something about it. In 1989, with support from the William R. Kenan, Jr. Charitable Trust, she formed The National Center for Family Literacy. Parents and children gather in a school setting that both supports the parent as first teacher and promotes their own educational needs. Parents participating with their children provides each child with a strong role model. I have visited many school sites, as a member of the board of advisors, and have witnessed the bond of love and respect that develops between parent and child. The National Center for Family Literacy intercepts parents headed for a life of illiteracy and despair, and gives a future generation the educational foundation to help them be lifelong learners. I know I am a better person as a result of my involvement in programs such as these.

The phenomenal growth of The (Nameless) Amos Company had as much to do with my commitment to humanity and love for my customers as with a quality product. And although I lost the company, the intangible assets I have gained through charitable involvement can never be lost. I have also committed my time and resources to a dropout prevention program, called Cities in Schools, that supports and encourages children to stay in school.

In the early sixties, Bill Milliken was a kid in Pittsburgh who spent far more time out of school than he did in school, and he did not think much about his future. He was resigned to a fate in which there were no prospects other than the poverty into which he was born. Then, one day, a kindly man dropped into the pool hall where Bill hung out and changed his life forever. Over a game

they chatted, and the stranger told Billy that it was possible to achieve all his dreams. For the first time ever, the boy considered the idea that he could turn his life around and make something of it. The stranger's act of love left a lasting impression on Billy, and years later he committed his life to working for others. He and a group of associates began living with and caring for disconnected and runaway kids on the streets of New York.

They set up store-front substitute classrooms, called "The Street Academy," which evolved into one of the most innovative and imitated schools in the nation, featuring supportive social services alongside an academic program. During the seventies, the Cities in Schools idea was formalized and brought into public institutions.

Today Bill Milliken's creation is a national organization operating out of four hundred and fifty project sites. It is dedicated to helping young people complete their schooling. But more than that, it helps children discover their value and talents so that they might grow up with self-esteem and ambition. Children who might be lost through lack of love and attention are often revitalized through the intervention of Cities in Schools.

I came to the organization in 1985, and today I sit on the board of directors. My association with Cities in Schools has been a fantastic experience. It has reaffirmed my faith that anything and anyone can change. I have seen children who seemed doomed to a life of drugs and destruction pick themselves up and evolve into the special human beings they were meant to be.

I also serve on the board of directors of Aloha United Way in Hawaii. United Way is a fund-raising council which distributes millions of dollars to sixty-five social service and non-profit agencies in our community.

I am on the board of trustees of The Napoleon Hill Foundation, which perpetuates the ideals of a positive belief system. Napoleon Hill was author of the classic, *Think and Grow Rich*,

which outlines the qualities common to extremely successful people. In 1937, Andrew Carnegie commissioned Hill to write the book, giving him introductions for interviews with some of the most powerful people in business and politics. Hill's discoveries have propelled thousands of other people to fame and to fortune.

The Napoleon Hill Foundation runs an information center that distributes printed matter, conducts seminars, and trains volunteers to run programs in prisons. It teaches people to build self-esteem by adhering to seventeen basic principles, the most important of which is PMA: a Positive Mental Attitude. I am the self-appointed spokesperson for the Foundation's ideas, as I demonstrate their principles in my daily living.

When I have hit stressful times in my life, or when the financial well runs dry, I have had to do some soul-searching about whether I can continue my charitable work. Every time, I've realized that I can't afford not to. Whenever I start coming up with reasons why I cannot give or spend time helping less fortunate people, it is a definite sign that I to need to give more—and right now! Giving equals receiving. And dedication to high ideals is like a trademark. It becomes an identity which one can wear with great pride. I would be giving up who I am for a much lesser person if I were to stop. So I continue to travel extensively for various organizations and spiritual groups as a motivational speaker. It is my pleasure to share my ideas on the power each of us has to make great things happen in our lives.

The feelings of satisfaction and gratitude I have gained from working with non-profit programs exceeds the rewards for anything else I have ever done. I enjoyed the opportunity to throw

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myself into this work when I left The (Nameless) Amos Company. But I still needed to pay my bills, so when the non-compete clause in my contract expired in 1991, I began planning my comeback into the cookie game.



Obstacles Are What You See When You Take Your Eyes Off the Goal

What about Chip & Cookie? I had washed my hands of the cookie business for two years, but I had not forgotten that Christine and I had conceived of a whole new concept in cookies which we had put on the back burner. Once I got over my disappointment and my depression, I realized that now was the chance to forge ahead with the development of our project. A children's book about love was created, which our friends Peg Kehret wrote and Leslie Beaber illustrated.

The story of Chip and Cookie is about Grandma Dovely who bakes chocolate chip cookies with the village children every afternoon. One day, no chocolate chips arrive from Sultan Semi-Sweet who usually supplies them. Grandma Dovely does not want to disappoint her beloved children, so she decides to make them cookie dolls to play with instead. Magically, the dolls Chip and Cookie are energized into life. Armed with love and determination, they set out for Sultan Semi-Sweet's castle to see if they can secure the missing chocolate chips. Along the way they meet many enchanting characters to whom they teach the joys of living and loving.

We contracted with various companies to make dolls, T-shirts, cookie jars and other fun accessories. And of course, we also baked scrumptious, delicious no-holds-barred chocolate chip cookies! We launched Chip & Cookie in five J. C. Penney stores in Hawaii in November, 1991. Then we followed with a promotional book tour on the mainland. *People* magazine did a story on Chip & Cookie. The business was launched with a great spirit of joy and festivity. The only people not celebrating were the lawyers at The (Nameless) Amos Cookie Company.

At this point, I had also become aware that the recipe for (Nameless) Amos cookies had been changed since my days at the company, and I asked Leroy Wulfmeier to ask (Nameless) Amos to stop claiming that their cookies were based on my original recipe. Their reply was formal legal action against me. They maintained that I had conveyed to the company all rights to using my legal name in business in the various employment contracts, quit claims and non-compete agreements I had signed. Chip & Cookie was, according to them, in violation of these agreements. They challenged my allegation that the recipe had been changed and said that in any case, I was bound by my agreements not to discuss the company, its business, or the circumstances of my separation from it, and ordered me to cease and desist.

Once the shock and surprise began to settle, I faced the reality that (Nameless) Amos really was suing me and demanding that I immediately stop using my name or my likeness for "Wally Amos Presents Chip & Cookie." Actually it occurred to me their concern was quite a compliment. Here was a multi-million dollar company fearful of penniless me.

But I also thought, "Wow! If I cannot use my own name to establish my business and generate an income, what then will happen?" There was no way I could ignore this court order, and now that I was involved in a lawsuit, I realized that none of my business associates would be able to deal with me without also risk-

ing a lawsuit. My problems weren't over. They were only beginning!

As I waited to board the plane for Hawaii after being served with the court order, these thoughts made my mind spin. I had a long flight ahead of me to reflect on this disaster. But as soon as I settled into my seat I chose to go into a state of spiritual contemplation, which gave way to a peaceful sleep. This prevented me from being fearful or acting rashly. One thing was obvious: there was nothing I could do 35,000 feet above the ground, and good sense required that I be calm and collected when I arrived home.

On the last leg of the flight I thoroughly read the complaints, then completed some other work to distract myself. Christine and my young daughter Sarah met me at the airport, and on the ride back I shared what had happened. Once home, I went directly into my office and faxed the entire stack of papers to Leroy. He sent them on to a colleague and friend named Patrick Freydl, a copyright and trademark litigation specialist. In no time at all, my case was in competent hands.

As Patrick and Leroy took up my cause, I realized how blessed I was to have developed such honest and trusting relationships over the years because they gave me an edge. By surrounding myself with honorable people, I felt secure in the knowledge that not only talented, but trustworthy experts would be representing my case. I had the best in the field of trademark and copyright law as my counsel.

In the separation agreement of March, 1989, it was written that each party should be supportive of the other and would not do anything to adversely affect the other's business. Neither (Nameless) Amos nor I were to make any public statements to the effect that we were no longer associated. But I thought that our agreements had come to an end now that it was two years since I left the company. I believed that as my contractual obligations were over, I was quite within my rights to defend my good name.

(Nameless) Amos chocolate chip cookies now tasted bland and uninteresting, and as a gourmet cookie maker, I could no longer afford to be associated with them.

Patrick Freydl turned out to be a very generous man and he accepted my case with a small retainer. During my first conversation with Patrick, in an effort to set my mind at ease, he said, "We will be bathed in the waters of victory." Meanwhile, broke but not broken, I set about gathering the money to pay for my defense. I decided to send a letter to some of my friends requesting their support till I cleared up the whole mess and got back onto my feet.

Why is it so difficult for us to ask for help? I remember that it was not easy for me to go asking for money. But I had already invested a sizable sum in Chip & Cookie and this setback prevented the possibility of earning a return. I was scraping the bottom of the barrel and I had no further financial resources. So I braced myself, drew once again on my assets of inner strength and good faith, and I sent out the Wally Amos Defense Fund letters. I reminded myself that if I acted in the name of truth and integrity, both my friends and I would gain in the end. I wrote to them as follows:

On April 1st, I was served with papers, by a process server, while waiting to board a plane for Honolulu. At first I thought it was an April Fool's joke. It wasn't. It might someday be a scene in a movie.

I am being sued by the venture capital group that purchased (Nameless) Amos. They claim I do not have the right to use my name, Wally Amos. They also claim I have defamed their product by saying that they have changed my recipe, and therefore, the taste of the cookies.

I have no choice but to defend myself. There are agreements signed by me, during sale one and sale two of (Nameless) Amos in 1985 and 1986, that give them the right to my name and likeness. I was ill-advised and thought I was sign-

ing something else. My attorneys feel we will be victorious in this effort.

On the issue of the recipe, I created the original one and I know they have changed it, and I can prove it. Besides, everyone who has eaten the original cookie and the current cookie knows there is a difference.

I have retained the services of attorney T. Patrick Freydl, of the firm Frasco, Freydl & Caponigro, with offices in Detroit and Los Angeles, and we are in the process of planning the strategy for my defense, which brings me to the reason why I am writing this letter. Contrary to popular belief, I am not “in the chips.” I left (Nameless) Amos with nothing, and during the last three years, I have exhausted my financial resources.

I have paid my attorney a \$2,500 installment on a \$12,500 retainer. However, I currently do not have enough income to cover the balance or the cost beyond the retainer. As you know, I am making my re-entry into the cookie business, and the expense of starting a new business has left me dry and with considerable debt. Therefore, I am asking friends and those organizations I have helped during the years to assist me by either a donation or an interest-bearing loan to help cover the cost of my defense. I do not as yet have any idea how long this will take. We will do everything in our power to move it along quickly. (Nameless) Amos will probably want to drag it out since they have the financial resources to do so.

My attorneys feel very strongly that we can win and I agree. But, you can't win unless you stay in the game. Any support you can give me will be greatly appreciated. Please make your check payable to The Wally Amos Defense Fund, and mail to P. O. Box 897, Kailua, HI 96734. If your payment is a loan, I will prepare a note, for 10% interest per annum, and return it to you.

This is an important issue for Christine, Sarah and me, and we sincerely thank you for your help.

Aloha,
Wally Amos

The events which followed my writing that letter to my friends showed me that there is always a return on the love and goodwill you offer to the world, even though it often comes back from people other than those you gave it to. I knew that the people I was writing to were aware of my honesty and my lifelong enthusiasm for giving to others. Their response affirmed the entire way I had lived my life.

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10

The Truth is Closer to the Gut Than to the Lips

I sent off the requests for financial assistance, and in no time at all I received around \$15,000, which I placed in a trust fund in the name of Patrick Freydl. I was overwhelmed and blessed by my friends' generosity, even though I live my life with the knowledge that what one sows one will reap. Still, it surprises me how well things work out when you adhere to God's laws. If you are mindful to practice kindness and compassion, you receive all that you need in return for your actions.

The response showed that I had rock-solid credibility among my business associates, and my history of service had impressed the people I came to know through the years. They trusted my good intentions and understood that I approached them with honesty, a giant need, and a great deal of respect.

One letter, from my friend and former mentor Howard Hausman and his wife Marie, was especially touching. Unbeknown to me, Howard was bedridden with a severe heart condition. He still responded with a check for \$500, and in his letter he said, "I have been somewhat sick recently, and may not last till the outcome is known. But if so, I promise you that the third angel on the left, sitting in the back of the jury box, will be sending you all his good

wishes and prayers.” Howard did not live to see the outcome, but he sure did let me know the meaning of friendship.

I asked and was given, yet none of us knew what the outcome of this lawsuit would be and what would ultimately become of my backers’ money. But I think both they and I trusted that the power of truth would prevail. We all acted with faith, and faith breeds success. One donor said he felt compelled to make an investment in me, because he knew that I had accumulated so much goodwill through my own generosity that he felt free of all fear about the verdict, financially or substantially. If you believe you will win, the odds immediately become stacked in your favor.

The Portola Group had every good reason to be proud of saving the company. At the time they served me, The (Nameless) Amos Chocolate Chip Cookie Company was grossing \$80 million in sales annually. And though they were making money, their success was not entirely without my help, because I was still firmly placed in the eye and affections of the American public. If the public became aware of the fact that I was no longer a part of the firm, they might have reason to worry.

Through my community projects, I remained in the public eye long after (Nameless) Amos was overhauled. In fact, as a personality, I became more influential than ever before. As I dedicated my newfound free time to social causes, the public became more and more interested in my work and my speeches. I received an honorary doctorate in education from Johnson and Wales University, was inducted into the Babson College Academy of Distinguished Entrepreneurs, and was honored with the Horatio Alger Award, The President’s Award for Entrepreneurial Excel-

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lence, and the National Literacy Honors Award. Live according to the truth of the Higher Power and your life will be blessed, in public and in private.

Every time I leave Hawaii, I meet and befriend people. Many times our acquaintance is in passing, but I do my best to make the experience rewarding. Sometimes I do not get to meet my audiences, yet my goal is always to leave them inspired. I feel my celebrity is a God-given responsibility, because I know that my fame can be used to influence my environment. I want to be a force for unity and peace, and the best way I can do that is to honor and value each individual I meet. As my celebrity grows, I develop my faith and my gratitude. I remain aware of an increasing debt to the communities who have honored me and put me where I am.

When I launched (Nameless) Amos, when I left William Morris, when I quit Saks Fifth Avenue, things were not easy, financially or otherwise. Although in most ways I am fortunate and privileged, challenges and hardship are not strangers to me. When I wrote my autobiography in 1983, I reflected on how the critical turning points in my life always ended up being great opportunities. The greater the pain, the harder the shock, the more hopeless the crisis, the more miraculous the outcome. Not only is every crisis resolved eventually; it is always resolved in the best possible way. When (Nameless) Amos sued me, I decided that a really huge blessing must be coming my way!

On a Sunday in May, 1992, I spoke at Unity By The Sea, a church in Santa Monica, California. I was being less liberal in accepting non-paying speaking engagements because I was spending most of my time promoting Chip & Cookie to create much needed income. However, I decided to accept this invitation, because I would be in Southern California anyway for personal appearances at Nordstrom to promote Chip & Cookie. Through the years I have always made a special effort to accommodate speak-

ing engagements from Unity churches, since I have received so much from Unity's teachings. Speaking at these churches is a way for me to repay my debt.

Sometimes it's hard to muster the energy to give. The temptation to not go ahead is almost irresistible. But I have found that I am usually rewarded in abundance when I overcome my negativity and decide to show up. And often the less you feel like going somewhere, the better the experience turns out to be. If I resist expending the effort to do something of service, I recognize my resistance as a sign that something good is going to happen, and therefore I must do it! What happened in Santa Monica proved once and for all that the benefits of saying "yes" far outweigh the sacrifice of energy and time. I came away from the engagement with much more than I gave.

In my talk, I shared that (Nameless) Amos was suing me and discussed how I was processing the experience. I spoke about the Wally Amos Defense Fund letter. My talks are always about what I am currently growing through. I show folks that famous people are human and have lessons to learn, just like everyone else.

One of Unity's board members, Ed Carlson, invited me to a potluck dinner at his home after the service. There I found more than good food and company. I was introduced to Brett Bochierrri, who had attended the service and who turned out to be a trademark attorney.

Over dinner, Brett told me that he had handled a similar case. And he mentioned that his client had discovered in his liability insurance policy that under an "advertising injury" clause, the

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carrier had to pay for the client's defense! Well, he really got my attention. What? Could this be true? Could this be the way to pay for my suit?

I could not wait to get home to read my insurance policy, which was with the Hartford Insurance Company. And yes, I found I was covered! I could even continue working with Patrick. When I called him, he said he would adjust his fees to coincide with the rates set by the Hartford.

Just before this, I harbored certain doubts about Patrick, and I wondered whether I should have Brett Bocchieri for my attorney. I knew that Patrick was one of the best in the business, but at times it seemed he was too busy for my case, and often I thought he was quite inaccessible. But after the arrangement with my insurance company, I realized that Patrick had to be the right man for the job. I also remembered that Leroy recommended Patrick, and Leroy would not steer me onto the wrong track. If you cannot believe in your friends, who can you believe in? I am human of course, and cannot always avoid moments of worry. But I know that in the divine plan every situation is perfect for my growth and will lead to a positive outcome.

Later that month, the first deposition in (Nameless) Amos vs. Wally Amos was held in Honolulu. For two days I sat at a conference table, with Christine at my side, facing Brad Lieberman, (Nameless) Amos's attorney, answering his questions as honestly as possible. Whenever I felt stressed, I focused and meditated. I kept my attitude open and my responses straightforward. Lieberman was tough. He cajoled and manipulated, constantly looking for an opening to make me betray my case. But I was prepared. I remained centered, assured and clear about myself and my story. I was beyond being flustered by him. I drew on the great source of power inside of myself with the knowledge that the truth would always prevail. I also had Patrick's associate, Tom McGlovkin, to help with legal technicalities.

I heard the other side saying that they had not changed the original recipe of (Nameless) Amos's cookies. I knew that was untrue! The packaging proclaimed "The Original Recipe" and yet the list of ingredients showed that claim to be false. My name with that recipe! I knew that the actual facts would be verified so long as I held firm to my trust in the outcome, did what was necessary, and let events unfold according to God's divine plan. This case was a learning experience for all those involved, and I was prepared for the lesson. If we had to sit in this classroom together, I decided to make it as painless as possible.

The blows kept on coming. In June, 1992, The (Nameless) Amos Cookie Company requested an injunction to prevent me from using my name in any business at all, because of the likelihood of confusion between their name and mine. I kept going with Chip & Cookie; like any one with bills, I needed the money. But the other side wanted to shut me down completely—according to them, not only was I riding on the coattails of their name, but I was taking business away from them. They said if I used my own name there would be a likelihood that their customers, potential customers, and the public generally would be confused or misled as to the source of the cookies. (Nameless) Amos believed that the public would think that my business was identical to or affiliated with theirs, all to the irreparable injury to (Nameless) Amos and its goodwill in the market.

The second hearing was held in San Francisco. Patrick represented my response to the judge, claiming that my name was a trademark owned by me, and since it had not been used as a trademark by (Nameless) Amos for over two years, they had lost the right to control it. We wrapped up our arguments and waited for the judgment to be handed down.

The judge's final decision took a long time to come through. The wait was torture for me. I had always been one to take charge and take action. Now I was forced to deal with a new experience

which felt like suspension in limbo. After all my life believing in the power of the individual to take control of his or her fate, I was now discovering how it felt to be helpless. Other people—strangers—had my fate in their hands. I felt like a man standing before a firing squad, tied up and blindfolded, while the sharpshooters decided on whether or not to fire. I had to focus all of my inner strength to prevent myself from panicking. I was earning a Ph.D. in letting go and letting God. My patience and faith were as much under trial as my business.

Since the outcome of the hearing was still pending, legally I was still free to use my own name in my transactions. But there was no way to do business with anyone else, since my associates knew they would immediately receive letters to cease and desist doing business with me. Up to the release of the injunction, I could use my name, but the reality was that I had no one to use it with.

On the evening of August 17, after finishing the taping of a training film for Cities in Schools in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, I returned to the hotel and called Patrick. He broke the news to me that the judge had granted (Nameless) Amos the preliminary injunction, giving them greater and more far-reaching rights than the original agreement. I really thought the judge would rule in our favor. Boy, was I wrong! You never can tell.



11

You Can Call It Anything If You Think It Needs a Name

Thank goodness I was sitting when I received the news, because, I must admit, I was stunned. Not another setback! Talk about a painful and torturous test of one's faith! The more steadfast I became in my conviction that things would get better, the more I was tested. Was that how it worked? I could not help myself from sinking into an instant depression, and I sat there despondently, going over and over my unhappy prospects.

I was angry, fearful, empty. My heart ran through a gamut of emotions normally associated with some significant loss like the death of a loved one. I felt anger, denial, depression, and resignation. I went through all this in a matter of minutes.

If ever I needed to call forth all my optimism and experience, it had to be now. I pulled myself back to the tune of the power within myself and I drew a deep breath. Finally, acceptance came.

After so many years of using my inner strength and personal resources, returning to this source was an instinct for me. I had no other means of surviving. I did not know how to sink anymore; it was no longer part of my nature to lose myself in despair. I had been practicing the art of positive thinking for too long.

I felt as though a greater, subconscious wisdom was taking charge of events. When you lose the function of a hand, eye or leg, the other one is strengthened, and I believe that the psyche works something like that. The foundation of my faith was solid, because of all the proof I had seen from previous experiences. I know too well that everything that happens is for a beneficial cause, and I could not allow this crisis to floor me.

Suddenly I was struck by a profound realization—a complete liberation. I realized that in order to be truly free, I honestly needed to let go of my earthly attachments. And what is more of an attachment than our name? Even a person who has lost every possession—a refugee, a homeless person, a prisoner—still possesses their name. Letting go of my name was letting go of the ultimate attachment. In that moment I realized freedom.

According to the perverse values of our culture, I had been robbed of the root of my identity. And with the loss of my identity should have gone my sense of self, my self-esteem, and my sense of manhood. But suddenly I saw it quite differently. A name is only the title of the thing it identifies, and that thing continues to exist whatever you call it.

I do not exist in this world because of my name. I do not exist for anything but for my spirit, and for the actions that spring from that self. All my experiences, all my possessions, all my attachments are merely accessories to what my soul really is.

I woke up in a moment to the truth of the matter: there was only one name in the world that I could not use! There were

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millions more to choose from. In telling me what I could not do, the judge had also shown me what I could do.

The universe has an immeasurable number of ideas running through it. When you tune into the wonder of Creation—if you have faith and allow the Higher Source to work through you—you become a finely-tuned channel for ideas to flow consistently through you. If you do not hear the ideas, that does not mean they are not there. It means your spirit is tuned into some other frequency. Intuition and instinct will tell you when to take action, and what to do.

I contacted Bob Orians, a businessman I met during the days of The (Nameless) Amos Chocolate Chip Cookie Company, when he had been a franchisee. We were planning to open a cookie boutique in a prime location Bob owned in Portland, Oregon, under the trademark Uncle Nonamos, a name Leroy Wulfmeier came up with. The boutique promised to be a good proposition. We would still use Chip & Cookie, only now Uncle Nonamos would be their presenter rather than Wally Amos.

I stuck to my guns. In the face of what seemed to be a debilitating lawsuit, I kept moving forward. Although my old world and my life seemed to be crashing around me, I remained undeterred and moved ahead with my life.

Once I managed to put my foreboding aside, I calmed down mentally and left for San Clemente, California, to meet Christine and Sarah to end the summer holidays at the home of my in-laws.

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I could not allow all the legal and business complications to interfere with my family, so I set off with genuine enthusiasm for the few days ahead. There was nothing to be gained by taking my difficulties along with me.

While in San Clemente, Christine and I had planned to visit with Sister Ada, a great friend of ours who is a nun at the Carmelite monastery in San Diego. We had not seen her for ages and knew that being with her could be a healing experience. So I put all my issues aside and reveled in my personal life. This was a good time to let the Universe see to things for a while. Life must go on, and the good things about it must still be enjoyed. It reminds me of the quote, "For peace of mind, give up being general manager of the Universe." We had a great visit with Sister Ada. It always renews me to be with her and the other Carmelite sisters because we laugh, play, and they share their good spirits in heavenly song. It was a wonderful change of pace.

On August 22, during a warm Saturday morning, Christine and I took a stroll along the beach in Laguna, California. After having spent the night at a quaint hotel while Christine's mom, Ruth, watched Sarah, being alone gave us time to share our news and catch up with each other, and to really enjoy the private space together which, given our circumstances, was becoming quite rare. Time alone together is important to us. We cherish the opportunity to keep up with the changes, to communicate with each other and to nurture our relationship. Such moments enable us to cement our commitment to our love and our marriage.

Walking along, we saw the moment was over when we were approached by another man and his wife, who instantly recognized me. Although I was loving the precious time with Christine and I was needing the quiet, both of us know not to disrespect my celebrity. We struck up a conversation and took an instant liking to the couple—Mariann and Dick Dunchock. Dick noticed we were wearing Chip & Cookie T-Shirts. (I am never too far away

from my product, and I wear my business like a badge because it epitomizes what I do in life, which to me is a cardinal principle of the entrepreneurial spirit. We also had a lot of Chip & Cookie T-shirts left over.) Dick had heard me on a radio interview talking about Chip & Cookie, and he asked how we were progressing. I found myself telling him about the lawsuit and how we had to put Chip & Cookie on hold. However, I went on to describe my hopes for a future with Uncle Nonamos.

Dick laughed and said, “You have to use the name “Nonamé” (pronounced no-NAH-may). I have a very strong feeling that is the name you should use.” Dick, an inventor, and obviously bright and creative, became rather adamant. He recounted how he was called Dick Nonamé by a printer who did some work for him, because the company could not spell his last name.

My first reaction was to reject the Nonamé name, but a little voice said, “Remember how you refused to listen to the ideas of others in the past and fell flat on your face? You had better listen this time!” So we talked further, and the more we talked, the more I liked the name Nonamé. We continued to a local coffee shop and talked some more. By the time we parted, both Christine and I were visualizing Uncle Nonamé on packaging, apparel, and on everything else. We had the name of our new company: The Uncle Nonamé Cookie Company.

Fortunately for me, I listened to my inner voice. I think that a closed mind is an infertile mind, and therefore might not admit some great inspirations. We are all pieces of a cosmic puzzle, and when we are closed to the ideas and the suggestions of others, we might just be turning away the missing piece to complete our latest life puzzle. A stranger on the beach had a piece of my puzzle—the name for my new company! He also reinforced my treasured

A closed mind is an infertile mind.

belief: God is the source of everything, and brings insight and resources to you in any number of ways. There is a phrase in the Bible which says “God knows your needs before they arise.” I believe meeting Dick Dunchock confirmed that for me. On my best day I could not have orchestrated our timely meeting on Laguna Beach!

I returned home to Hawaii excited and energized, and full of great hopes for the future. At a talk I gave to one of the local service clubs in Honolulu, I publicly announced the name of the company for the very first time. Then I began outlining my plans and my mission. And while I was busy with that, I began gradually to shed my old image—that image I had carefully developed as “(Nameless) Amos” for over seventeen years.

I felt compelled to clear out that other persona to discover and reveal a new (improved!) me. The first thing to go was my trademark beard, which I had worn since 1974. I decided to shave it off in a public demonstration to launch the next stage of my evolution and career. I tried to contact Joe Moore, the number one newscaster on the NBC Hawaiian affiliate and a friend, but was unable to reach him. I thought such an important event as shaving my beard should have the largest audience possible.

It actually turned out to be an historic event without TV. On September 11, Hurricane Iniki stormed into our peaceful Hawaii, and everyone on the island rushed to secure their homes. There was no damage in my immediate area, but the chaos in other places was devastating. The television station now had more immediate items to broadcast than me shaving off my beard.

My personal transformation could not wait. I itched for a cleanshaven look. So I shaved at home, with our house boarded

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up, just after the hurricane passed. I used a cheap plastic razor—I had forgotten that in the past I used an electric razor, as it had been such a long time since I had shaved! When the memories of a hairless face returned as I looked at this new person in the mirror, I realized that it really was high time for a completely redesigned image.

September 17 was the first day I attended a public function without the covering of a beard. It was a fund-raiser for a child-care center in New York City to benefit a charity called JFKids Port. The new, improved me was quite a conversation piece. Some people did not realize I had shaved. They knew I looked different, but could not identify the change. It was obvious to some that the alteration in my appearance signified a change of direction in my life and a step towards the next stage of learning. My fellow fund-raisers were especially enthusiastic about my plans for Uncle Nonamé. Their support spurred me on.

On September 18, I flew to San Francisco for a meeting to discuss the plans for the new San Francisco Library. I was invited to participate in this important and exciting project because of my work with literacy programs. I was thrilled to help plan the launching of a project which would have value for everyone in the city. I was also due to meet with a group of literacy workers.

As I walked up the steps of the building where this meeting was to take place, my escort asked if I had heard the news. “What news?” I replied. He drew a deep breath, and his reply took the wind out of me.

“I have just been told that The (Nameless) Amos Chocolate Chip Cookie Company has been sold for 63 million dollars,” he said softly. Portola had sold the company to a Taiwanese company called Ambrosia Bakery.

I thought I would burst. The company I had visualized, established, and built up had been sold for a phenomenal figure. I would get nothing from the sale, not even a penny. I felt like a par-

ent scorned and betrayed by his child. I felt duped and abused. But I had no time to reflect on the turn of events. There was business at hand. I walked on into the meeting about the library, and from there to other meetings, expecting to have to force myself to complete my duties.

The people who greeted me at my engagements showed such genuine pleasure to have me there that my chilled emotions began to thaw again. While I basked in their warmth, I noticed something remarkable. They loved and appreciated the soul of Wally Amos the philanthropist, the volunteer who gave so much to help create a better world for all. They valued my ideas about how to promote literacy, and they were not relating to me based on my fame for making chocolate chip cookies.

In that moment I realized that the sale of (Nameless) Amos made perfect sense for my personal growth and the launch of a new and significant cycle. It was a final closure with the past that marked the opening up to success in the future. I was now free to pursue my latest goals. My life was in harmony with the rhythm of the universe, and the time had arrived for a fresh contribution. All I had to do was stay positive and focused. I was wrong to think that I did not benefit from my founding of The (Nameless) Amos Company. Tons of goodwill had been created that still belonged to me.

Another thought struck me. I had created the foundations of a company which had grown to an enormous size. I was filled with pride as I realized this. And the success of (Nameless) Amos had given me the chance to pursue philanthropic activities, which in turn brought me fulfillment, benefits and incredible friends. I had found worth and meaning in life. Establishing the company heralded a beneficial change in in my life in 1975. Now, in 1992, another great change was taking place, and it was bound to make me a happier person.

I felt such a sense of gratitude. I was not a victim, but exceptionally blessed. If I could create such success once, there was every chance in the world that I would triumph again.

And so I went forth with new gusto into the Uncle Nonamé project. Now that I had crossed emotionally from one life to the next, I could put the attachment to (Nameless) Amos behind me. I knew that part of the credit for the 63 million dollar sale would always be mine.



A Diamond Is Just a Piece of Coal Which Stuck to Its Cause

Are you ever discouraged while pursuing a goal? If you're anything like me, you not only get discouraged; it's sometimes difficult just getting from one day to the next. Reminding myself I'm that diamond stuck to its work helps me get through the rough patches.

September 19 dawned as one of those cool, clear days which make San Francisco so gorgeous. I rose early for my morning meditation and a long walk before preparing for a speaking engagement for employees of a well-known cookie company, Otis Spunkmeyer, and their children. The owners had asked me to present my philosophy and experiences at an annual banquet they held for Otis Spunkmeyer employees whose children needed extra support in school. The company provided generous funding for the effort, called the Student Motivational Program. Speaking events like this helped me earn money during a financially difficult time in my life, as well as filling my desire to help change the world. It felt good to visit a friendly cookie company, and I knew there was value in what I was doing.

The Otis Spunkmeyer Company is owned by a kind, gracious couple, Ken and Linda Rawlings. I had met Ken some months be-

eventually at least one will hit the jackpot! If you stay in the game, making adjustments now and then, and keep swinging the bat, sooner or later you'll hit the ball. Live your life to the fullest, because the goodwill and energy you project attracts opportunity to you in proportion to your effort.

I thoroughly enjoy meeting new people, forging new friendships, and sharing myself. You might dislike crowds, or parties, or strangers, and prefer to keep to yourself. You don't have to try and be the life and soul of the party if that is not your nature. But if you respect and appreciate your fellow human beings, you will usually receive the best from them in return.

I flew from Miami to Portland to spend time with my partner in the cookie boutique. We met with investors, and our plans continued their progress. The fact that things were moving was positive; the fact that they moved without any upsets was even better!

I returned home to Hawaii on September 28, and once I had unpacked and was restored and rested, I called all my friends in the media in search of some interviews to publicize the fact that I no longer belonged with The (Nameless) Cookie Company. I figured I had the right to free speech about all of this, and I felt that now I was in the throes of launching a business, it was imperative that I discuss my new ventures. No business is established without some help from the press, and the (Nameless) Amos controversy was super free publicity for Uncle Nonamé.

The most beneficial means for dealing with your issues is to often devote time and energy to the difficulties of others. Such action puts your own needs in context, and diminishes the size of your troubles. At the same time, of course, your fellow humans are helped!

In the middle of pitching my media contacts, I discovered that a dear friend of ours named Betty Payton, who had cancer, was deteriorating rapidly. Christine and I put our plans on hold so that we could be at her bedside and offer support. No soul was more deserving of all we could give.

As a family, we believe that caring for suffering people is one of the supreme responsibilities of life. Betty had given so much of herself to us and others in the past, now it was our turn to offer what we had to her. We accepted this role with all our love and devotion, putting our worldly concerns aside for a while. I was not worried about my own position. To give to others is paramount, and the universe will supply all other needs.

The most beneficial means for dealing with your issues is to devote time and energy to the difficulties of others. Such action puts your own needs in context, and diminishes the size of your troubles. At the same time, of course, your fellow humans are helped!

On October 6 I went to Phoenix, Arizona, for a speaking engagement. This time I asked for no compensation because my appearance was arranged by my friend, Heidi Ream, who owns a business organizing speakers for company occasions. I was scheduled to address the regional convention for the Association of Training and Development, and only my expenses were covered. The association could not afford an expensive speaker, but both Heidi and I felt that the booking would serve as a showcase (that means “free” exposure) for my skills and experience. The rewards of publicity are not always measurable in the short term.

I met some wonderful people—of course! I was introduced to, Keith Howe, the training director of Continental Cable Television Company who invited me to speak at their annual convention. In lieu of a fee, he agreed to produce a promotional video of my presentation at no cost to me.

After a long busy day, I went up to my hotel room, lay on my bed, ordered some food from room service and took time to relax. I had the next day all to myself. I spent the day in peace, resting, reading, and eating well. I took a long walk. It was bliss, and I really needed time to regroup.

Sometime later a check arrived for five hundred dollars from Heidi. Her association had made an unforeseen profit from the seminar, and they shared their blessing with me. I had made good contacts, had a holiday, and had been paid for it!

Upon returning home, I tackled my responsibilities with reinforced energy. My plans were to open the boutique in Portland the following April. One associate suggested I market Uncle Nonamé in Hawaii as well. It dawned on me that The Uncle Nonamé Cookie Company represented a perfect progression from the doomed Chip & Cookie project.

Once I realized that Uncle Nonamé had greater potential than just a cookie boutique in Portland, I spent some time in meditation. I wanted to discipline and focus my mind in an effort to clarify exactly what it was that I wanted, what I didn't want, and which was the best way for Uncle Nonamé to proceed. I reestablished my focus on goals, rather than on the obstacles I would encounter on my journey to them. Through prayer and meditation, my vision began to flow and develop. Once I had carefully considered all the possibilities in front of me with a mind free of all other issues, I made a watershed decision.

We would not open the boutique in Portland. It was costly and complicated. It was a retail venture with all the attendant details and risk. It required a lot of up-front investment, and the return would be some time coming. And what I really wanted to do was to simply sell cookies! I didn't need to repeat the retail-first strategy that had characterized my approach to The (Nameless) Amos Company. I could go straight into the wholesale distribu-

tion that had finally rescued (Nameless) Amos from the doldrums.

I called up my partner Bob Orians and put the Portland project on hold. I established the goal of making, marketing and selling Uncle Nonamé cookies in Hawaii by Christmas—just two months away! I wanted to see thousands of bags of cookies in retail stores. And I had to accomplish this despite imminent trips to various cities on the mainland.



Power Is in Being, Not in Doing

Shifting my perspective from a boutique to a wholesale operation meant less components to deal with and perhaps less risk also. However, there was still a lot of work to be done and I felt certain I would be able to get the job done.

I received a call from Jeff van Ness, manager of one of the local Costco warehouse stores. Jeff, just returned from a managers' meeting on the mainland, told me that Costco had undertaken to support the Cities in Schools project, of which I was a member of the board in Hawaii. The Hawaii program was ready to expand. Costco had committed to the program in Seattle, where the firm was based. Costco now planned to support Cities in Schools in other communities too.

I met with Jeff and his associate, Ron Hanstein, another Costco manager, at the offices of Don Anderson, president of the YMCA. Cities in Schools operates under the umbrella of the YMCA, so I invited Don to attend the meeting. We had a very encouraging and interesting meeting and agreed to visit the school site to see the program in action.

As I reflect on that original meeting it confirms once again that you get what you give. During our visit to the school I suggested

to Jeff and Ron that one way Costco might support Cities in Schools in Hawaii would be to sell Uncle Nonamé cookies and I would make a donation from each sale to Cities in Schools. In December 1992 we began selling cookies to Costco.

Costco also featured me on the cover of their monthly magazine, *The Costco Connection*. The story carried the news that The Uncle Nonamé Cookie Company had promised a percentage of its sales to Cities in Schools. My reward was that I received great publicity for my developing business, and the organization I served gained increased public awareness. Later that same month, I helped open a new literacy center in Kona, Hawaii. Despite the legal battle with (Nameless) Amos, uncertainty over the future of my business, and the bank's continued demands for my house, I still found myself able to enjoy and participate in these milestone events.

The positive rewards you receive from living your life using the principles of truth can be viewed as checkpoints along the journey. Just as a pilot has checkpoints to keep him or her on course, we have checkpoints in our journey to help keep us on course. Commitment and giving are definitely two of the checkpoints along the route of life. Rather than focusing on what I needed to be doing, I was being the best person I could be.

People often tell me they will get involved with charities as soon as they have the time or the spare cash. My response is always this: "Do it now!" The reward for your effort is as certain as a well aimed arrow hitting its target.

People often tell me they will get involved with charities as soon as they have the time or spare cash. My response is always this: "Do it now!" The reward for your effort is as certain as a well aimed arrow hitting its target.

Later that month, Christine and I attended a prestigious awards ceremony—the Hero Awards, hosted by Cheeseborough Ponds—to benefit the Brothers and Sisters organization, a group which benefits disadvantaged children. It was a great honor for me to receive an award with Christine at my side. Out of eight different categories, I tied for the business prize with Lee Iaccoca, chairman of the Chrysler corporation. I felt that I was being commended for a lifelong mission, and I was honored that others perceived my story as important.

Not only was the recognition a pleasure, but the extensive publicity generated by the event served me wonderfully also! The splendid program, distributed to hundreds of movers and shakers at the awards dinner, featured a free advertisement for Uncle Nonamé. Our new logo made its debut. The readers of *Parade* and *People* magazines voted for the winners, and when the final list was announced, my name was splashed everywhere. It was comforting to know that Wally Amos was still recognized by the press and the public.

As I relished the sumptuous suite provided by the awards ceremony at the Waldorf Astoria, I looked back on my life. In 1961 I had quit an eighty-five dollar a week job at Saks Fifth Avenue without any idea where my next paycheck would come from. My wife and I had a toddler, and she was pregnant with the next one. But I intuitively knew that life had more to offer me than I had experienced at Saks. My job at William Morris turned out to be the most exciting opportunity I had ever received up till then. I had faith in my value and talents, and now I have experienced enough to know for sure that life is never what it appears to be; it is always more.

My certainty helped me push aside all the negative thoughts which said I could fail that entered my mind. I replaced those immobilizing ideas with joy and optimism, for as long as I believe in

the goodness of God and my personal power, my life always turns out well.

I was now armed with an even tastier cookie and a greater commitment to serving others than ever before. My love for cookies and people gave me a head start with Uncle Nonamé. People knew they could expect integrity and quality from me, because that is what they had gotten in the past. I reject the old saying “The end justifies the means.” Rather I say, “The means creates the end—and the end will be great if the means is love.”

To top it all, I was asked to join the nominating committee for the Hero Awards of 1993, and I found myself pledging that I would donate a bag of Uncle Nonamé Cookies to every table at the forthcoming banquet. I could not believe the national media coverage I received from that simple commitment.

The Uncle Nonamé Cookie Company was just a few weeks old, yet word was spreading far and wide. Uncle Nonamé was developing a life of its own—it was a project just waiting to happen.

Once again, life was giving more than we had at first perceived! If I ever needed a power surge to restructure my life, that New York trip was it. I left the city full of anticipation for the new chapter in my life.

*“The means creates the end—
and the end will be great if the means is love.”*



If You Believe It You Will Have It— Doubt Is Just Another Experience on the Path to Faith

I had set my target of having Uncle Nonamé cookies in the stores by Christmas. It was now the end of October, and I had to move fast. Once home in Hawaii, I spent a few days scouting around for a bakery to produce my new line. I found Tommy Madeiros, the proprietor of a successful plate lunch and catering business. Since the preparation and sale of plate lunches is over by 1:00 P.M. every day, his kitchens were free for the remainder of the afternoon. I got Tommy's name from a local baker who assured me that Tommy and I would work well together.

On the morning of November 1, Tommy came over to my house for coffee and cookies, followed by a fine time in the kitchen as I taught him my techniques for making great-tasting cookies. The more time I spent with him, the more inspired I became to share all I knew. I was convinced I could trust him, and I felt sure we would continue with a good business relationship.

I was soon off to Denver, Colorado, for the annual conference of Literacy Volunteers of America. I have been the national spokesperson for LVA since 1979, and have attended every conference at my own expense, even during the leanest years. I returned home the second week of November, just in time to kick

off another reading program in Hawaii. It is called “Read to Me,” and its agenda is to encourage parents, friends and relatives to read to children for at least ten minutes a day. The event was sponsored by the Governors’ Council for Literacy and the statewide Rotary Clubs. Since then, Rotary Clubs in other cities have also launched Read to Me programs.

On November 9, I went to visit Tommy Madeiros and found that he had already installed two new baking ovens in his kitchen! He told me the ovens he used every day were for chicken and meat, and he figured we would not get very far with Chicken Chip Cookies! His enthusiasm for our working together was abundant. We had not formalized a signed agreement, yet Tommy was forging right ahead. I was bowled over by his dedication and spirit, so we agreed then and there to enter into a partnership. We also took a serious vow to be selling cookies no later than December 1, 1992.

I spent the rest of that week at an institution called Olomana, a prison for delinquent children. I listened to the kids’ stories—sometimes the simple act of lending an ear is enough to help someone through their suffering. I gave all the children a copy of my book *The Power in You*, and encouraged them to visualize their dreams for the future and share their ideas with me.

Despite my hectic schedule, visiting with those kids was necessary spiritual nourishment for me. The stress in my life was exhausting and I found myself becoming irritable at inappropriate moments. I was tired out by the tests of the year which sometimes threatened my defenses against negativity. The trip to Olomana lifted my spirits and gave me the energy to stay the course. The kids I befriended said they enjoyed our time also, as I showed them it was possible for anyone to make a go of life. They understood that it was not always easy, but they came to believe that good fortune was not out of the question for them. If I am able to

reach just one child and inspire him or her, then I will have done my part.

Many children get in trouble because of depression over their difficult circumstances. The majority of delinquents have no one to guide and befriend them on their path towards adulthood. So many children are born into tragedy, and as they absorb the adversity of their environment, they act out in response to their helplessness and confusion. Yet all children and all people are children of God, and by seeing this in them we help them see it in themselves.

On November 11, Steven Loui, a fellow Cities in Schools board member and local businessman, called me about doing a fund-raiser for Cities in Schools, adding that he wanted to incorporate Uncle Nonamé cookies into the promotion. He outlined his proposal and then inquired if I was interested in his idea. Of course I was interested!

With Steven and many others relating to me not as the founder of (Nameless) Amos but as the proprietor of Uncle Nonamé, I realized I had become a new Wally with a remodeled life. So I arranged for a photo shoot—without my beard—to mark the occasion. I cut my hair short, bought new glasses, Christine hung a colorful flower lei around my neck, and Presto! In every way I felt and looked different from the old Wally Amos. We wanted to capture my renaissance, my change of direction, and my delight with the transformation. My soul had shifted gears, and it was time for the new me to be introduced to the public.

I enjoy almost all aspects of the cookie business (of course I delight in baking and eating!), but an especially fun part is working

*All children and all people are
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with the designer to create the overall image of a particular project. I spent a day with my designer, Dale Vermeer, reviewing concepts and designs, and in that session we came up with a final decision for the graphics. One of our goals was to have the graphics reflect the friendliness of Hawaii. We did that by incorporating the phrase “Baked With Aloha” and adding the image of palm trees, which Christine designed.

Time was so short that we didn’t have the six- to eight-week lead time it normally requires to get bags printed. Instead, we purchased blank bags for the cookies. Even this “problem” turned into a fortuitous move, since the best bags available were in Christmas colors—red and green. We printed separate labels for the back and the front. The front featured our logo, and the back told the legend of Uncle Nonamé. I wrote it with a friend, Cliff Marsh. I shared my ideas about how I saw the Uncle Nonamé concept, and together we came up with the following story:

Uncle Nonamé was an elderly Hawaiian gentleman with much wisdom, a quick wit, a love of life and a smile that could light up a castle. His love of life was matched only by his love for cookies, and he was often seen eating large quantities with his favorite beverage, lemonade.

Everyone called him Uncle, but his legal name was Soma until the powers that be took it away from him. They said it was no longer his to use. It angered him at first, but then it occurred to him that he was spirit and could not be defined or confined by a name. So he decided to call himself Nonamé. Uncle Nonamé.

It had been his dream to have a permanent connection with cookies. The dream has now been fulfilled through the creation of The Uncle Nonamé Cookie Company. So, enjoy these delicious homestyle cookies, made with love, by his nieces and nephews at The Uncle Nonamé Cookie Company. He taught us how to turn lemons into lemonade.

As all the elements of the enterprise came together, Uncle Nonamé truly came alive for me. The next day, at a talk for an exchange club, I spoke of my journey, both financial and spiritual. My imagination flashed on the green and red bags being filled at the bakery and I understood that an unshakable faith in the future was the key to my success.

My next two appointments were in Ohio, one for a lecture in Columbus to an educational group and the other to spend a few days at the Consolidated Biscuit Company in McComb, Ohio. Jim Appold, the president of Consolidated, had met a friend of mine on a plane trip and after hearing my story wanted to meet me. I discovered that he was an hour away from Columbus, and he invited me to visit his bakery.

Jim's operation was extremely impressive. In addition to the bakery in McComb, he had facilities in Missouri and Kentucky, as well. I shared ideas and my love of the cookie business with one of the key players in the game. Although we might never do business together, I had made a new friend. Uncle Nonamé had not sold a single cookie, and I was far from being out the woods financially or legally, but I felt that I had arrived at another checkpoint that showed me quite clearly I was on the right track.

On my return from Ohio, still glowing from the heart-warming encounter with the folks in McComb, I stopped in Los Angeles to speak at O. C. Smith's church near the Los Angeles Airport. O. C. is a Religious Science minister and a top recording artist best known for his hit "Little Green Apples." He is also a good friend. I arrived armed with a batch of cookies I had made with the staff of the Consolidated Biscuit Company. As I handed around treats to the congregation and they tasted my offerings, their faces broke into beams of delight. This was the taste they knew!

I had been concerned that, because I could not make every cookie by hand, I might lose the homemade taste and quality. But

now I had proof that the recipe was excellent enough to be used successfully by a large industrial bakery.

On November 27, Uncle Nonamé cookies made their first official appearance at a fund-raising dinner for an organization called "Adult Friends for Youth," a dropout prevention program. This program links an adult volunteer with a child. It offers support to kids who have dropped out or who are on the verge of dropping out. I rushed around madly, making sure every table featured a bag of Uncle Nonamé cookies. I played the role of auctioneer, auctioning off the prize of a pound of cookies per month for a year! The winner was a father, who opted to claim his prize in June, 1993, for the auspicious occasion of his son's graduation.

Every Christmas, the Salvation Army invites local celebrities to be bellringers for an hour in a big shopping mall to raise funds. On the morning of November 28, I was one of the bell ringers for the annual collection campaign. Every person who put cash in my pot got a cookie. This caused some hilarity, and donations were substantial!

My conviction that every situation can truly serve everyone was proved once again. The more I gave, the more I received. The Salvation Army increased their resources, I introduced thousands of people to Uncle Nonamé cookies, and I cemented my reputation for goodwill and enthusiasm.

That night, under a royal blue sky, Christine and I attended the fiftieth wedding anniversary of our friends Bob and Belle Anderson. My gift to them? What else? A batch of cookies. The activity and sense of community served to maintain my good spirits; so much was going on that I had little time to worry about my debts and the lawsuit. All I knew was that I was generating

*Life is made rich through our relationships,
not through money.*

customers, new options and solutions. Life is made rich through our relationships, not through money.

The more time I spend in service to my world, the more I establish a base for my own welfare. I do not deny the ups and downs in my life, nor do I ignore my responsibilities. So long as I persevere with a positive, creative mentality and consider the consequences of all my actions, I will undoubtedly triumph. I am not deluded. I have simply experienced so much in my life that reinforces this truth.

Two days before December 1—our self-imposed deadline for having cookies out there and selling—I made the first sales at Windwood Unity Church, my own congregation. The cookies were a hit! We sold out of the sixty one-pound bags of Pecan Nut Chocolate Chip Cookies we had brought along. Here was another great sign. Clearly it would be a very merry Christmas.



Keep Your Eyes On Your Dreams

The holiday season plunged into full swing. On December 1, my accountant, Paul Asano, drew up the first set of books for Uncle Nonamé, and my attorney, George Brandt, drew up the documents which would make us official. Our first income was three thousand dollars. I rushed to the bank, and with a flourish I opened a new business account.

The following Sunday Christine, Sarah and I rose early to attend church with a fresh batch of cookies to sell. My friend Spencer Johnson, co-author of the bestselling book, *The One Minute Manager*, was the guest speaker, so I was expecting a large turnout and brisk cookie sales. Cookie sales were excellent and Spencer's talk, based on his inspirational book, *The Precious Present*, was perfect for the holiday season.

After the service we returned to our house for lunch with Spencer and his family. We settled in for a friendly and casual Sunday afternoon. Suddenly the phone rang. It was Janet Morse, Executive Director of Hawaii Literacy, reminding me that I was the guest speaker at the annual Literacy Luncheon, which had just started in Waikiki.

I usually takes thirty to forty minutes to get to Waikiki. I made it in twenty and arrived just as the group was finishing dessert. I was able to assist them by sharing several bags of cookies I had brought. All was forgiven and I went on to give a talk that was acceptable to all.

On Monday Costco's first order arrived. It was for over five hundred one pound bags. Christine, Sarah and I danced around with the order in absolute delight. The Uncle Nonamé dream was becoming real. We had cookies, a business plan, and a whopping great order from a major conglomerate. What could be better?

During December and January I delivered cookies to Costco a pallet at a time in the back of my multi-hued Mazda pickup truck. I was so busy I didn't have time to think of the lawsuit, being in debt or anything else. Although (Nameless) Amos did attempt to stop me by serving my customers with subpoenas, no one was frightened away and several customers increased their orders.

We reached our first goal. Uncle Nonamé cookies were available to the public by Christmas, 1992. I kept that one objective in sight, stepped over all obstacles, and hit the target. Christine and I, with the help of firm friends and honest associates, managed to launch a new business in the face of a court injunction and a lack of funds. My second round in the cookie game opened in spite of every obstruction known to commerce.

Perhaps I was put through this test because I had lost my sense of self when I lost The (Nameless) Amos Cookie Company. Each of us is born with free will, and we choose for ourselves the nature and course of our lives, either passively or actively. I realized that it was contingent on me to take responsibility for the trauma that had occurred so far, and for what would eventually transpire through the court case. I felt that I needed to examine myself afresh, and rebuild my self-esteem. To accomplish this, I spent almost an hour every morning in meditation.

In this time of prayer and contemplation, I laid claim once again to my particular talents. I reminded myself of myself, and I understood that my outside world was only reflecting my image within. I went within to empower myself to find value and truth for myself and my world.

During the early days of December, holiday advertising becomes a frenzy as advertisers compete to catch the attention of customers. Ad rates are at their most expensive. Yet I received an incredible boost in the form of a series of radio spots on CNN radio, compliments of my friend Tony Cassera. He owns the station and arranged for around two thousand dollars worth of radio time for Uncle Nonamé in exchange for plenty of cookies for the CNN staff and clients. They must have enjoyed them, since the cookies did not last very long. Because I was a new company in need of high visibility, I also bought a considerable amount of advertising on television and on other radio stations. I remember one TV ad that showed me from the neck down. Since it was not clear if I could use my likeness, I chose to show my body from the neck to the waist wearing an Uncle Nonamé T-shirt. It was *very* effective.

I am liberal with my donations of cookies. I give in the name of goodwill, of course, but also for marketing purposes. Every Uncle Nonamé cookie I give to another person seeds the sale of many more cookies. If a person has tasted my cookies once, they need little persuasion to taste them again. It would not be long before Uncle Nonamé bags began moving out of Costco and into the

I took hold of my heartache and channeled it into a constructive direction. I made the challenges work for me. I could have done none of this without a baseline of love, faith, commitment, integrity and a natural enthusiasm for life and the future.

ladders of Hawaii. My focus was not on why or if I would succeed, but on how.

On December 9, on my way to a literacy luncheon at the Governor's mansion (a meal which included, of course, free Uncle Nonamé cookies for all), I heard the first radio spot on CNN. My campaign was falling into place like pieces of a puzzle. I felt guided by my higher power. I could hardly believe it. Not in my wildest dreams could a disaster such as the loss of my name have been the cause of something as wonderful as this. I felt that God had hit me over the head just to get me to notice a better path.

The day after I wrapped up a training video for Cities in Schools, Christine, Sarah and I attended a rumble sale at the Hanahaouli School, which Sarah attended, to sell cookies, with a portion of the proceeds going to the school. It was amazing to see how many bags passed through our hands. It seemed like the word was beginning to spread. Could there be a groundswell of interest in Uncle Nonamé? Apparently an increasing number of cookie lovers were eager to taste my new line.

I was happy, fulfilled, and in love with my life and existence. But as great as I felt, I was still compelled to go that extra mile. When I decide to do something, I throw my soul into it. The more positive I feel, the more energetic I am, and the more I am able to achieve for myself and others.

The pain and devastation of the court case that threatened to drown me financially and spiritually became the spark which lit the fire of my enterprise. I took hold of my heartache and channeled it into a constructive direction. I made the challenges work for me. I could have done none of this without a baseline of love, faith, commitment, integrity and a natural enthusiasm for life and the future.

I donated a bag of cookies for each table at a dinner for another charity called Adult Friends of Youth. Gene Axelrod, president of The Honolulu Athletic Club, was sitting at my table. He

could not stop eating the cookies. He ate our bag and several bags from other tables. Before the evening was over he had ordered ninety-six bags to give as gifts to his employees and friends. I agreed to stop by the club on the evening of their Christmas party and autograph the bags.

Everyone loves a parade and nowhere are parades more fun than in Hawaii. On December 20th I took part in the Aloha Bowl Parade, an annual event to help kick off the college bowl football game. My brightly-colored pickup truck, which Christine had painted, was packed with a throng of happy youngsters from the Read to Me program, clutching long ribbons and helium balloons while blowing on kazoos for all they were worth! I stood at the helm and told silly jokes to the crowd. Those kids giggled so hard that the sound of the kazoos turned into an earsore! While having buckets of fun, we spread the word about Uncle Nonamé cookies and the Read To Me project.

Our family had a wonderful and loving Christmas. I spent much of that day in meditation, filled with gratitude for my family, my friends, my business, and the means to donate time and resources to the people around me. I even gave thanks for the lawsuit which had kicked me on to new heights and to Uncle Nonamé.

Throughout the day, I visualized clusters of happy families sharing and enjoying chocolate chip cookies! That year of 1992 had started off looking like it would be the worst year of my life, yet it had been full of joy and promise.

I also gave thanks for my deepened understanding of faith. I had learned anew that faith means trusting a plan higher than your own. I gave thanks for crises: Crises are signs that there is a better plan. Having faith in a divine plan and acknowledging that there are no facts on the future serves to liberate your mind and soul. We have limitless potential, but our vision is limited. Just because you cannot see the good that is formulating in your life does

not mean that no good is happening. On the contrary. If you submit to the wisdom of your Higher Power, you will receive positive results beyond your wildest dreams.

As I celebrated the festive season, I realized that the lawsuit was a moot point. Although (Nameless) Amos's intention was to stop me from making and selling cookies, they did not stop me at all. I was traveling on God's path, not theirs. Their blow to my livelihood became a springboard for a fantastic new enterprise and for an opportunity to rediscover myself as an evolving human being.

There is always a way to make victory out of adversity so long as one keeps focused on answers and solutions. It is the process that is important, and whatever the crisis, the key to recovery (and greater reward) is a mind willing to grow through the experience, rather than submitting to it.

I never complain, criticize or condemn, however horrific a situation may seem. If your mind is critical it destroys your life force by labeling difficulties as immovable obstacles. Rather, let your mind be learning and searching and believing in the perfectability of things, because if you allow it, it will create beauty. By seeking to understand and improve upon your world, you will come to live happily and substantially.

The willingness to grow through one's problems keeps you on the journey toward greatness and happiness. We evolve out of crisis more often than happiness, yet the pain brought by change does not have to be devastating. If we use our problems as stepping-stones toward greater self-knowledge, we can establish new and healthy patterns of behavior. My travails have taught me

They say that the lotus flower grows best in the dirtiest water. Therefore I never complain, criticize or condemn, however horrific a situation may seem.

new lessons about faith, charity, compassion, meditation, positive thinking, value-creating action and the power within. And I am still in the classroom!



The Proof of the Cookie Is All in the Eating

In August of 1993, The (Nameless) Amos Company made serious overtures to end our battle. A settlement conference was set up in San Francisco with a judge presiding over our case. Patrick Freydl represented me at the hearing while I promoted my cookies at the Costco warehouse store in Fresno, California. My energy was focused on the present, not on the past. My sole agenda was to establish Uncle Nonamé. Patrick's priority was to represent my interests in the (Nameless) Amos affair.

The first conference was inconclusive, and a second one followed shortly thereafter. After a week's vacation in San Clemente, I set off for San Francisco in excellent spirits. We were drawing close to a settlement, and settle we did.

The outline of the arrangement gave both of us what we wanted. The (Nameless) Amos Company owns the trademark rights to the name "Wally Amos" for any business that involves food. I own the name Wally Amos for any non-food endeavor. I also own the rights of publicity to the name "Wally Amos," so I can utilize my name, likeness and reputation to market my cookies. In effect, I can continue with the Chip & Cookie project, although obviously Uncle Nonamé is what's uppermost for me right now. I can

open a cookie store, and Christine and I can continue developing ideas for non-food Chip & Cookie merchandise such as books, ceramics, gift items and clothing. I can sell Uncle Nonamé cookies with freedom, and I can promote all that I create with the use of my birthright: my name Wally Amos.

The documents of agreement were mailed to me for signature on October 25, in New York, where I was attending the 1993 Hero Awards. A year had passed since I first pledged to launch Uncle Nonamé before the next awards banquet. It was a fitting celebration. I have everything I need to continue unhindered in the path of my bliss. In fact, I can say I am better off now than when I started. Life is never what it seems; it is always more!

As 1993 drew to a close, and I spent the last few weeks of it at home with my family, I found the time to reflect on the period behind me. It had been a year since I made the first sales of Uncle Nonamé cookies. As the second holiday season of my new business swung into gear, I found that I had passed another milestone: not only was I successfully selling my cookies in Hawaii, but they were also for sale on the mainland.

We introduced the line into Costco warehouses on the continental United States in mid-1993. Our first launch was in Anchorage, Alaska. I decided to start at the top and then fan out and across the U.S. I felt like the Pied Piper of chocolate chip cookies leading the way with a publicity and media campaign! Uncle Nonamé bags filled the aisles at Costco, leaving a splash of color behind me. I spent much of 1993 marketing the cookies and making personal appearances at Costco warehouses throughout the country.

It was so exciting! It was like old times. My enthusiasm for chocolate chip cookies transformed into a burst of good feeling which inspired those around me. Not only was I back in the business I helped create, but I now had a higher perspective. Time and experience had left me with a spiritual awareness that gave me an

edge. I knew what I was doing now. I had built a core of self-confidence and I was savvy enough to avoid old mistakes. "This time," I pledged to myself, "I'll do the job even better!"

I am an enthusiastic salesman and the public knows me as a happy-go-lucky and fun-loving person. When I started (Nameless) Amos, I hammed it up out of instinct, and people were attracted to me by chance, not by calculation on my part. Now that I have a better developed sense of psychology, spirituality and business wisdom, I have become more conscious and careful with my promotional efforts. I have discovered how to be more effective: I am centered rather than being impulsive and scattered.

As I have matured, I have become keenly aware of my power to influence people and how to use that gift conscientiously. My love for the product comes from deep in my heart and it rubs off on others. And I am moving exuberantly toward my next goal. By Christmas of 1994, I expect to see the brightly-colored Uncle Nonamé bags in all major markets.

I say this is my goal with total conviction, but I also say that my life and this mission is part of a journey; my prize is the road, not the goals. The good things are found in life's lessons.

A writer from *Parade* magazine recently asked me to outline the principles that helped me overcome my crisis. His request gave me the opportunity to meditate upon and clarify the qualities that pulled me through. They were:

1. I did not become part of the problem.

I was faced with an extremely unpleasant situation, but I did not internalize the dispute and defend myself in a combative manner. I let my attorney handle the legal details and I directed my attention towards starting Uncle Nonamé. I undertook to concentrate on the worthwhile things in my life

The good things are found in life's lessons.

and turned over the lawsuit to a trustworthy professional. In short, I focused on answers and solutions.

Reverend Robert Schuller speaks of the three fundamental ingredients for certain success: Faith, Focus and Follow-Through. I like to add an extension to his idea: Faith, Focus and Follow-Through equals Fulfillment!

I am sure that if I did not have faith, the lawsuit would not have been resolved in my favor. Earl Nightingale once said that we become what we think about. So long as I believed in a positive outcome, victory was certain.

I focused on and identified my role in it all. I centered myself and decided on how I could conduct myself in the most valuable manner. By concentrating on my purpose, I realized that developing Uncle Nonamé was my mission and I should do nothing else but work towards that. This provided the framework for me to move into my future.

I followed through by doing something for the Uncle Nonamé project every single day. Every morning I came up with something to get me just a little bit closer to achieving my goal. Fulfillment is a constant experience for me. There is an internal peace which comes from giving your all and looking at life from a positive angle.

2. I accepted and acknowledged the reality of my situation.

Nothing could change the facts as they were on that fatal day in Los Angeles. Wishing the crisis away would not help. Getting angry and yelling would not help. Denying that this was a problem would make it worse. Taking it out on my loved ones would only add to my problems. I had to say to myself, "This is the way it is, and the course of events now depends entirely on me. I can turn this lemon into lemonade, or I can let it sour my whole life." I could only deal with my problem once I separated my emotions from the facts. Once I

did that, I gained control of my situation and could make the necessary moves to resolve it.

3. I remained committed to creating a new life for myself.

Even through the most dark and depressing parts of this story, even when I privately thought things could not be worse, I still woke up each morning determined to stay the course for as long as it lasted. I hardly had any choice. I had to redeem myself and take care of my family, so I had to keep my heart and my mind completely on track. I never gave up—I had to swim towards solutions or sink and lose everything.

4. I allowed the experience to open me up to what I needed to learn.

Every situation is an education. This is one of my biggest and most beneficial lessons to date. Before the (Nameless) Amos suit, I had a habit of spending a lot of energy explaining myself and my course of action to other people. I was not wise or secure enough to hear their ideas. I guess I wanted to right instead of happy.

I learned through this lawsuit that if you open your mind to the voices of others, you will open your life to receiving your good. They say that there is a reason why God gave us two ears and one mouth—we should listen twice as much as we speak! I enhance my chances for growth and achievement as I learn to overcome my ego.

5. I maintained a positive mental attitude.

A positive mental attitude is the basis of my philosophy of life. Positive people have positive effects on the world around them. W. Clement Stone says that the ultimate secret of suc-

*I could only deal with my problem once I separated
my emotions from the facts.*

cess is to keep your mind on the things you want, and off the things that you do not want. It is as simple as that. Regardless of the appearance of a situation, there is always good to be found there. I make sure I seek out the beauty and wisdom in everything, and believe it or not, it is always there to be found.

6. I held on to my faith.

The noted Princeton professor Cornel West has an astute way of describing strong faith. He says, “Faith is stepping out onto nothing and landing on something.” When we have faith, we reinforce our subconscious to make our lives move forward and flourish. We create our own circumstances, and our subconscious merely reproduces in our environment what we conjure up in our minds. Vitality, luck, love—everything comes to us as we draw such qualities out of ourselves.

7. I consciously practiced living in the present.

It always helps me to be mindful and aware of each moment so that I can make the best use of the time I have. If I wasted my energy on thinking what could have gone wrong with the lawsuit, and how it could have turned out, I would have inhibited my ability to live each day effectively. If you live in the moment, you will realize that you have everything you need to deal with your life. The past cannot be changed nor the future predicted, but each moment in the present is a building block to creating a happy existence. I take care not to reflect on the past or project into the future—rather I believe it is the present that counts. “Do it now!” is my motto.

8. I kept my sense of enthusiasm alive and active.

Enthusiasm creates joy. Joy creates more joy. Maintaining a joyful outlook and keeping a high level of enthusiasm can sometimes be difficult, but the more you do it, the easier it gets. The rewards always reflect what you invest.

9. I engaged in acts of selflessness.

Throughout the nineteen months of the lawsuit, I still made time for my charitable and non-profit activities. Even if it is the last thing I am able to do, I will still devote myself to giving. I have been blessed with benefits both immeasurable and incredible. Not only did I receive emotional and spiritual support from my literacy and dropout prevention work, but I also ensured the success of my business by establishing myself in the heart of a community of people who came to my aid when I needed them.

10. I aimed at responsibility, honesty and integrity at all times.

In essence, we are all part of the whole, and however we act determines what we receive. There is a law of cause and effect, and what we express comes back to us faithfully. I want the very best for myself, my family, society and this world. I realize that I can set my sights on that dream only if I am prepared to live my life in an honorable fashion with every action I take.

So I take care to follow these principles. I give the best of myself, and I get the best in return.

Lemonade, anyone?



Epilogue

What is it in me that enabled me to start a new company, write a book about being sued while in the midst of being sued, and withstand the whole ordeal of litigation of ownership of my name and likeness, all with my positive mental attitude intact? What is it in any of us that enables us to overcome and grow through the daily challenges of our lives?

Well, I won't even begin to speak for you or the millions of others, but as for me, I am more convinced now than ever before that it is the strong spiritual foundation that undergirds every decision of my life. It is a combination of meditation and prayer that gives me a peace that truly does pass all understanding. It is what Marilyn Ferguson called "direct knowing" in her book, *The Aquarian Conspiracy*. I know the end result will not necessarily be what I want, but it will always be exactly what I need and I can live with that.

Let me leave you with several prayers that I've said every morning for over two years. They are at the core of my ability to turn lemons into lemonade.

"There is no challenge to a teacher of God. Challenge implies doubt, and the trust on which God's teachers rest secure makes

doubt impossible. Therefore, you can only succeed. You can only succeed because you never do your will alone." (*A Course in Miracles: Manual for Teachers*, 2nd edition, page 12.)

"Father, you lead me and know that which I do not know. And yet, you would not keep from me that which you would have me learn. And so, I trust you to communicate to me all that you know for me." (This is a compilation of several ideas confirming that God is my source.)

"Father, I am peaceful, I am fearless. All things pass away. God never changes. Patience obtains all things. I will want for nothing if I have God in my heart and soul. God alone is enough." (This last prayer was assembled by me from thoughts shared with me by my friend, Sister Ada.)

By the way, if you are uncomfortable with the words "Father" or "God," substitute another word that is appropriate for you. It's the feeling that counts, not the words.

Thanks for reading my book. I hope the information you've read will help you turn some of your lemons into lemonade.

Aloha,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Wally Amos". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Wally Amos



Uncle Nonamé's Hawaiian Lemonade Recipe

1/2 CUP FRESH LEMON JUICE

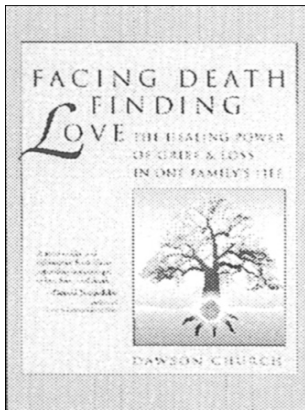
3/4 CUP SUGAR

1 1/2 QTS WATER

2 TBS PINEAPPLE JUICE

LEMONADE, LIKE EVERYTHING
YOU TOUCH, REFLECTS YOUR
PERSONALITY AND ATTITUDE.
SO, ADD A GENEROUS HELP-
ING OF YOURSELF TO THE
ABOVE, MIX THOROUGHLY IN
A LARGE PITCHER, CHILL AND
SERVE WITH PLENTY OF ICE.
YOU WILL THEN BE DRINKING
YOUR LEMONADE.

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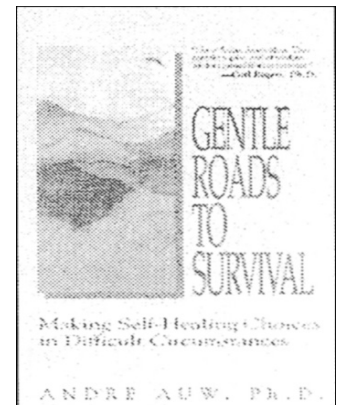
by *Dawson Church*

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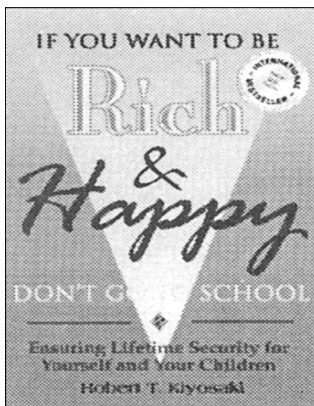
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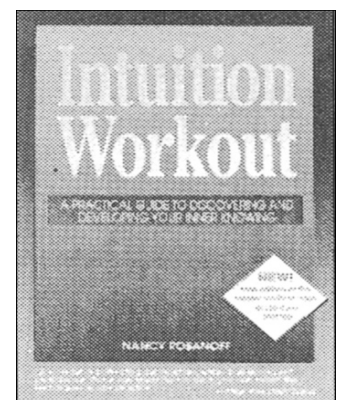
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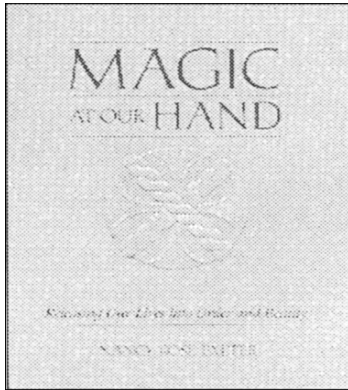
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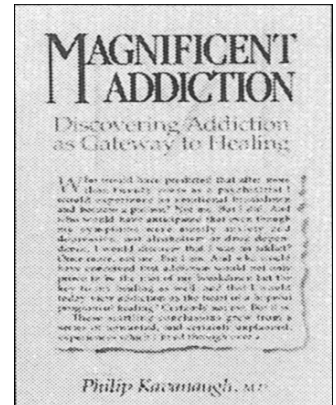
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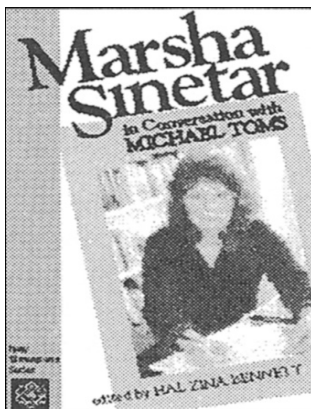
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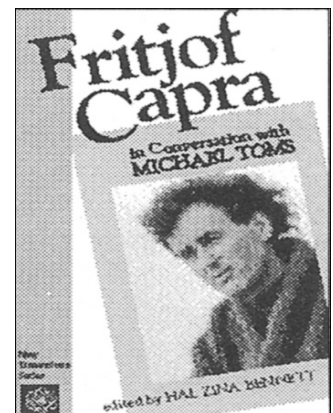


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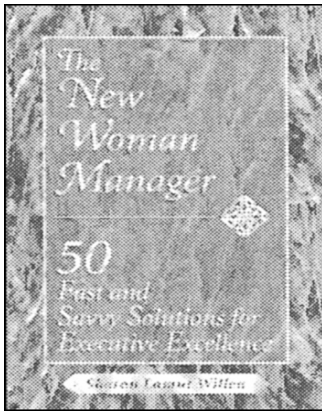
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by Sharon Willen

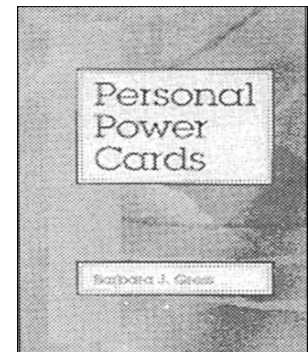
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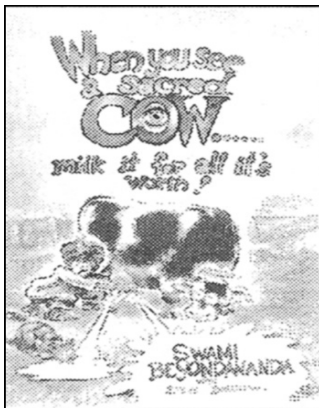
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by Swami Beyondananda, with Steve Bhaerman

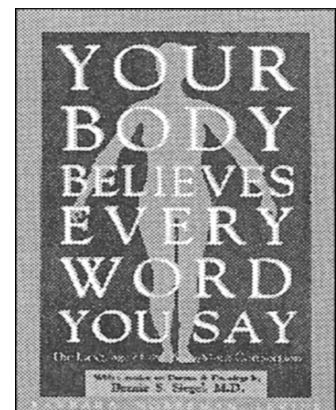
What do you get when you cross Groucho with Gandhi? Why, Swami Beyondananda, of course. Swami, the altered ego of writer/comedian Steve Bhaerman, has delighted millions of grossly co-dependent fans with his off-the-wall monthly advice column, "Ask the Swami," and is the winner of the prestigious 1992 Punster of the Year Award. ("This is understandable," say the Swami; "after all, I studied in the Punjab.")

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Wally Amos shows us how to find the seeds of greatness in adversity. He is brilliant, inspirational and insightful. I hope everyone reads his words of wisdom.

—**Deepak Chopra, M.D.**

Author of *Ageless Body, Timeless Mind*

This is a book about practical spirituality and has the authenticity of Wally truly walking his talk. It will most certainly uplift your spirit, put air in your tires, wind under your wings, joy in your heart, and a smile on your face. It is a wonderful book about hope, empowering yourself, turning your life over to God, and believing that nothing is impossible.

—**Jerry Jampolsky, M.D.**

Author of *Love Is Letting Go of Fear*

In his own unique style, Wally Amos sends a message to us all in *Man with No Name*, that problems can become opportunities if you do something about them.

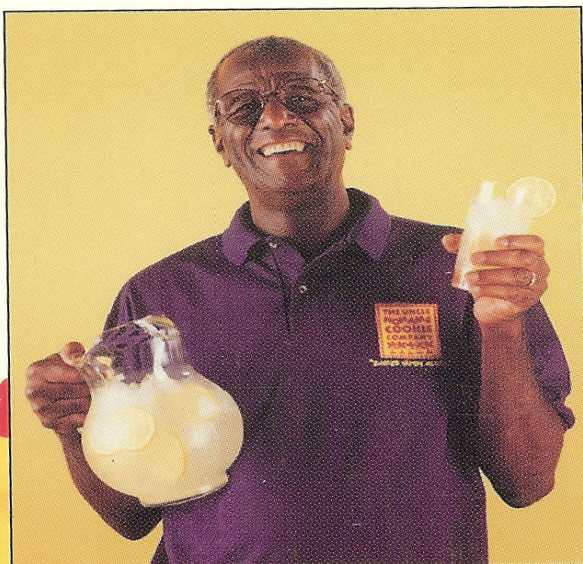
—**Dave Thomas**

Founder of Wendy's Old Fashioned Hamburgers

Wally Amos really knows how to turn lemons into lemonade and can help you do the same. Things don't always work out exactly the way we want in life. *Man with No Name* is a must read if those occurrences ever happen in your life.

—**Ken Blanchard**

Co-author of *The One Minute Manager* and *The Power of Ethical Management*



Wally's smiling countenance, known as "the face that launched a thousand chips," has become virtually synonymous with chocolate chip cookies. For 20 years Wally has promoted good cheer through his nationally renowned cookie businesses. He actively assists mar
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