

This is a story about keeping a positive attitude. Not giving up when the odds are against you. Even possibly about self fulfilling prophesy. It certainly left me wondering how much control we have over our own destiny.

It is difficult to believe we have that much control. We are not alone and other people will have influence on our destiny as well. There are going to be times when our beliefs will diametrically oppose to the beliefs of someone else.

It is my hope that this story will convince others as it has convinced me, individual belief and effort does matter.

Prior to 2009 I would often say I have been living a blessed life. The worst event that had ever happened in my life was the death of my dog.

The financial crisis in October 2008 signaled the beginning of what I call my Perfect Financial Storm. Little did I know then, it would be the longest and darkest storm of my life.

Financially, 2009 was a disaster. By the end of 2009 my house was in foreclosure and it was not uncommon for me to spend the entire day curled up in a ball on the couch.

On September 21st 2009 I was arrested for resisting an officer without violence. Without violence on my part, not the arresting officer. I'm not too concerned after all I was in the right. The arresting officer was incorrect in his interpretation of this law. I did not break the law.

At this point 100% of my income is from the electronic device that I had been manufacturing for 18 years. The entire 18 years I had one guy that was responsible for all aspects of its production.

Early in 2010 my production guy's wife takes ill. Her illness required 24/7 care. Once in a while he could come in and build some units. Even though sales which had been on a slow decline for years, sales dropped 80% overnight after the October 2008 financial Crisis. Demand was running at 20% of the previous year.

In late November of 2009 I go to my arraignment for my resisting arrest, plead not guilty, and ask for a jury trial. This annex courthouse does not do jury trials and my case is transferred downtown.

Then one of the motor drive controllers on the robot that places the components on the circuit boards fails. Normally not huge problem. This has happened four or five times before. My production guy in the past would fix the failed controller. He took the controller with him to fix, and to this date I have never seen it again.

In January 2010 I attend the first pre-trial "calendar call". At this time I have become a little concerned because I do not know trial procedure. If I am to defend myself at trial I am very likely to make procedural mistakes that could cause me to lose. If I lose at trial, I go directly to jail.

I am called before the judge and we have a brief conversation where he warns me the DA has a lot more experience with juries than I. The judge is a very nice Irish guy with a big white beard and looks like Santa Clause. We talk, I get a couple of laughs out of him. To help with trial procedure I ask him for help from a Public Defender. He tells me to fill out a request form and points out the Public Defender.

I fill out the form the Public Defender looks it over. He says there is no way the clerk will approve this and if I give it to her she is just going to stamp it DENIED. He then suggests rather than give it to the clerk let him present directly to the judge and make an argument that because my house is in foreclosure maybe the judge will bend the rules. He does, I have a Public Defender, and this one appears to be very competent and reassures this should be no problem to win. But first we have to get the police report and see how much they lie. He did not say IF they lie, but how much.

This is important to me. Back in September I had a conversation with my father regarding the arrest where he told me I can't fight city hall and win. My response is that the police abuse use this law on nearly a routine basis. I am on the right side of the law. It would be wrong not to put up a fight. My father says OK when it's all over, let me know how much it cost and what you get out of it.

I call an attorney, tell him the details. The attorney just laughed. He tells me he can make it go away for \$750. I did not want to tell my father it cost \$750 so that was not an option.

After a couple of months his my production guy's wife dies in April of 2010. That was the end of my manufacturing business. He was no longer able to work at all. And the main machine in the assembly process is down and the only person that can fix it, is unable to work.

By then I had come to terms with my financial situation and was able to pick up enough contract computer programming jobs to get by. After all I did not need much as the bank was was paying my property taxes and home owners insurance. It was like living rent free. The only problem was I had more than enough equity in my house which was now shrinking every month.

As another cost cutting measure I stopped driving and paying automobile insurance. My sole source of transportation became my Segway, the battery operated self-balancing personal transportation device with two wheels.

I was able to maintain an attitude that the foreclosures does not matter. I knew, without any doubt, no matter what happens, I will come out of it OK. I don't need much money and with monthly expenses down I will have time to develop new software products.

That was the financial setting for the first part of 2010 but there was a lot more going on. In February of 2010 my father broke his hip. That develops in to a long story of its own. My father dies May 20, 2010. My parents were living in Texas so there was a Texas memorial followed by another in Wisconsin where life on this earth began for me, my parents, and siblings.

On June 3rd the day of my father's Wisconsin memorial service, my best friend died of a heart attack.

I return to Florida and attend my daughter Christine's graduation ceremony the following weekend. On my way home from the ceremony I am driving near a friend Larry's house. My first thought is to stop by . As I got closer my thoughts changed. It's 10:30, maybe it was getting a little too late for Larry.

Shortly after I arrive home, at around 11:30, the phone rings. It was the mother of my best friend that had died earlier in the week. She had just gotten the call someone had found Larry's body.

When I had arrived in Texas for my father's memorial service I immediately could see there is something wrong. My mother's skin color is not right. Am I imagining things? No one else seems to notice.

Then in Wisconsin at my father's second memorial, again, there is something wrong. When I arrive back in Florida as I am leaving the airport I call my mother and suggest after all the turmoil she has been through in recent months she should get a checkup.

In July of 2010, just a little more than a month after my father's death, I was hit with a law suit for libel. A wealthy guy with more money (\$90 million) than brains did not approve when I posted on a website he was a drunk driving, wife beating, felonious violent offender. It did not matter to him that it was true.

My father was so right when he decided to abandon the Florida house and move to Texas to live near Lisa. He knew. He knew, one, that if there were issues and help was required that Lisa was the one that would come through. Brilliant move. Two, he probably knew he was a ticking time bomb and could drop dead at any moment. He never told anybody about his medical condition.

When my parents moved to Texas I knew there was something wrong. Very uncharacteristic. The only logical explanation was my father felt it was necessary to be near Lisa. He was so right.

Unfortunately this decision unnecessarily came at great cost to Lisa. If had Lisa had foreseen the family bullshit and pain she had would have to endure from relatives in Wisconsin, would she do it over the same way? No doubt. Just do the right thing.

While in Texas for my fathers memorial service I asked my mother why they left Florida. She responds he had said Lisa needed him to be there for her.

I then later ask Lisa why she thought they moved to Texas. Her answer had nothing to do with her being in need. I then ask her point blank if it were true. It turns out the reason my father had given my mother for moving to Texas was not true.

When leaving Texas after my fathers memorial service I took with me all his medical records my mother had. After examining them it was apparent that he was indeed a ticking time bomb. And I agree he was right not to share his condition with us. It also confirmed my suspicions that the move to Texas was for medical reasons.

In the next couple of my months my mother is increasingly having a very difficult time coping with living alone. After eighty years for the first time in her life she is living alone.

My sister, Lisa, is keeping me informed on the details of what is going on with our mother. It's not good. Lisa who lives only a few miles from my mother is the only person my mother has to lean on for support.

This all comes after all the emotional trauma Lisa experienced from the time my father broke his hip. I was going to say up until his death. Except it still continues today.

I can sense the burden this is putting on Lisa's shoulders. Burden is my word. Lisa would never use that word. She would not call it an obligation either. To her it was the only thing, the right thing to do.

Life for me at this time is not very pleasant. But it could be worse. And it does get worse.

In the first week of August I crash my Segway. Land on my head and break four ribs. By break I mean broken where the broken ends grind against each other. To make matters worse it was four adjacent ribs. It hurts to break a rib. Later I had read that the pain from breaking two adjacent ribs is exponentially worse than a single rib. A single broken rib has the two adjacent ribs for support minimizing movement of the broken rib. When two are broken there is less support.

While I lay in the ER eating breakfast an ER doctor cautioned me not to choke on my food. I think "What a peculiar statement".

After a brief stay in the hospital the pain has subsided to just excruciating and only when I breath.

I was bed ridden. My Ex-Wife Elizabeth and her mother would stop by a couple of times a day bringing me food and helping me out. I could not move at all. Even the slightest movement would cause such pain I would lose my breath.

I will never forget. As I am eating a bagel I inhale a crumb. Now I know why the doctor said be careful not to choke. After experiencing the pain from coughing I came to the realization that if I were to catch a cold I would have no choice but to commit suicide.

During the rest of August I keep in touch with Lisa. My mother's problems with coping are getting worse. My mother would call Lisa every evening crying here eyes out. And I can tell this is really taking a toll on Lisa having to deal with this on her own.

Meanwhile our brother Tim had taken a leave from his job under the Family and Medical Leave Act. Lisa did all the leg work including filling out the forms and getting the doctors to sign off on the paper work.

Tim arrives in Texas but makes his stay very brief. The way I see it, apparently he did not have enough room in his vehicle to hold all the items he absconded with during his first visit to Texas while my father was ill. After a few days he takes off using the Family Leave for a 12 week vacation.

All my mother needs is a warm body to be in the house with her.

I tell Lisa I am willing to go to Texas and stay with my mother. I know my mother just needs another warm body in the house with her.

Word gets back to me my mother would like it if I was there. As soon as I my ribs allowed me ambulatory enough to travel, a flight to Texas was booked for me.

Two days before my flight to Texas it became official. My mother's monoclonal gammaopathy has escalated to where it is now considered Cancer, an incurable bone marrow cancer, Multiple Myeloma.

This did not come as a surprise to me. After returning from Wisconsin I had surmised the reason my mother did not look healthy was due to her having Cancer.

After I arrived I rarely saw my mother shed a tear. Just my presence did in fact alleviate her emotional state due to living alone.

My mother had known for the previous 15 years of the inevitable. Not if, but when. This type of Multiple Myeloma begins as monoclonal gammopathy. There is an organization that sets the limits on where monoclonal gammopathy reaches the stage to be considered Cancer. In my mother's case it is when the hemoglobin, red blood cell count diminishes to dangerous levels. This explains the unhealthy color I had previously seen in my mother.

I have never been one to believe what someone says to be true, no matter their credentials. It has to make sense to me. Other times it's just due diligence. Second opinion. I know someone that is very knowledgeable about these things. For whatever reason I decide to gather up all my mother's lab results I can get my hands on.

I contact Lisa and ask her to send me all the lab results of my mother's she could find.

Multiple Myeloma is a disease of the immune system. For the past 20 years I had been the IT consultant to an Immunology Laboratory. Over the years I had become friends with the owner of the Lab. I call him and ask if he will take a look at my mother's lab results. He tells me his new partner Jay would be a better choice and that I should ask Jay to look at them.

Jay has a PhD in Tumor Cell Biology from Northwestern. I talk to Jay and he kindly agrees to take a look at my mother's labs.

I get him a copy of the labs and we then talk on the phone. When I called he had not yet had time to look at the labs. For quite a while I just listen to him thinking out loud while pouring over the years of labs. I hear things like ooh that's not good, oh wait that's that caused by this, so that working OK, that's good.

At this point I am in awe. I ask him, how the hell does someone learn all that stuff? He replies he had just got a book on the subject recently and it came on CD as well. He says, I'll FedEx you the CD.

I am so glad I got the CD version! I had to read it on my PC. The great thing is, this makes it very easy to copy a word from the book and paste it into an online medical dictionary search. Which I had to do, on average, about 6 times per page. Fascinating stuff. On the flip side there is so much that is unknown. Did you know that no one knows why we have or what causes fever?

When my mother was diagnosed with Cancer I did about 300 hours of research into her condition. Prior to this I had zero knowledge of the immune system which is the cause of her bone marrow Cancer.

Why I would put this kind of time into the matter is puzzling. What's the use? Well that thought did not occur to me until many months later.

His final assessment is there is not much wrong. Almost every thing is operating normal. Just one thing wrong. One Immunoglobulin an IgA antibody is clogging the bone marrow not allowing enough space for the bone marrow to produce enough Red Blood cells.

When I arrive in Texas I spend every waking hour researching Multiple Myeloma. Lisa also was on the

case. We were a team. Lisa would find very relevant documents and pass them on to me. I would then research the hell out of what she found.

Eventually we, Lisa, Jay, and myself all agreed on the one chemo drug best for my mother.

There was one printed document that Lisa had brought over. It was rather large and it didn't have links I could click on like the ones she email to me. Things settled down as we now had our course of action resolved.

It was not until then I read the document that Lisa had found. Apparently Lisa had some insight that there was something significant about this document that she decided to print rather than email.

Granbury, Hood County TX. Not a place for me. I learned this long before my parents moved there. It's a fact the Granbury Police are either unfamiliar with the Bill of Rights or think it was a waste of paper. When a Granbury cop asks me what I'm doing at Brendon's, Lisa's son's my nephew's, little league game and I inform him it's none of his business, lands this long haired Harley riding out of state non-conformist in the overcrowded beyond Federal guidelines, Hood county Jail.

The other thing about this backwoods po dunk Texas town is their cable TV sucks. It sucks so bad I end up reading a "printed" document. The one Lisa had brought over a week or two earlier. One interesting item is an interview with a doc at MD Anderson. Jay had mentioned MD Anderson as one of the leading Cancer research centers. The Multiple Myeloma drug they were working with was so new that it was only available in limited Clinical Trials.

There was a very similar slightly older chemo drug that was showing some promising results. So I look into this drug and it appears to be the perfect companion drug to the one we had finalized. The combination effects of these two drugs attacks both the source and long term build up causing my mother's condition. This is exciting, until...

I call Jay first thing the next day and he agrees it would be a very good combination BUT it's not known if the two together will have adverse effects. Son of a bitch! Back to the Internet.

I found a clinical trial that had just completed Phase One which was testing these two drugs together. Phase one is only to test for the Maximum Tolerable Dosage, not effectiveness. They had just released the results of the adverse reactions. The adverse reactions were no worse than any any other chemo regimens currently in therapeutic use.

This is all I need to know, case closed, I will put my mother on those drugs.

This is where in hindsight I begin to examine the possibility that our belief has enormous affect on the out come of things that happen in our life. I truly believed that my mother would be taking these two chemo drugs. I never wavered. It, at the time, never occurred to me there would be obstacles. And I was so driven by my belief and determination when the obstacles did pop up I was unfazed.

Shortly after the diagnosis my brother Randy had been asking my mother to come to Wisconsin for her Cancer treatment.

Lisa and I had gone to the Oncologist in Texas with my mother. The Oncologist stressed that treatment needed begin immediately. Her reason being a my mother's high kappa gamma light chain ratio was

the highest she had ever seen. When dealing with a disease that afflicts 35 out of million if see saw one

The Texas oncologist

As I was driving my mother home she says, “Well I guess I can't go to Wisconsin”. I asked her “Do you want to go to Wisconsin?”. After a bit a pause, it turns out, Yes she does. This was a Thursday afternoon, Sept. 9th, 2011.

As soon as we got back to her house I looked up the resumes of the doctors at the hospital in my Wisconsin home town of Waukesha. near where Randy lives. I was familiar with the Cancer clinical trials going on in Waukesha while researching chemo drugs for the rare disease afflicting my mother.

Impressive resumes. They have the proper credentials and they are intimately familiar with my mother's disease. Acceptable. I call Waukesha Memorial Hospital (WMH) and am told by their patient advocate they have no appointments available and are booked solid for more than the next month. There is nothing they can do to help me. Oh, OK, thank you, I understand.

No! that last sentence is not true.

I was not willing to accept that answer. Not conscientiously, more in reflecting back examining how things actually turned out. At the the time I must have just assumed it could not be true. There must be a way. That answer did not fit in with what needs to transpire for the outcome I have come to expect.

I spent the next hour or so reasoning with and attempting to persuade her to reconsider. After all I don't need the Docs to do anything but write the prescription for the chemo drugs I had chosen. I already did all the preliminaries.

That was was my actual approach with her. Now it sounds a bit arrogant. At the time, it is what I truly believed. And I still believe it to be true. The fact that the chemo regimen I chose was not proven did not factor into my decision making process.

Before hanging up I had an appointment for for her on the next Wednesday, just six days later on Sept 15. I asked a patient advocate, to have the Doc give me a call. She tells me these doctors do not even talk to patients on the phone. Talking to a family member? That is just never going to happen.

Not important right now I will talk with the Doc later.

The way I got the appointment was insisting there was really nothing for these dos to do but write the prescriptions.

When Randy took her to the the Doc at WHM, Randy reported back to me, all excited, they put my mother in their clinical trial. I was familiar with this trial and the chemotherapy regimen was not, in my opinion, a good choice. I say to Randy, CLINICAL TRIALS ARE OFF THE TABLE! My mother's life was on the line so I think it required a very quick solution as my mother was to begin treatment in the trail within a matter of days.

So here I am, a family member the Docs “will never talk to”, I have no medical credentials, just a theory that this combination of drugs is what my mother needs. And in my thinking this is the regime she will use and I was hell bent on making that happen.

Looking back had I been realistic, I would have concluded this was an impossible outcome to get her on an untested treatment. I can now look at it from the perspective of the Oncologist. This is his job. He is an expert in immunology and Cancer. He is conducting a trial with Multiple Myeloma (my mother condition) patients in conjunction with the Mayo Clinic and University of Wisconsin. Me, I found some stuff on the Internet.

I had worked as an electronic technician in hospitals some 30 years prior, but nothing credible. I did learn while employed at the hospitals, doctors do not like to accept the advice of others. I once witnessed two doctors arguing over how to save a patient that had just coded while in the Cardiac Cath lab at St. Lukes Hospital.. One wanted to do CPR the other a Tracheotomy. Neither doc would acquiesce to the other. It developed into a shouting match while the patient died. Historical moment, the first patient ever to die in St. Luke's Cardiac Cath lab. The point being, it is not easy to change a doctors mind even if you have equal or better credentials. I must have been insane to think I could get my mother on my treatment.

In my research I found that Multiple Myeloma is considered an incurable Cancer. Treatment usually consisted of nine to twelve months of chemo treatment. The treatment outcome is that many die, many have no improvement, some have very good results, and very few reach Complete Remission (CR). Those that had reached CR most would within six months to a few years, relapse. For those that qualified, which my mother did not, could elect for a bone marrow transplant following the first round of treatment. After the transplant they would then go on a maintenance chemo program until they died. Most died within the first year or two some lived as long as 6 years.

In my state of ignorance I still continued trying to get my mother on my treatment regimen. Against huge odds I, with my stuff I found on the Internet, blindly forge ahead in my quest. Not impossible, what stands in my way? A doctor that will never talk to me and no credibility in the medical community.

I write an email send it to the patient advocate, and asked her to forward it to the doctor. This exemplifies how naive I was. The next day I was expecting the phone to ring and the doc would agree with me. Hindsight says that was a pretty ignorant expectation. I was not thinking that at the time so I wrote another email and asked that one be forward to the doctor.

Well most would have seen long before this see that I was beating a dead horse. All except me. I was so confident that I knew better than the experts. So here I sit waiting for the phone to ring just like a girl who was told after a first date he would call.

Except in my case no one even told me they would call. I was told it would Never happen. One other difference, the phone rang! It was very clear from the start of the conversation the doc was calling just to appease a family member. He informed me the patients he was treating in this clinical trial were all getting very good results and one or two may even reach CR.

Impressive but that's not the way I visualize things should be going. I discuss with him how the drugs in the trial are not ideal given my mothers condition and how my drug combo will target the source of the disease. After about 30 minutes, keeping a doc on the phone for 30 minutes was a major feat in itself, he then says to me, "You know what? You're right." He put my mother on my treatment plan. Looking back I am still in awe.

And how about this? When there would be an issue brewing in Wisconsin (that's what that do there,

brew stuff), I would send the doc an email. Now this is the unheard of part. Not only would my phone ring within 5 minutes but he had already consulted with other on the problem. But this Doc was amazing. What doc does anything like that? Who responds to email that quick? Like I always say, it all in the timing.

Shortly after the initial consultation, I get a call from Randy. He says I have to stop call the hospital and bugging the staff. Apparently the staff was a buzz and it made it through the grapevine to Randy that I was being a pain in the ass. I was dumbfounded, and told him I never called, they called me. He went back and confirmed he had gotten bad intel and apologized.

I checked into his complaint as well. It turns out the buzz was they could not believe a family member would would put forth the sort of effort as I. As typical with rumors and the like, by the time Randy heard the story it was so distorted. This kind of exemplifies why I wear the Misunderstood hat.

What I did for my mother, to me, was just doing the right thing. I am used to being treated poorly no matter how much I try to do the right thing. But it still hurts. After all my hard work against all odds, I was sarcastically referred to as Dr. Patrick.

That was only the beginning. After the first month of treatment the the lab results had shown a phenomenal improvement. The Cancer indicators were reduced by 50%. This is better than it sounds. My mother had a precursor condition diagnosed about 16 year prior to being diagnosed with Cancer. They don't call call the precursor condition Cancer until it creates serious life treating symptoms. They do give it a big ass long name, monoclonal gammopathy. For 15 years I couldn't say it, now I can even spell it. In my mothers case this was extremely low hemoglobin. This was caused by a genetically defective antibody. All cells in the body are genetically programed to self destruct in a process called apoptosis. My mother had one type of antibody (IgA) that would not self destruct. She was diagnosed with this condition about 16 years prior. This was a VERY slow process. What happened is these cells accumulated in the bone marrow. It became Cancer when the bone marrow became so clogged these mutant cells affected the marrow's ability to produce red blood cells.

The point being, a 50% reduction took her back to where she was like 10 year prior. At that point, after only one month of treatment, it would likely take anther 10 years for the disease to progress again to the point where it would be life threatening again. After another month all symptoms were non-existent. The doc and I discussed these results and concurred, my mother would never die from this "incurable" Cancer.

The point here is regardless of the unflattering perceptions some people in Wisconsin have developed toward me, this trumps it all. After my mother, watching her father die a horrible death from the same disease, and knowing for the prior 15+ years her knowing that she would be faced with the same affliction, I was able to tell her, "Mom, you are not going to die from Cancer".

And that is the short version, I left out a lot of detail.

At the time this was going on I was very confident, I was correct, and that it was inevitable my mother would be on my treatment. It never crossed my mind I would not persevere. My visualization of the situation was it's going to go my way. No doubts what so ever. Looking back I think very differently. It was very amazing. I was up against insurmountable odds. I am formulating in my mind that we actually have the ability to influence our destiny. We are not just passive victims of circumstance. Our outlook and true belief on how our lives are going to play out, signify our direction, achievements and outcomes. A positive mental attitude is imperative. We are responsible for our future, and future happiness. Haven't chiseled it in granite yet but it sure seems like a very cool concept that we are in control of our destiny. Even if I'm wrong, it still may be a very good approach in dealing with every

day issues. And 2012 is, without doubt, going to be a great year. In the past couple of years when things would get tough, I say, so what. Things always work out, so why should I worry about those issues that to some would appear to result in doom.

I went to trial for my September arrest on April 9th 2010. The trial ended with the judge saying “This man should never have been arrested”

My new theory is that if we truly believe something bad is going to happen our belief will alter our destiny and become true. Conversely our positive thoughts can alter our destiny in a good way.

This is similar to and congruent with theories on how the forces of good and evil influence the direction of destiny.

When our thoughts and beliefs align with the beliefs of others it becomes a collective force of influence.

I also believe the intensity of our beliefs and the amount of effort we put into shaping our destiny.

When there is a large group of intense collective beliefs putting forth great effort there should then be enough to reverse what has become accepted as the enviable by a majority of the population.

This could explain the concept of miracles.