

HOW TO TURN ADVERSITY INTO AN OPPORTUNITY OF A LIFETIME

THRIVING IN TRANSITION

**Book one: A behind the scenes look at a life in the NHL,
spinal cord injury and career change**



Doug Smith

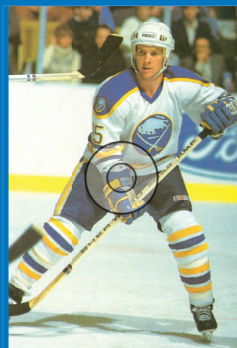
From Ottawa to Pro Hockey and Back Again

**FREE
GIFT INSIDE**

NHL goal photo
with 5 Hall of Fame
members

"This is a true story of childhood adversity, hockey stardom and a tragic accident which ended a career and opened up a whole new world of opportunity. Any of us can take adversity and turn it into opportunity, no matter what game you are playing, business you are building or legacy you are designing. The key is to always be searching for ways to make a positive difference in other people's lives while you are here."

– Doug Smith



Focus on transition – The Department of Labour estimates that today's graduates will experience ten to 14 jobs before the age of 38, and the pace of change will continue to increase for all ages. When human beings are faced with the thought of transition it can conjure up unnatural fear that can rob us of our strength and belief. In this book and throughout the series, two messages speak loud and clear:

1. Fear is not telling us that we can't do something; fear is telling us that we have not done something yet.
2. In every profession today, the path to high performance is based on teamwork, support & belief.

Don't just survive transition, learn how to thrive and come alive

"Doug has woven his story of transitions with success principles of life, helping others realize that every one of us has a success story within us. This truly amazing journey reflects many of the change principles taught by the top leadership coaches in the world and can surely benefit anyone at any age by helping them believe they can achieve anything they set their mind to – Doug is living proof of the power of these principles."

RON WIENS, M. Sc.,
Partner, www.totemhill.com

"Doug Smith has won many great battles in his life as an athlete, and broken through a barrier that he would never walk again. He has experienced the kind of pain few people know, and now he breaks through his biggest barrier yet, writing a book on his own, from his own mind, from his own studies and discoveries on how we can all break through in every area of our lives. I am proud to know him, and call him a friend."

JOHN KANARY,
International best selling author
President of John Kanary International – www.johnkanary.com

"Doug Smith is a dedicated professional in all aspects of his work. His boundless energy and positive attitude has enabled a successful transition from the ice to the corporate boardroom."

JIM KYTE,
Former NHL teammate,
Chair, Algonquin College School of Business
www.algonquincollege.com/business

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www.DougSmithConnected.com

THRIVING IN TRANSITION

*How to turn adversity into
an opportunity of a lifetime*

DOUG SMITH

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Dedication

I dedicate this book to my family, now and forever.

It takes only one person's belief to change the belief of the world and in my case, that one person is Patti, my wife of 22 years, who refused to accept my diagnosis. I love you.

To my daughters, Jamie, who was born into the middle of my fight to survive, and Jenna, who was at the tender age of two when the impact occurred: this is for both of you. Since birth you have pulled me every step of the way and you continue to challenge me physically and emotionally. The world is yours. Buddies for life, love forever, Dad.



From left to right: Jenna, Doug, Patti and Jamie

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Forward

It was autumn when I received a telephone call from Doug. “Dad, would you be willing to write the foreword for my book?” You know—the usual type of call from a son or daughter.

I must be honest: I’ve never written a foreword or a book in my life. But I’m thinking that if my son can write a whole book, surely I can contribute a few paragraphs. I’m not surprised that Doug has written a book. He is not afraid to step up and fast-track new ideas. He has endless curiosity, is willing to move in new directions and has more than one life story to share.

The present is influenced by the past and I remember a young boy who was a gifted athlete excelling at hockey and lacrosse. Doug was determined to improve and would spend hours on outdoor hockey rinks, including the frozen Ottawa River, fine-tuning his skating, puck handling and shooting skills. Our old concrete-block garage attested to Doug’s ability to fire a lacrosse ball: Doug won, the garage wall lost!

All the coaching, practising and hard work through minor hockey would eventually pay off. We received a phone call in the summer of 1979: Doug had been drafted, underage, by the Ottawa 67’s Major Junior “A” hockey club. He was very fortunate to have been able to play two years as a 16- and 17-year-old under coach Brian Kilrea. It was long enough to establish his potential—45 goals, 56 assists and 101 points in 54 games in his second season. But maybe not long enough to prepare him for the world of professional hockey.

Doug turned 18 in May 1981 and was drafted second overall by the Los Angeles Kings in June of that year. But things were happening too fast. Brian Kilrea believed that Doug would benefit from one more year of junior hockey. But difficult decisions were made, and Doug joined the National Hockey League as one of the youngest players to play at that time.

Doug played only one game as an 18-year-old with the Ottawa 67’s—a game he played as Ottawa’s captain.

Ottawa/Nepean is Doug’s hometown; he was born and raised here. That’s one reason I have always thought it unfortunate that Doug relinquished the opportunity to play junior hockey in Ottawa as an 18-year-old. But at that age, who would pass up the opportunity to play in the NHL?

I believe that had he waited, Doug would have established leadership skills and a presence with the Ottawa team that not only would have made the transition to NHL hockey somewhat easier but, just as importantly, would have left a positive and enduring memory for the 67’s hockey fans.

I won’t delve into Doug’s NHL career here but I am happy to talk about it from a father’s point of view with any who are interested. He played 11 years of professional hockey and had more ups and downs than the TSX. I don’t believe he ever realized the potential that his skills in Junior suggested. There



*With Mom (Carol) and Dad (Wayne) – OHL's Bobby Smith Award
for Academic Achievement – 1981. Republished by permission of the Ottawa Citizen.*

are various reasons for this—some he controlled and some he could not. I believe Doug had what would be considered an above-average NHL career, interspersed with enough spectacular moments to fill a highlight reel.

One of the special by-products of Doug's hockey career was that both of his sisters, Tracy and Carey, became interested in the game and in travel. They both travelled extensively when they were younger and still play on recreational hockey teams today.

I have always been extremely proud of Doug. He has led an extraordinary life so far and I'm sure that the future will hold more of the same.

*Wayne Smith
Loving father of an unusual son*

About the Author

A passionate supporter of the Ottawa business community, Doug Smith worked in technology sales for 10 years, starting on the telephone but adopting the Internet early on, building networks and learning a new language based on business, people and continuous learning. Using the mistakes of the past as a teacher, he immersed himself in personal development, communications, business development and building relationships with community leaders. Doug is a natural network maven.

At the beginning of the Internet revolution, Doug rose to the position of director of business development with a national Internet service provider and an international domain registrar (which is now the largest domain registrar in Canada). He then headed up Canadian sales for Silicon Valley's Linuxcare Inc. at the turn of the 21st century.

Doug furthered his education with the inaugural courses of the NHL Alumni *Life after Hockey Program* at Quinnipiac University in Connecticut. In 2003 he co-founded Arc Stainless Inc., now a leader in custom design, engineering and fabrication with an established track record in health care, construction and biotechnology sectors. Doug was president of Arc for 4 years and now leads business development initiatives with an opportunistic eye on clean technology and high tech sectors.

Doug also reached the pinnacle of professional sports, being drafted second overall into the NHL as a teenager. He was the youngest player to ever play for the Los Angeles Kings at that time. He played over 600 games professionally before a broken neck and spinal cord injury ended his career. Doug is the founder of the Ottawa Senators Alumni Association and co-founder of the Canadian Paraplegic Association/Ottawa Senator's Alumni Wheelchair Relay. Combined, these organizations have raised over \$5 million for local programs and charities. Doug is also a past chair of CPA Ottawa and spent six years on the Ontario Board of Directors of the Canadian Paraplegic Association of Eastern Ontario based in Toronto, helping to take the CPA budget from \$1 million to \$7.4 million through events and the passing of the Ontario Disabilities Act.

Doug's life experiences, his never-ever-quit approach and his curiosity leading to openness have profoundly shaped his unique and captivating perspective and vision. His experiences are an inspiration and demonstrate the extraordinary things the human mind and spirit can achieve.

A much sought after speaker, Doug lives on the Ottawa River in Ottawa with his wife, Patti; daughters Jenna and Jamie; and a Portuguese water dog aptly named Loca.

Introduction

The Dream

Let's take some time and focus on what we all have to work with while we are here. All of us were born with only two powers; the power to **choose** and the power to **act**. Along with these powers we all have access to **dreams** and **imagination** to motivate us, **reflection** to learn and appreciate from and, ultimately, **results** created by our past choices and actions. The key to achieving success is to use everything we were given.

***Before you can
do something
you must first
be something.***

*—Johann Wolfgang
von Goethe*

We all use our imagination endlessly to chase our dreams and freedom our whole lives, but we only sparingly use our resources called reflection and results. Sometimes we even stick our heads in the sand or pull the covers over our heads and hope the past and present don't exist. Hopefully, over time, we will all learn how to use these self-created free resources to be more patient, more caring and more effective. These tools will help us deal with the reality of the situation we are in right now and can make a difference in how we see the world.

How you deal with the situation you are in right now will determine the level of freedom and prosperity you will get to experience on this earth. One dream almost all of us have in common is to leave a legacy or a footprint of our existence. To do this we must take stock of the past and present, regardless of how painful it can be. As we have children and as we grow older and wiser, our desire to realize this dream will grow stronger with each passing day.

Working together, dreams, imagination, reflection and results help us to

overcome the adversities that lie between where we are right now and our future goals. As I mentioned earlier, reflection is a powerful tool that many of us do not use to full advantage. Our past successes show us that we can accomplish anything we set out to do and, if we are honest with ourselves, our past failures give us the opportunity to cleanse, correct and adjust while improving the odds on not making the same mistakes that created the circumstances that led us to fail in the first place. Don't be afraid to document the best and the worst. This information is gold to family, friends or business.

As you read this book, I encourage you to look past the specifics of my personal story and imagine how you could use this model and replace my story with yours. Find a defining moment, high or low, and get started. Whether you plan to distribute the information to a wide audience or not is not the issue. Creating a legacy is.

Mistakes: The Quickest Way to Learn

Most of us struggle through life on our way to death and never grab the opportunities to make the mistakes necessary to open up our minds to the unlimited possibility and prosperity available to all of us. Many of us never get to the point where we understand that the world does not revolve around us, mostly because we did not take enough chances. If you know someone who seems to think the world revolves around them, be patient; it's not their fault. It is their environment that has conditioned them to see the world in a certain way. Consider the environment you are in right now as you read this book.

We all make mistakes every day, whether it is the relationships we get into, the deals we miss because we were not prepared, the things we don't say to the people we love or the failure to put on a helmet in dangerous situations. On the flip side, we all have successes every day, be they the relationships we get into, the deals we close because we have developed a killer system, the things we say to the people we love or the act of putting a helmet on to set an example and prevent injury.

This series of books is not about being comfortable; it is about change and personal development that start deep inside us all. One of my goals is to challenge you and make you feel uncomfortable because being uncomfortable is the quickest way I have found to grow and improve. The more pain, the greater the learning.

Why the Transition Series?

The Transition Series comprises five books and companion websites covering the story of the transitions my family and I have experienced, starting with *Thriving in Transition*. This first book reveals the reality of one of the most frightening injuries a human being can suffer—a broken neck and spinal cord injury—and reflects on one of the greatest opportunities an athlete can experience: making it to the top league in the world.

Watch for other books and videos in the series, including free training, upcoming seminars and introductions to some of the foremost experts in the world on business development, health care and career transition. The series is a collaborative effort of some of the great academic minds, business professionals and companies we have had the honour to meet, build relationships with and work with over our years of rehabilitation, business development and change. I will introduce you to various subject-matter experts over the coming years and many will be joining me on stage, in video and in writing to bring you proven formulas and concepts to support you, your business and your family on your journey. My role is to develop the friendships, working relationships and content to make the introductions; I hope you can make introductions to me as well. If what you see, hear and feel makes sense, please move this information to someone else.

If your intention is to prosper in your career, your business and your life then you are in the right place. Whether you are young or old, in a long-term career, just starting out or in transition, I sincerely want you to achieve the top position in every area of your life. If you are not satisfied, change what you're doing, change your environment, because the definition of insanity is continuing to do the same thing and expecting your life to change.

The key that I have found since my sports career ended is that you should always be working on your high-level understanding of the laws that govern the universe and be paying close attention to the ever-changing rules of the game you are in right now. The invaluable lesson I learned from my transitions both inside sports and after hockey is that the laws of the universe have not changed since the beginning of time, but the rules of the game change at an ever-increasing speed. It is in your best interest to be aware of the subtle differences between laws and rules.

Whether you are an employee who wants to advance your career, a pensioner who needs to move on, a business owner who wants to accelerate or an individual searching for prosperity or legacy, many of the principles in this series are universal; you can apply them immediately. The one requirement is that you must be prepared to think about what you read and if you don't agree with me, don't understand or have questions, commit right now to communicating with me through www.DougSmithConnected.com and expressing your thoughts. If you agree with the concepts and ideas then the only thing left is your decision—the decision to act.

If you are struggling with personal or business change, that's OK. You are not alone. Everyone is in change mode; the bulk of businesses around the world have been built by Baby Boomer entrepreneurs who are in some phase of confusing transition. Some are trying to increase sales, some are dealing with family and shareholder issues, some are getting prepared to sell their businesses and some have just recently suffered a disabling injury. Take everything into consideration because all these scenarios are possible. History

continues to repeat itself as new entrepreneurs form blue-sky partnerships, get picked apart by the sharks, delay structuring things properly, get ignored by the banks and face change at an ever-increasing speed.

In other words, businesses and individuals today, in general, need help and awareness on many fronts. This series will help with perspective and then concrete solutions. Follow the paths of experience to which you are given access, tap into this network and other networks and do not be afraid to ask for help.

Greatness from Pain

When you study great accomplishments you will find that most of them come from pain. Great songs, successful battles and great inventions are usually the result of great personal or societal pain. If my family and I had not experienced pain then this series and the relationships that were built to write this series would never have been created. Then there is that excruciating pain of actually sitting down and writing something meaningful. Many authors on many occasions have told me that writing changes you, and it's true.

If you are driven, the pain will inevitably hit you as you realize the complexity of what you have started and what you must finish. That pain cannot force you to quit; only you can make the decision to quit. Finding the determination to finish anything valuable is similar to the last one percent of a long-distance race. It is a combination of pain, focus, rhythm and exhilaration, all in one place at one time. As I closed in on completing this book, though painful in many ways, I was not aware of time and I felt the rhythm that would get me through to the end.

You will likely find that the more knowledge or experience you have with something, the less anxious you are working with it and dealing with it. Once your knowledge level has reached the point where you are no longer anxious, you can develop an awareness level that drives you to share your knowledge and experience with others.

There are millions of people who have stories far more interesting and powerful than mine but never sit down to write them. Why is that? Do your kids really know who you are and what you have learned? Do your parents know how you feel and what you stand for? Are you having an impact on the world in the way you hoped to? If the answer to any of these questions is no, don't worry; it's not too late to change that.

Putting the Pieces Together in a New Way

I hope this book by a kid from Ottawa who was fortunate to have the support and competition to make it to the National Hockey League will inspire you to start organizing your content and one day, be ready to present your own legacy. Because I can guarantee that no one is going to do it for you.

I have found that just gathering and organizing my information has changed me for the better and forced me to realize things that I might never

have considered, and has helped to crystallize who I am. Now that I've written this first book and the record of my life is mostly digitized, it gives me peace to know that my grandchildren's grandchildren will be able to pull from my experiences to gain strength, awareness and a positive frame of reference. I think about the extraordinary value, to me and my daughters, that a record of my grandparents' and great-grandparents' achievements and perspectives would have had. Unfortunately, they did not have the tools to deliver their message the way we can today. So I ask you: what are you waiting for?

Don't worry, it's never too late. When I finally sat down to write this series I had behind me 12 years of amateur hockey, 11 years of professional hockey and over 16 years of sales and business-building—and the career-ending broken neck and spinal cord injury that devastated our young family. The physical and emotional impact of a full-speed, head-first collision with the end boards created more complications than anyone could ever have prepared for. And to most people's surprise, it created more possibilities than we could ever have imagined.

There are very few things in life that are so complex that when barely touched, they can instantly change a person physically and emotionally. The spinal cord is one of those things. The instant the cells of the spinal cord are physically touched by the outside world, they die. They do not possess the ability to regenerate and heal themselves. Like the collapse of a mine shaft, the tunnels between your brain and your extremities are closed off and the brain must find new pathways around the damage to connect itself to the body again. Any neurological trauma means that in the blink of an eye things will never, ever be the same. Unlike the clearly understood healing properties of, for example, bone, neurology is multi-dimensional.

The trauma of my spinal injury affected every facet of my life, from my understanding of the subconscious mind, to my physical capabilities, to how I conduct myself in a social, sales or business setting. It has taught me things you can't learn inside the halls of professional sports or behind the walls of institutions. My intention in this series of books is to make you feel like you are one of the fortunate people who have had the opportunity to start over with a passion and an awareness that will help you make the most of a second chance at life and mobility.

Identify and keep your most valuable assets, wipe the slate clean and open up to putting the pieces together in a new way. When the opportunity presents itself, and I promise it will, I want you to be prepared for transition. These lessons, ideas, connections, occasional rules and timeless laws that I have discovered are a shortcut for you and can save you the most valuable commodity we have in life: our time.

Before I forget, if you are interested in the hockey story, how to go pro or how to improve a particular part of your game, no worries—some of that is here; the lessons, the pictures, the videos, the politics, the big games, the big names and

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the road to NHL superstar status are all within your reach through this series of books and the companion blog/website (www.DougSmithConnected.com).

To my grandchildren's grandchildren: I wish I could be there with you to play by the river and shoot baskets in the sun. You can be anything you want to be in this life, so get busy being it and know I love you.

We begin with the end...

Chapter 1

Impact

Like the blade of a skate cutting a line through the cold, hard ice, change is sharp; it does not happen over time. Change occurs in an instant. My professional hockey career ended that way. It concluded in the blink of an eye, without warning, when I was 29, playing in the Alpine League in Europe, at the 10-minute mark of the third period of professional game number 607.

I can recall it with electrifying clarity: the awesome crack of a lightning bolt running through my body as the top of my head hits the end boards at 40 kilometres per hour. Blinded by the sheer impact, my body collapses on itself with my head resting on my gloves. I don't know it yet, but my neck has just been shattered in over 100 places and I've torn all the ligaments in the back of my neck. I should be dead, like a bird hitting a window in full flight.

But, for some reason, I am alive. Incredibly, I am conscious. My eyes suddenly open, but for a few seconds I can't see, don't comprehend. I hear the familiar sounds of the arena, of the piped-in music played after the whistle, of the fans in the stands, of people talking. But where am I?

When the searing pain snaps me back into focus, I realize instantly that

Security is mostly a superstition. It does not exist in nature nor do the children of men as a whole experience it.

Avoiding danger is no safer in the long run than outright exposure.

Life is either a daring adventure or nothing.

—Helen Keller

I've broken my back.

It had been a classic "dump-and-chase" play not unlike thousands of other plays and icing races I'd been involved in during more than 21 seasons of minor, junior and professional hockey and outdoor rink scrimmages. I'd been banging, crashing and hitting guys along the boards since the age of eight. But this time something went drastically wrong.

Watching the videotapes years later, I can still smell the arena that night. I take off from centre ice as our defenseman dumps the puck in from centre. I skate full-tilt up the middle to meet the puck before the opposing defenseman can corral it along the boards behind the net. As I close in on the black disc I graze the goal post with my left shoulder, balancing myself for impact.

I quickly shift to the left and look down for the puck, but as the defenseman hits the brakes the soft ice gives way to his blades and he drops like a baseball player sliding into third base. His body catches mine at the hips and suddenly redirects my body, less than four feet from the boards, with no time to react, into a head-first collision course with the wall.

The top of my head is pile-driven into the top of the boards, my spine takes a direct hit and like cookies being struck by a hammer, my fifth and sixth cervical vertebrae shatter on impact.

Realization, then Action

I am broken badly. My head rests on my hockey gloves. All I can think is, What am I going to do now? How am I going to cope? What is Patti going to do? How is she going to feel about me? What about our babies?

Catching my breath to muster a whisper, I mutter, "Help... help... I need help. I've broken my back." I am hurt badly but I know I have to focus, and I know I have to think. I think, What's next? What can I do or not do next? X-rays?

Logically, I know I need a doctor. A doctor could get me the x-rays, could read the x-rays, could tell me about the damage. But could I get an x-ray? I remember thinking, I must stay flat, and a doctor will come and talk to me on the ice. They will slide a backboard underneath me. That's it, I think. Get me to the hospital on a backboard, in an ambulance, and then we can correct and adjust our course of action.

I hear the loud sharp sound of the whistle. Someone will be here soon. I need help, I say to myself.

That was the first 15 seconds after impact. But now it is time for action. This is my body, and I promptly take control. I tell the trainer that I have broken my back and that I need a doctor, a backboard and an ambulance as quickly as possible. I am also clear that no one is to touch me other than the four people who will lift me straight up, to slide the backboard underneath.

I am in shock, but also so focused on not moving that I barely even remember the ambulance ride to the hospital. I am aware enough to recall that

the spinal cord can't withstand serious swelling around it without the risk of irreparable damage, so I have one goal: get to the hospital for x-rays. Focus on that action until it is done.

I can move my toes and feel my hands, which is encouraging. Preserving that feeling is my main internal goal and nothing is going to get in the way. I have already made up my mind what is going to happen and it's time to move forward. As soon as the backboard is underneath me, I say, "Let's go. We need two people on each end."



Paramedics urgently delivering me to the waiting ambulance.

The second we arrive at the hospital, I know I need to send word to my wife, Patti, to let her know exactly what is happening.

Meanwhile, on the other side of the country, Patti—five months pregnant with our daughter Jamie—and our two-year-old, Jenna, are entertaining my teammates' families at our home. The game is on the TV until strangely, about 10 seconds before the impact that would change our lives, the broadcast signal flickers and stops. The screen displays nothing but static for about five minutes, and does not resume until after I'd been removed from the ice. One of the guests realizes I've been hurt from what the commentators are saying. Just as she does, the telephone rings: it is me on the line. I tell Patti I think I've broken my back, but that I'll call her the moment we know the extent of the damage.

As soon as the phone is removed from my ear, I lie perfectly still. I can't help but reflect on my career. Like flipping through a book of photographs, all the pictures of a life in hockey play in my mind. Forty-five minutes later, I discover the extent of the damage to my body and make the most emotional call I've ever made in my life.

Feedback, Analysis, Adjustment

It is time to get my equipment off. Out come the scissors. The pain roars in the base of my spine but my rule is still in place: no one can touch me until we get photographic evidence of the damage. I am still face-down, and I insist that my hockey gloves remain on my hands, supporting my head, until we know exactly what we are dealing with.

First, the lumbar (lower) spine is x-rayed. Incredibly, the x-rays come back negative. X-rays of the thoracic (middle) spine come back negative as well. Could it be possible that I've just suffered bad whiplash, I think, hoping I'd dodged a bullet. But we aren't finished yet. It is time to x-ray the upper back and neck area known as the cervical spine.

It's amazing, really, how the energy changes in a room when members of the medical staff suddenly discover they're staring at a broken neck. The demeanour changes instantly. Routine becomes emergency.

Doctors now know for certain that I've broken my neck, but are still unsure of the extent of the damage. They tell me they've seen broken necks before but that my cervical spine x-rays are inconclusive and CT scans need to be performed.

No one at the hospital is prepared for what they see on the CT scan.



*CT Scan of the crushed
5th cervical vertebrae.*

My neck has shattered into hundreds of small pieces, I am told. The bones of my fifth and sixth vertebrae were crushed, but most of the pieces are still sitting in exactly the same place—this is the good news. That, and the fact that we now know what we are dealing with. The bad news is that the staff at this hospital have never seen anything like this before. We are all preparing mentally to go to work.

More bad news: the ligaments in my neck are also almost certainly torn, so the road to recovery will be extremely risky. Little did we know there would be three more hurdles to jump during the next four months and that one of them would result in paralysis from the chest down.

I can feel each heartbeat in my chest as the doctors outline my status. I need to know but emotions cloud my thoughts. What next? What action is next, I wonder helplessly, asking for the telephone again. I need to let Patti know about the extent of the damage, before the first surgery, just in case

I don't make it. Surrounded by the team's spouses and by neighbourhood friends, she has been waiting for the call for almost an hour. As hard as I try, I can barely speak because of my emotions.

The doctor takes the telephone from my ear and speaks to Patti briefly, and when I get back on the phone with her I do not talk as she reassures me of the doctors' plan. As I hang up, in tears, I am introduced to the person who will hold my head in place out over the end of the table during the two-hour surgical procedure. That snaps me back to the reality of the situation I am in.

The procedure will see four self-tapping screws drilled through the skin and 3 millimetres into my skull to hold a metal halo, which in turn will be attached with metal bars to a vest around my torso. The doctors' preference is to put me to sleep for the procedure, for obvious comfort reasons, but also because it will prevent me from moving as the screws were drilled into my skull. I want no part of being put to sleep. I have remained rigidly still for the past six hours and I can do so for a few hours more, no matter what they are drilling into my head. If I am going to die or become paralyzed, I want to be awake for the journey.

It is uncomfortably obvious that we, both patient and doctors, are crossing into uncharted territory. But we have to move forward; it is not possible to go back. We agree to take the next step.

The next step is to finally shift from the face-down position I've been in since the impact with the boards. I have to let go of the hockey gloves I've been wearing since the start of the third period of the game, the gloves that have saved my life, that have stopped my head from falling forward and damaging my spinal cord. I still have those gloves.

The medical team rolls me onto my back and slides me up the table until my head would have been hanging in midair if not for one gentleman holding it in his hands. The ligaments in my neck are completely torn, and his hands are the only thing keeping my head from sagging towards the floor. As his hands cup the back of my head I think of Patti, Jenna, my then-unborn daughter Jamie and the life this man holds in his hands.

"Mein Leben ist in Ihren Händen," I say. My life is in your hands. I stare him straight in the eyes, adding that his is not the last face I want to see in my life. I remember his smile, reassuring me, as he and the medical team continue working me into position.

The doctor slowly produces a series of metal pieces he will use during the operation, and then comes a slew of instructions in English. I quickly learn that this is the first time this hospital and this group of doctors has ever installed a halo



Life-saving gloves supporting my head after impact.

fixation device. “Please take your time, I have nowhere to be,” I say, managing a weak smile. But trust them I must, for what good will it do to not trust them?

I feel a little bit like the star in some strange Frankenstein movie as the doctor drills screws into my head, one by one, and builds a metal structure around me. It is the beginning of the most physically painful experience of my life. The shock of the accident had protected my brain from the pain that is inevitably coming. I am about to enter the place where, to survive, the human body and mind must balance painkilling medication and maintaining a heartbeat.

By this time, it is abundantly clear to everyone around me that my hockey career is over, but to me, the reality of career termination has not yet set in. For an athlete, rehabilitation after injury is just part of the game. I am in a difficult position but I have not reached the lowest point of my life just yet.

After the operation, I am transferred to the intensive care unit. With the clarity of an HD movie, reflections on a life of sports and hockey in the NHL, filled with all the successes I had taken for granted, the challenges I had overcome and the painful realizations of situations I had chosen to block out, all come pouring back to me in vivid colour. The movie begins with my first memory of the freedom to run.

Reflections on Childhood Adversity

Many people have told me over the years that I was either cursed or blessed with what “they” medically term attention-deficit disorder (ADD). I don’t deny that this is true. I credit this type of thinking process with my making it as far as I have in the world of sports, survival and transition. I have always been exceptionally able to shake off things that would normally drag a person down into depression and failure. My imagination has both created adversity and come to my rescue more times than I can count.

I believe that telling the story of what happened early in my life can only help others who may have experienced or are experiencing the emotional trauma associated with a broken family, separation or divorce.

I had not yet even been born when that emotional impact occurred in my life. Ignoring the fact that this reality has been playing quietly in my mind over the past several decades does not serve me or the people I care about. I firmly believe that getting things out in the open is the

Today I understand why the human will can never compete with the imagination: will, by itself, cannot save us from the adversity and change we will experience in our pursuit of excellence over the course of a lifetime. The human will needs the help of imagination.

—Doug Smith

best healing technique we, as humans, possess.

Emotional or physical trauma, at any age, has a “blast radius” that is felt by everyone around the situation. As a newborn, it is inevitable that you get caught in the blast when awful things happen to your mother. Even though feelings are almost impossible to measure, we cannot deny that they exist when we feel them, and when we suppress them they inevitably find their way to the surface in another form. We can attempt to ignore them with our will in the short term, but they will always come out one way or another.

I guess you could say that, initially, it was my young 19-year-old mother and me against the world. Born in Ottawa, Douglas Eric Harlock on May 17, 1963, I was not aware that my blood father had decided that he was not ready to have a child in his life, or to have a life with my mother. Just before I was born he went out with friends and never returned home, deciding to start a new life thousands of miles away.

It would be more than 40 years before I had the opportunity to meet and spend some time with my biological father, Peter Harlock, and to introduce Jenna, Jamie and Patti to him. Patti and I made the decision to stop in on a trip to Vancouver to say hello and introduce our girls. I later flew out to spend time on the golf course with both Peter and my biological grandfather Ian Harlock, who I had met when I was 19, in Ottawa. Both trips were fascinating experiences and opened my eyes and my mind to more possibilities than I can possibly explain. This was a personal journey of discovery and I encourage you to follow your heart as I did in this case. Some things can't wait forever. Break through those emotional adversities and be stronger as a result.

Thank you for reaching out in 1982, Ian—I know it must have been difficult. But it is never too late. I am so pleased that my daughters had the chance to meet you and Peter in my lifetime. It happened because of you, and it means a lot to me.

There are very few people in this world who would step into a lifetime commitment with a spouse and help raise that spouse's child as their own. This is why I call Wayne Smith my dad and my best friend. He has protected me and taught me from the time I was about two years old, and he continues to teach me today with his level head and logical mind and with a heart that encourages everyone he meets to be the best they can be.

The simple fact of my existence caused great pain and confusion in many lives, but I was always well protected from the heavy emotion that lingered at times. Some unhappy situations I have heard about from my mother's family but personally, I can look only at circumstances as very fortunate for everyone in the end, because without those circumstances so many years ago, my life, my relationship with Patti and our wonderful, beautiful children would not exist today.

I am not writing this to judge anyone but to allow what happened to me to stand as a positive example of what an open, supportive approach can bring

to life. I can't imagine the pain of making the decisions my parents—all three of them—had to make as teenagers at that time. On the emotional side, I am honoured that Wayne embraced me with more love, caring and guidance than I could have ever asked for from anyone. On the physical and athletic side, it was his guidance, persistence, perseverance and athletic abilities that transformed me into a balanced world-class athlete. Who I am as a father, husband and person today I owe to him and I am grateful for him every single day.



Doug confined to heavy ankle-to-thigh leg braces from 18 months old.

My First Cage: Leg Braces

It was not long after I started to stand that my family realized there was something wrong with my legs. Doctors found that I had soft-tissue deformities twisting my legs and that my left kneecap was in two pieces. The decision to put me in leg braces must have been extremely difficult for my mother, but the decision was made and my first experience with confinement and being seen as crippled began.

Most people would agree that no matter how young someone is, the experience of wearing leg braces has to affect who that person is and who they become. The key is that their support team maintains a belief system that is consistent and impenetrable. There is no place for negativity in this environment because it does not serve the patient.

One of the gifts we all have at our disposal is contrast. Contrast helps us to embrace transition; without it we lose our reference point and everything becomes the same. When you are in the freezing cold and you come into a warm place, it is the transition that gives you pleasure. If we did not have winter we would not appreciate the spring nearly as much. When someone tells me that

their day isn't going very well, I ask, "Compared to what?" When someone tells me they are too fat, I ask, "Compared to whom?"

The movie *Forrest Gump* nailed it with its portrayal of early life in leg braces. Forrest was confined by these metal structures and when he broke free from them running was not a chore; running was a pleasure-filled escape. Running allowed him to think and to sort things out. Running came naturally because of what he had to compare it to.

I promise you that if you had been in solitary confinement for 60 days, you would not complain about your day a week after being set free. Living with leg braces was a reality for me at 18 months. The theory at the time was that my situation would correct itself if my legs grew into the proper position and my kneecap fused together on its own. They did and it did, and I started running the day the braces came off.

***When you are
a child with leg
braces, every adult
and child tells you
that you can do it.
I believed them.***

—Doug Smith

Chapter 2

Reality of Cause and Effect



Being airlifted from hospital to hospital 10 days after impact.

The impact with the boards has caused a vibration through my body similar to striking a tuning fork on the edge of a table. It is as if every single cell in my body is vibrating like an electrical current and there is nothing my mind or body can do to shut it down. It is beyond my mental and physical control.



Strapped down and secure in the medical helicopter.

As I lie in traction on my back, it is like my head has been locked into a vice that has been screwed tight to the point just before my skull will pop like a melon. I focus on a single spot on the suspended ceiling in the ICU, but my mind jumps from where I am in reality to my past and back again.

Whether I like it or not, it is a time for sorting out what has gone right and what has gone wrong in the crazy, rollercoaster life of a professional athlete who has lived on the edge without regard for his body—and many times without regard for other people's feelings. I had changed in an instant and that change has opened my mind to reflect on who I had hurt and who I had helped along the way.

I can't help but think, as I lie here, trapped in a cage, that this must be what it is like just before you die. I wonder for a moment whether I will get a second chance to make things right, to correct my errors in judgement. Will I have an opportunity to start a new life with a new perspective? I stare wide-eyed through the metal cage fixed to my skull, my head suspended in midair by four bolts drilled three millimetres into my skull. It is a scene from a horror movie—I think of *The Lawnmower Man* and *Hellraiser*. This is a genuine, real-time nightmare I am experiencing, yet I can't help but drift off into memories of the past during the brief time the morphine has an effect. At the hospital, decisions on what is going to happen to me next are being made on the fly. My role is to hang in there.

As I fade back into consciousness, I feel every muscle in my body still completely locked up and every cell vibrating in agony. It is a ripping pain impossible to describe or fight. I want to give up and let it go but I can't. I lie in my bed trying to absorb the searing pain, telling myself over and over and over: "It's OK, it's OK, hold on...it's OK."

As I approach the twentieth hour of excruciating pain, just before I begin to drift off, suddenly the alarm on the cardiac monitor beside my bed goes off for the tenth time. Nurses rush in to wake me again. I had just closed my eyes seconds after another shot of morphine was injected into my IV, but had reached the point where the risk of cardiac arrest had become too great to allow me to sleep. The morphine shots ease the pain for less than two minutes, before I beg for another. With each shot my heart rate drops until bottoming out at 29 beats per minute, triggering the alarms.

The fact that something very bad has just happened to my family has not yet sunk in; I am focused on the current battle to survive. But something very

No matter what kind of physical or emotional adversity you are facing, challenge it head on and take action as soon as humanly possible. Move towards your goals and your goals will move towards you at the same time.

—Doug Smith

bad *has* just happened to my family, something so bad we can't comprehend its implications. Along with the pain, waves of overwhelming emotion pulse through every cell in my body, welling up from somewhere deep inside me like the building of a wave on the ocean. The physical impact of running head first into the boards has triggered an emotional chain reaction through me to my immediate family, my extended family and everyone I know. As the next shot of morphine seeps into my veins I am able to think and reflect for a moment.

Reflections of an Athlete

As a young athlete I went from one game to the next virtually nonstop. Even at a very young age I felt like I was always running out of time, like I was coming from behind in the last minute of a one-goal game. There was always a sense of urgency; I could never understand why the other kids wanted to take a break and rest or eat.

My mother had always kept me busy—she said it was easier to keep me busy than to clean up the destruction I caused if I wasn't kept busy. Hockey was a perfect sport for my type of personality because it is so complex. There are many components to the game and working on figuring out each of them kept my obsessive personality extremely busy.

I would spend hours and hours on the frozen river as a young boy, before they built the outdoor rink across the street. Once every few winters there would be a big melt followed quickly by a freeze and the river would become a 30-kilometre ice rink. You could shoot a puck half a kilometre with the wind at your back. On a windy day you could skate 40 kilometres per hour one way but then have to grind it out into the wind on the return trip. That is a transition to experience at -40°.

In the wintertime, if I wasn't on the river or at the outdoor rink my mom was packing me up to go night skiing. When I had a weekend off we would spend it at the Camp Fortune ski resort, where I would eventually join the racing team for a brief go at the downhill.

We were all given the power to choose and the power to act but we were not given freedom from the consequences of our choices and actions.

—John Kanary
author, *Breaking Through Limitations*

Team Competition

If you want to get the flu then I recommend that you hang around people who have the flu. When it comes to team sports, if you want to be a talented player then you need to be near talented players. This concept holds true for success in anything at every level and every age. If you want to compete, you must continue to raise the bar with the people you work and play with to become the best you can be both individually and cooperatively. Ego and

self-righteous behaviour will snuff out the success of any team and stifle communication, but the competition still keeps coming.

The Nepean Raiders organization had plenty of talent both on the ice and behind the bench. When I was nine years old, the Baby Raiders were my first competitive hockey team. When they say timing is everything, it really is. On this first competitive team there were three guys who made it to the pros and one guy who won an NCAA Championship with Princeton University. You will find the entire team roster on our companion website, along with other pictures of my minor hockey years with the Nepean Raiders.

When I speak to hockey teams today, whether it is at a banquet or a more intimate dressing room talk, I always ask the teams, "Who are the three or four guys on your team who are going all the way with the sport?" Then I tell them there is not a player in the room who will be able to make it on his or her own, so it is in their best interest to make everyone around them better.

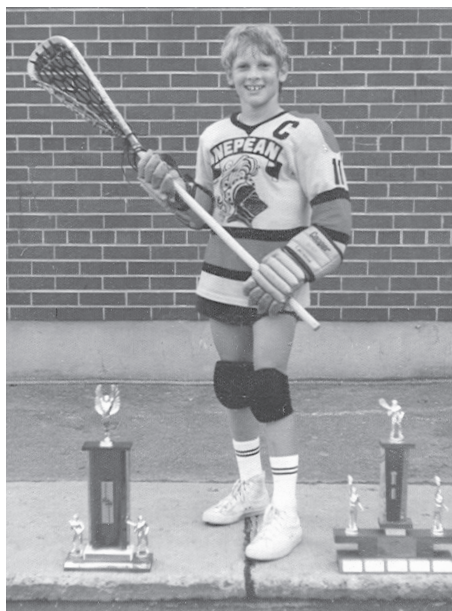
As I mentioned earlier, when you were born you were given the power to choose and the power to act. Use these powers very carefully because one thing we are not given is freedom from the consequences of our choices or actions. You are where you are today because you have put yourself there. Changing course is always an option for anyone.

Opportunities are opening up around the world every single year as the game of hockey becomes popular in more and more countries. Today, if you are a competitive hockey player living and playing in Canada and you want to participate in the hockey economy, the choice is yours. If you don't make it as a player (and aside from injury, there is no reason you can't make it), then there are thousands of opportunities around the game, all over the world. Our team will be sharing these opportunities through the Internet with our subscribers so as not to bother people who do not want the information. It's easy to subscribe and it's easy not to subscribe.

Lacrosse, Friendships and the Drive to Succeed

Childhood was a blast because my mom and dad made it that way. They invested time and energy in delivering me to opportunities where I could participate. It didn't matter what game or sport it was, I was just happy to be playing. My dad was stern at times and would not put up with a performance that was less than the best I could do. He would never let me fool myself when my performance was lacking; he was fair and I knew he always believed in me. We made a great team then and we still do today. Hardball, fastball, golf, tennis, track and field; one by one I would work at mastering them all.

Then there was table tennis and the opportunity to have grown up playing daily with Alex Edwards and Ron Edwards, just two houses away. Ron went on to play professional table tennis and then coach the Canadian table tennis team. Those are some of the best memories of my childhood. We remain good friends today.



Doug as Captain of the Bantam Nepean Knights.

One day when I was about 10, my parents let me try a crazy game called lacrosse—and thank goodness they did. Through Lacrosse, I met long-time friends like Tony House. I remember playing on a sheet of asphalt in the sweltering heat of the Ottawa summer. It was so hot some days it felt like the pavement was melting your shoes but I loved every single minute and embraced the game. In my first year playing lacrosse, I averaged over seven goals a game. The other players' parents were petitioning to have me suspended from the league because they felt I must have been too old for that level.

Halfway through that first season my parents were asked whether they would put me in the older group and whether I would like to play on the competitive team. Within four years I was ranked among the top 10 players my age in Canada. Lacrosse just fit with me. And because of lacrosse, I developed into a better hockey player.

I have vivid memories of summertime in my youth, standing in front of a cinder block wall on our property throwing a lacrosse ball at the wall for five or six hours at a time. I recall the competitions I would create in my mind as I pushed myself to hang in there for another 10 minutes, another hour. If I didn't throw it and catch it 100 times, I would have to start over until I had completed the self-imposed challenge. I was always open to competition and would play with others until they got tired and someone took their place, or I would go and play against the wall again.

The internal drive to go until dropping creates the finest athletes in the world, and the finest athletes in the world rarely think about what negative impact their drive and determination could have on others. It is not that they intentionally hurt others; it is just that they are so focused and that they do not have the time or the patience to satisfy everyone—or sometimes anyone except themselves. This mindset has the potential to be a negative trait in business and we will examine this issue later in the series.

People with these extreme traits focus completely on accomplishment. Their actions on the “field of battle” move their competition out of the way,



Nepean Knights Bantam Lacrosse Team, 1976

causing many people who might want to compete to not even show up. Other people live under an illusion, thinking they have worked hard enough and should be able to compete. They may want to win but wanting is only thinking. These people have failed to understand that thinking has nothing to do with being a top performer. Once you step into the arena, winning must be a non-negotiable commitment. It needs to be automatic and automation comes from practice and repetition. It is automation that dominates play; the more you think out there, the faster you fall. If there is ever a question in your mind as to whether you trained hard enough, that question will erode your performance every single time.

Business success works in exactly the same way; only the physical body is absent from the equation. In fact, the more you use your body to demonstrate your feelings in business the more challenges you may create for yourself. Reacting and attempting to use brute force in business can cost you. It is not a “drop the gloves” environment. There is no time clock, there are no referees. If you play as if there were, your behaviour will eventually come around and stab you in the back. In contrast to your ability to see everything that is happening on the field of sports, you will not see the attack coming in business. We will examine how to use this knowledge to your advantage throughout the series.

Where is your cinder block wall? What are you obsessively chipping away at? Are you doing something over and over again more than anyone else you know? Is it natural or do you really have to work at it? If you are allowing

yourself to quit early then you have not yet found the thing at which you can be the best in the world. Don't fall into the illusion that the successful people you meet just got lucky.

By the time I was 14, hockey and lacrosse were beginning to overlap—the trend towards playing hockey longer into the spring was starting. I decided that it was lacrosse that had to go. Even today I am not sure how much influence my mom and dad had in this decision. I was oblivious to my athletic talent, but to the coaches it was becoming apparent that there was something different about me.

My personal experience is my personal experience; please do not compare yourself to me. I am not trying to express arrogance when I speak about these issues, I am trying to express confidence. I am confident that if any competitive hockey player was to participate in the sports I participated in and committed one percent of their day to the exercises and concepts I have adopted over the years, barring injury, they would make it to the professional, university or semi-professional level.

I understand that not all athletes aspire to become professional, but if you can advance your career or add to your bottom line through playing a sport, if you can develop friendships that last a lifetime and stay in good shape, it does not get any better than that for the athlete and the parents who have supported them through the process. Minor hockey was a wonderful experience for me in Ottawa and when it was time to graduate to the next level it was Brian Kilrea who saw something in me.

Chapter 3

Reality of Isolation

Snapping back to the pain of reality, I lie in bed, shaking and alone. Meanwhile, on the other side of the country, Hanis and Karin, our wonderful neighbours, have heard about the accident. Hanis prepares his vehicle to drive Patti and two-year-old Jenna to the hospital I am in, a nine-hour trip.

The painful fight seems endless. My entire body and mind have been fighting the pain nonstop. Unconscious, almost 30 hours after hitting the boards, I am taken to a normal hospital room. And when I wake up, Patti and Jenna are there. It is impossible to hold in the emotion. For the first time since impact I break down from the joy of seeing my girls.

Patti is five months pregnant with Jamie Lynn and it is critical that she maintain her strength. For the first few nights the hospital makes Patti and Jenna as comfortable as possible and they stay by my side until the third day.

Fortunately, the city where I had played the previous season is only 30 minutes down the road in the mountains of Tyrol and our former nanny's



Patti, pregnant with Jamie, and 2-year-old Jenna just days after impact.

family welcomes Patti into their home, offering her a place to stay and helping her set up her “base camp” until I am stable enough to be moved.

Over the next six days the halo is carefully cranked upwards about a quarter of a centimetre a day to straighten my neck and take the immense muscular pressure off the soft, rubbery discs that sit between the vertebrae in the spine. The strong muscles in my neck have tightened into “protect” mode. The only way to open those muscles up is to ratchet my head away from my body at a rate of five millimetres every two days. It is extremely painful. But the hope is that once the distance between the broken bones has reached normal spacing, the bone will heal without incident and without any more bone moving into the spinal cord canal.



Headshot taken just months before impact.

***Promise yourself
you will never give
up. Not the world,
not me, but yourself.***

***—Bob Proctor
author, You Were
Born Rich***

This first week will be a critical time; every move I make is monitored very closely. When I arrive in my room after leaving the ICU, it is wonderful to see a new ceiling! I continue to lie flat on my back, my head suspended by the bolts. I ask the nurse to crank up my bed for the first time since the impact. She signals me and tells me in German that this is not a good idea at this stage, but I insist.

After the bed reaches a 45-degrees angle the nausea becomes overwhelming and I feel like I am going to pass out and throw up at the same time because of the dizziness. “Quickly—put me down, put me down right now!” Looking at the ceiling will be just fine for now. My body and its internal functions have been rocked so hard that I do not have the circulation neces-

sary to get enough blood to my brain to keep me conscious.

Suddenly, it becomes abundantly clear that my career has come to an end. But to me and my family it is not an issue of whether I will ever play hockey again, it is an issue of survival. I am far from out of the woods. Over the next four months there will be a series of adventures; some painful, some funny and some horrifying.

After 10 days of Patti and Jenna virtually living in a hospital nine hours away from our home, it is time to look at the possibility of moving me back to the town we live in, on the other side of the country. We approach the owners of the team about getting this wounded soldier back home. The team offers train tickets for me, my wife and Jenna. My doctors refuse outright to allow train travel because of the instability of my neck. The only way the doctors will allow me

to be moved is by helicopter from the hospital to the airport, jet from one airport to the other and then helicopter from the airport to the hospital in my town. I will need to stay hospitalized for some time yet as the bone has not had time to begin healing.

My team is not willing to bear the cost of the flights and the socialized medical system will not pay for transport because I am in a hospital already. We have fallen into the grey zone of socialized medicine. All of a sudden I feel like a wounded animal backed into a corner. It does not make any sense to me that neither the team nor the league will take financial responsibility for what has happened.

But we can only move forward and do what we must do. Like anything that gets in your way in life, no matter how far down you are, you must make the decision to move forward before anything can happen. You must believe you can accomplish what you have set out to accomplish. And then you must take action, massive action.

After a family discussion, we leave ourselves with only one option: take action and talk to the media in hopes of gathering enough sponsorship to move me across the country. Within days, one of the country's largest insurance companies, Generali, makes the commitment to pay the equivalent of \$8,000 in transport expense in exchange for a photograph of me with the company mascot and a story in the biggest weekly magazine in the country. We are grateful for their help.

When someone tells you they don't have any time, what they are really saying is that it is not worth their time.

—Unknown



Being loaded onto a private Leer Jet for transport to home town.

Moving Day

It is moving day and up to the roof we go. From there, I will get the opportunity to experience the rush of being strapped into a helicopter, flown to the airport and boarded onto a waiting Lear jet, which will fly me off to the other side of the country. My very own Lear jet, pilot, co-pilot and nurse included!

But there is a problem. The metal backboard/bed I am strapped to with four seatbelts, though it fit through the wide sliding door of the helicopter, does not fit so well through the door of the small jet. With me in traction, and with the four belts holding me in place, the only way they can get me inside the plane is to turn me sideways and slide me through the door and into the back of the plane, which had been modified for this journey. Talk about learning to trust. Totally helpless, feeling like a couch being carried up the stairs, I just squeeze through. We are off for the 75-minute flight. I can't help but try to imagine what the scenery is like. My own Lear jet to travel across the Alps on a crystal-clear day and all I can see is the ceiling of the plane!

Landing at our local hospital in the second helicopter and seeing the familiar face of the team doctor makes me feel that familiar emotional knot in my stomach, welling up to my chest.

The doctor patiently begins teaching me about what has actually happened to me—and about how lucky I am. I am comfortable with him and I believe he is comfortable with me. The pain has become manageable with the 200 milligrams of morphine per day—and I am back in my team's city. Getting me here has been a huge exercise and I am exhausted from the trip. Patti and Jenna are not allowed to accompany me on the jet so are making the long drive home.

When the lights go out that night I am alone with my reflections; the dreams continue in vivid colour.

Reflections on Junior Hockey: The Ottawa 67's

The story of my climb to the National Hockey League and my fall from superstar status in Buffalo eight years later started in the Ontario Hockey League when I was playing centre for the Ottawa 67's. I was one of the fortunate players to have been drafted by his hometown Junior team, which would allow me to live at home and go to Bell High School with my childhood friends. I was also one of the lucky ones to have played for the great Brian Kilrea.

Ottawa remains the scene of the biggest goal I scored in my career. In front of a Civic Centre capacity crowd of 10,000 people, one minute to play in the third period, down 3-2 and facing elimination from the playoffs, a penalty shot was called on me. The entire season was in my hands. A move



Ottawa 67s & 17 years old.

to the backhand and off the crossbar into the net kept us alive and ignited the arena. When I think back to this goal, still vivid in my mind, I realize that even though I could feel fear coursing through my body, I was able to perform.

Junior would prove to be different from Midget hockey right out of the gate. The 19- and 20-year-old players were full-grown men and I had only ever played with boys. Early in training camp I learned three of the most valuable lessons of my hockey career.

- Respect the opposing defenseman in the mid-ice area.
- Never chew gum while playing a contact sport.
- Helmets save lives.

In my first inter-squad game in training camp, I came across centre ice with my head down and for the first time in my hockey career was hit head on by a 6' 2", 210-pound defenseman named Bill Kitchen. The first thing to hit the ice was my head. I was knocked unconscious and my gum became lodged in my throat. Emergency action was taken on the ice and the gum was removed. I regained consciousness just as I was leaving the arena in an ambulance. The result was a concussion and a 24-hour piece of time being removed from my memory banks forever.

Fortunately I was back on the ice in a week. Talk about a lesson. I never got caught with my head down in open ice again and I never again chewed gum while playing sports. These were valuable and logical adjustments that would save my life over the years.

One of the short-term benefits of playing in my hometown was that I didn't need to make any major social adjustments. One of the downfalls of playing in my hometown was that I didn't need to make any major social adjustments. When I look back on my Junior career I realize I was always torn between high-school friends and teammates. Because I lived at home in the west end of Ottawa I did not tend to hang out with the team as much as I would have if I had been in a city away from home.

The effect of that circumstance was that when I turned pro at 18, I was probably even younger on a social scale. I was only a 16-year-old underage player my first year in the OHL, taking grade 11 at Bell High School in Nepean. Every night after practising with the Ottawa 67's, I would come home, eat dinner as fast as possible and end up on the outdoor rink across the street from my house. On free weekends I would be on the river skating and playing hockey with friends.

During that first year of junior hockey I had unspectacular statistics, scoring 23 goals and adding 34 assists for 57 points in 64 games. To others, it

***Fear is not telling
us we can't do
something. Fear
is simply telling us
we have not done
something yet.***

***—John Canary, author,
Breaking Through Limitations***



*New leg brace
for torn ligaments.*

was a sign that I might have what it takes to play in the NHL one day.

Hard Work, Enthusiasm and Excitement

If you are reading this while you are injured or laid up, allow it to be a form of motivation for you. In game three of my second season with the Ottawa 67's, which was my NHL draft year, I had a seemingly harmless fall in front of the opposition's net and tore the medial collateral ligament on the inside of my right knee. This injury forced me into a cast for several weeks, followed by rehabilitation for several more weeks. I was fitted with a heavy knee brace that I still wear today for any high-impact activities. I missed 17 games of a 72-game schedule. I couldn't wait to get back on the ice.

When I talk to aspiring athletes and parents I tell this story because it is a great example of how all the hard work over many years, married to enthusiasm and excitement, can come together at the same time and produce wonderful results, like all the pieces coming together on the manufacturing floor to reveal a completely assembled, functioning product. During the final 50 games of the season, everything I did on the ice seemed to result in the puck going into the opposition's net, whether it was off my head or from behind the net. My left-winger, Maurice Lemay, and I had put the time into our relationship on the ice and it all came together. I finished the season with 101 points in 55 games.

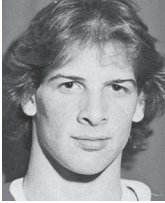
It seemed that the better I did on the ice, the better I felt in school. In fact, the injury to my knee gave me more time for my studies and as a result I won the OHL's Bobby Smith Trophy in 1981/82 for combined academic and hockey excellence.

Maybe the fact that I had always taken the summer off contributed to my success—I played very little summer hockey growing up. That pattern seemed to make me hungry for and enthusiastic about the game every fall. When you are considering pushing your child into 11 or 12 months of hockey per year, think hard about that decision. So many kids get burned out by the time they are 15 that they never get an opportunity to see the possibilities—or even worse, they just stop caring about the game completely. I always played other sports in the summer. I did dry-land (off-ice) training for a few weeks in August, then training camp in September, and always impressed the coaches because of my desire to be there. If you do not have enthusiasm, your effort will be unremarkable—and so will your results.

Enthusiasm: origin: 1570–80; < LL *enthūsiasmus* < Gk *enthousiasmós*, equiv. to *enthousí(a) possession by a god* (*énthous*, var. of *éntheos* having a god within)

When you look at my draft year, when I was 17, I had been off the ice from May until September, played for a month, got injured and was off the ice for another six weeks. And then I played the best hockey of my life. Go figure. The origin of the word “enthusiasm” is my best explanation.

Sports Mastery



***NHL draft time
at 17.***

Enthusiasm is not the only thing you need to compete at the highest level, however. Techniques that you have learned from day one will also play a role in the results you achieve. Every power move, hit or hard shot that you make in your sport can be improved by breaking it down to techniques and repeating those techniques in slow motion over and over and over again against resistance.

If you have a child who is playing hockey, or if you are a player looking to find the secrets of success in your sport, knowing more about the game of hockey is part of your knowledge base but it is not the key to making you a better hockey player and a better teammate. The key is the development of your understanding of balance and movement and of the universal laws that govern this balance and movement. The more cross-training athletes can do, the better they will become in their chosen sports. We see this over and over again with elite athletes. Most of the top athletes are accomplished in more than one sport. I mean really accomplished. This is the reason they excel; I can show you online.

Chapter 4

Reality of the Halo

Within a week, both the halo and my emotional state have become bearable and I receive permission to move around the hospital on my own. I begin frequenting the cafeteria at the hospital; this will become one of the greatest learning experiences of my life.

When you must wear a suit of body armour, including a helmet attached to your skull, for four months and the only way you can get out of it is with a set of wrenches, you are governed by a new set of rules. The first and most obvious rule is to never put your head down. And I mean never. For the time I am in the halo, this rule is law. My head is fixed in a permanent chin-up, straight-ahead position. I must turn and face the person I am talking to with my entire body or I simply can't see them. This lesson has stayed with me: Even today, I've held on to the habit of fully turning to face the person I am talking to.

Anyone can learn this with practice. You don't have to be forced to wear a halo to believe that it is an effective relationship-building technique to turn and face the person you are talking with and stop looking around the room for someone you perceive as more important. I sometimes wonder whether the halo should be mandatory for three months for every high-school student. Imagine what it would do for a student (or anyone for that matter) to walk into a cafeteria full of people who turn and look at you all at once. Imagine what it would be like to have a little girl at the grocery store look up at you and start to cry because of what you look like. Would it make you try even harder to convey warmth with your eyes?

Deep down we don't want to make people cry when they look at us, so no matter what we look like we must always try hard to become the best we

can be at making people feel good. Taking it for granted that people should feel good around you can easily be perceived as arrogant and who wants to be perceived that way?

When you are in the halo and you walk into a room full of people, everyone turns to look at you almost immediately. Our tendency is to look down when something like that happens to us—I know mine was before that option was taken away. Wearing the halo caused a huge transition in the way I saw the world. Thank goodness for transition. When you are in the halo, facing one person or an entire crowd, there is nothing you can do but make eye contact with everyone who looks at you. The only way you can look is straight ahead, so if your eyes are open you are making eye contact wherever you go, whether you like it or not.

Moving Again

Even though I can move around and I am becoming accustomed to the emotional ramifications of going outside and being in public, Patti and I decide as a team that having me at home would be the best thing for the family. A date is set and arrangements are made for me to make the move out of the hospital and into a hospital bed at home.

I have been in the institution for almost four weeks, and the day of my move is one of the funniest and scariest times in my life. Patti and I would later tell this story together because it paints a picture of what our life was becoming. Just walking outside of the hospital that day makes me feel sick. Seeing the cars moving as fast as they do is too much for the pace to which my mind has adjusted. Everything has been moving so slowly for so long that I have become accustomed to it with every cell of my being. The hospital offers an ambulance for transport to our home but I decline, reasoning that I am going to be outside the hospital and an ambulance will not always be at our beck and call. Patti will drive me home... brave Patti.

The day Patti is to pick me up at the hospital arrives; I remember how nervous she was. By this time she is six months pregnant and we have both been through the ringer. My nerves are shot, hers are shot, but we are both excited that I am coming home so I can be with our two-year-old, Jenna.

It is a beautiful early March day, but the weather is crisp enough for there to be patchy ice on the sidewalks and the snow is not melting yet. As I wait at the exit at the back of the hospital, Patti pulls up the hill to the parking lot. She comes and grabs my hand to walk me to the car down the sloped, icy lot. A man in a halo supporting his pregnant wife so she doesn't fall, and a pregnant woman supporting her injured husband so he doesn't fall; if that's not the makings of a love story, I don't know what is.

As we approach our small four-door sedan it becomes apparent that it is going to be very difficult to fit both me and the cage around my head into the passenger seat. With the halo I need 6' 4" of unbendable clearance. The

Renault is going to have a tough time meeting the challenge. I start to feel a little panicked, wondering whether this is such a good idea. Patti's nervous demeanour and the small car with no headroom are creating a rush of negative emotion inside me. Not to mention the fact that I still have a freshly broken neck that I am constantly worried about.

"No worries," Patti says as she opens the passenger-side back door to remove everything behind the seat, then moves the front passenger seat all the way back. "You'll fit," she says as she supports me as I move into the seat with millimetres to spare. I am now officially trapped in this car, unable to move or turn my head. She buckles up my seatbelt, runs around the front of the car (which is a standard, parked on quite a steep hill, facing up the hill), jumps into the driver's seat, puts her seatbelt on, starts the car and is just about to depart when we realize she has left the passenger-side back door open.

Sweat is already dripping from my forehead because of this new fast pace and I am feeling vulnerable because of my injury. Everything is moving at light speed as Patti jumps out of the driver's seat and starts to run around the car. But she has left the car in neutral, and it immediately starts rolling backwards down the hill. Needless to say, I start yelling and she rushes back to the driver's door and jumps into the moving car and hits the breaks.

By this time I am so nervous I can no longer imagine getting home this way. My door is already open and I am trying to get out of this car. Poor Patti is doing the best she can under incredibly difficult circumstances and she has a way of being patient but firm. We both regain our composure and after 10 minutes or so we are on our way for the five-minute drive to our house, where the hospital bed, our daughter Jenna and our good friends and neighbours Hanis and Karin await.

That first night in the same house as my family makes me feel comfortable and nervous at the same time. I am relieved to be under my own roof with my family for the first time in weeks but I am without the security blanket of emergency care for the first time since breaking my neck.

For the first time since the impact I feel everything is going to be OK. But the dreams of the game continue that night as I reflect on the beginning of an NHL career when I was barely 18.

Reflections on Joining the Los Angeles Kings at 18

The Montreal Forum

The dream of every boy who ever put on hockey equipment was realized for me in the Montreal Forum. Dale Hawerchuk was drafted first overall. And then



they called my name. "The Los Angeles Kings select first-round, second pick overall, from the Ottawa 67's, Doug Smith." Bobby Carpenter was picked third by the Washington Capitals and Ron Francis fourth by the Hartford Whalers.

Continued on page 37

1981 NHL Entry Draft

Welcome to the 1981 NHL Entry Draft which took place at the Forum in Montreal. I have included this information in my book to honour the guys who were in my “graduating” class of 1981. I would cherish a photo of everyone together, but it was never thought of at the time. This was the first year the NHL dropped back to 18-year-olds. Every one of the guys on this list over-achieved and reached the dream of getting recognized as one of the top hockey players in the world that year. I had the pleasure of playing with many of them over the years and experienced the daunting task of playing against even more of them. I hope to get the opportunity to share the stage with you again someday. If your name is on this list or you are a family member or friend of someone on this list, please connect with me, share your story and let's see if there is some way we can work together in the future.

Round one

Pick #	Player	Position	NHL team	College/junior/club team
1	Dale Hawerchuk	Centre	Winnipeg Jets	Cornwall Royals (QMJHL)
2	Doug Smith	Centre	Los Angeles Kings	Ottawa 67's (OMJHL)
3	Bobby Carpenter	Centre	Washington Capitals	St. John's Prep (Mass.)
4	Ron Francis	Centre	Hartford Whalers	Sault Ste. Marie Greyhounds (OMJHL)
5	Joe Cirella	Defence	Colorado Rockies	Oshawa Generals (OMJHL)
6	Jim Benning	Defence	Toronto Maple Leafs	Portland Winter Hawks (WHL)
7	Mark Hunter	Right wing	Montreal Canadiens	Brantford Alexanders (OMJHL)
8	Grant Fuhr	Goaltender	Edmonton Oilers	Victoria Cougars (WHL)
9	James Patrick	Defence	New York Rangers	Prince Albert Raiders (SJHL)
10	Garth Butcher	Defence	Vancouver Canucks	Regina Pats (WHL)
11	Randy Moller	Defence	Quebec Nordiques	Lethbridge Broncos (WHL)
12	Tony Tanti	Right wing	Chicago Black Hawks	Oshawa Generals (OMJHL)
13	Ron Meighan	Defence	Minnesota North Stars	Niagara Falls Flyers (OMJHL)
14	Normand Leveille	Left wing	Boston Bruins	Chicoutimi Saguenéens (QMJHL)
15	Al MacInnis	Defence	Calgary Flames	Kitchener Rangers (OMJHL)
16	Steve Smith	Defence	Philadelphia Flyers	Sault Ste. Marie Greyhounds (OMJHL)
17	Jiri Dudacek	Right wing	Buffalo Sabres	HC Kladno (Czech)
18	Gilbert Delorme	Defence	Montreal Canadiens	Chicoutimi Saguenéens (QMJHL)
19	Jan Ingman	Left wing	Montreal Canadiens	Farjestads BK Karlstad (SEL)
20	Marty Ruff	Defence	St. Louis Blues	Lethbridge Broncos (WHL)
21	Paul Boutilier	Defence	New York Islanders	Sherbrooke Castors (QMJHL)

Round two

22	Scott Arniel	Centre	Winnipeg Jets	Cornwall Royals (QMJHL)
23	Claude Loiselle	Centre	Detroit Red Wings	Windsor Spitfires (OMJHL)
24	Gary Yaremchuk	Centre	Toronto Maple Leafs	Portland Winter Hawks (WHL)
25	Kevin Griffin	Left wing	Chicago Black Hawks	Portland Winter Hawks (WHL)
26	Rich Chernomaz	Right wing	Colorado Rockies	Victoria Cougars (WHL)
27	Dave Donnelly	Centre	Minnesota North Stars	St. Albert Saints (AJHL)
28	Steve Gatzos	Right wing	Pittsburgh Penguins	Sault Ste. Marie Greyhounds (OMJHL)
29	Todd Strueby	Left wing	Edmonton Oilers	Regina Pats (WHL)
30	Jan Erixon	Left wing	New York Rangers	Skelleftea (Sweden)
31	Mike Sands	Goaltender	Minnesota North Stars	Sudbury Wolves (OMJHL)
32	Lars Eriksson	Goaltender	Montreal Canadiens	Brynäs (Sweden)
33	Tom Hirsch	Defence	Minnesota North Stars	Minneapolis Patrick Henry (Minn HS)
34	Dave Preuss	Right wing	Minnesota North Stars	St. Thomas Academy (Minn. HS)
35	Luc Dufour	Left wing	Boston Bruins	Chicoutimi Saguenéens (QMJHL)
36	Hakan Nordin	Defence	St. Louis Blues	Farjestads BK Karlstad (SEL)
37	Rich Costello	Centre	Philadelphia Flyers	Natick (Mass. HS)
38	Hannu Virta	Defence	Buffalo Sabres	Turku TPS (FNL)
39	Dean Kennedy	Defence	Los Angeles Kings	Brandon Wheat Kings (WHL)
40	Chris Chelios	Defence	Montreal Canadiens	Moose Jaw Canucks (SJHL)
41	Jali Wahlsen	Centre	Minnesota North Stars	TPS (FNL)
42	Gord Dineen	Defence	New York Islanders	Sault Ste. Marie Greyhounds (OMJHL)

Round three

Pick #	Player	Position	NHL team	College/junior/club team
43	Jyrki Seppa	Defence	Winnipeg Jets	Iives Tampere (FNL)
44	Corrado Micalef	Goaltender	Detroit Red Wings	Sherbrooke Castors (QMJHL)
45	Eric Calder	Defence	Washington Capitals	Cornwall Royals (QMJHL)
46	Dieter Hegen	Centre	Montreal Canadiens	Kaufbeuren (W. Ger)
47	Barry Tabobondung	Left wing	Philadelphia Flyers	Oshawa Generals (OMJHL)
48	Uli Hiemer	Defence	Colorado Rockies	Fussen (W. Ger)
49	Tom Thornbury	Defence	Pittsburgh Penguins	Niagara Falls Flyers (OMJHL)
50	Peter Sundstrom	Left wing	New York Rangers	Umea Bjorkloven (Sweden)
51	Mark Morrison	Centre	New York Rangers	Victoria Cougars (WHL)
52	Jean-Marc Lanthier	Right wing	Vancouver Canucks	Sorel Éperviers (QMJHL)
53	Jean-Marc Gaulin	Right wing	Quebec Nordiques	Sorel Éperviers (QMJHL)
54	Darrell Anholt	Defence	Chicago Black Hawks	Calgary Wranglers (WHL)
55	Ernie Godden	Centre	Toronto Maple Leafs	Windsor Spitfires (OMJHL)
56	Mike Vernon	Goaltender	Calgary Flames	Calgary Wranglers (WHL)
57	Ron Handy	Left wing	New York Islanders	Sault Ste. Marie Greyhounds (OMJHL)
58	Ken Strong	Left wing	Philadelphia Flyers	Peterborough Petes (OMJHL)
59	Jim Aldred	Defence	Buffalo Sabres	Kingston Canadians (OMJHL)
60	Colin Chisholm	Defence	Buffalo Sabres	Calgary Wranglers (WHL)
61	Paul MacDermid	Right wing	Hartford Whalers	Windsor Spitfires (OMJHL)
62	Gord Donnelly	Defence	St. Louis Blues	Sherbrooke Castors (QMJHL)
63	Neal Coulter	Right wing	New York Islanders	Toronto Marlboros (OMJHL)

Round four

64	Kirk McCaskill	Centre	Winnipeg Jets	Vermont (ECAC)
65	Dave Michayluk	Right wing	Philadelphia Flyers	Regina Pats (WHL)
66	Gus Greco	Centre	Colorado Rockies	Windsor Spitfires (OMJHL)
67	Mike Hoffman	Left wing	Hartford Whalers	Brantford Alexanders (OMJHL)
68	Tony Kellin	Defence	Washington Capitals	Grand Rapids (Minnesota High School)
69	Terry Tait	Left wing	Minnesota North Stars	Sault Ste. Marie Greyhounds (OMJHL)
70	Norm Schmidt	Defence	Pittsburgh Penguins	Oshawa Generals (OMJHL)
71	Paul Houck	Right wing	Edmonton Oilers	Kelowna Buckaroos (BCHL)
72	John Vanbiesbrouck	Goaltender	New York Rangers	Sault Ste. Marie Greyhounds (OMJHL)
73	Wendell Young	Goaltender	Vancouver Canucks	Kitchener Rangers (OMJHL)
74	Clint Malarchuk	Goaltender	Quebec Nordiques	Portland Winter Hawks (WHL)
75	Perry Pelensky	Right wing	Chicago Black Hawks	Portland Winter Hawks (WHL)
76	Jim Malwitz	Centre	Minnesota North Stars	Grand Rapids (Minnesota High School)
77	Scott McLellan	Right wing	Boston Bruins	Niagara Falls Flyers (OMJHL)
78	Peter Madach	Centre	Calgary Flames	Jonkoping HV71 (Sweden)
79	Ken Latta	Right wing	Philadelphia Flyers	Sault Ste. Marie Greyhounds (OMJHL)
80	Jeff Eatough	Right wing	Buffalo Sabres	Cornwall Royals (QMJHL)
81	Marty Dallman	Centre	Los Angeles Kings	Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute (ECAC)
82	Kjell Dahlin	Right wing	Montreal Canadiens	Timra IK (SEL)
83	Anders Wikberg	Left wing	Buffalo Sabres	Timra IK (SEL)
84	Todd Lumbard	Goaltender	New York Islanders	Brandon Wheat Kings (WHL)

Round five

85	Marc Behrend	Goaltender	Winnipeg Jets	Wisconsin (WCHA)
86	Larry Trader	Defence	Detroit Red Wings	London Knights (OMJHL)
87	Doug Speck	Defence	Colorado Rockies	Peterborough Petes (OMJHL)
88	Steve Rooney	Left wing	Montreal Canadiens	Canton (Massachusetts High School)
89	Mike Sitala	Right wing	Washington Capitals	Kingston Canadians (OMJHL)
90	Normand Lefrancois	Left wing	Toronto Maple Leafs	Trois-Rivières Drapeurs (QMJHL)
91	Peter Sidorkiewicz	Goaltender	Washington Capitals	Oshawa Generals (OMJHL)
92	Phil Drouillard	Left wing	Edmonton Oilers	Niagara Falls Flyers (OMJHL)
93	Bill Maguire	Defence	Hartford Whalers	Niagara Falls Flyers (OMJHL)
94	Jacques Sylvestre	Centre	New York Islanders	Sorel Éperviers (QMJHL)
95	Ed Lee	Right wing	Quebec Nordiques	Princeton (ECAC)
96	Doug Chessell	Goaltender	Chicago Black Hawks	London Knights (OMJHL)
97	Kelly Hubbard	Defence	Minnesota North Stars	Portland Winter Hawks (WHL)
98	Joe Mantione	Goaltender	Boston Bruins	Cornwall Royals (QMJHL)
99	Mario Simioni	Right wing	Calgary Flames	Toronto Marlboros (OMJHL)
100	Justin Hanley	Centre	Philadelphia Flyers	Kingston Canadians (OMJHL)
101	Mauri Eivola	Centre	Buffalo Sabres	TPS (FNL)
102	Barry Brigley	Centre	Toronto Maple Leafs	Calgary Wranglers (WHL)
103	Dan Bourbonnais	Left wing	Hartford Whalers	Calgary Wranglers (WHL)
104	Mike Hickey	Centre	St. Louis Blues	Sudbury Wolves (OMJHL)
105	Moe Lemay	Left wing	Vancouver Canucks	Ottawa 67's (OMJHL)

Round six

Pick #	Player	Position	NHL team	College/junior/club team
106	Bob O'Connor	Goaltender	Winnipeg Jets	Boston College (ECAC)
107	Gerard Gallant	Left wing	Detroit Red Wings	Sherbrooke Beavers (QMJHL)
108	Bruce Driver	Defence	Colorado Rockies	Wisconsin (WCHA)
109	Paul Edwards	Defence	Pittsburgh Penguins	Oshawa Generals (OMJHL)
110	Jim McGeough	Centre	Washington Capitals	Billings Bighorns (WHL)
111	Steve Smith	Defence	Edmonton Oilers	London Knights (OMJHL)
112	Rod Buskas	Defence	Pittsburgh Penguins	Medicine Hat Tigers (WHL)
113	Marc Habscheid	Centre	Edmonton Oilers	Saskatoon Blades (WHL)
114	Eric Magnuson	Centre	New York Rangers	Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute (ECAC)
115	Stu Kulak	Right wing	Vancouver Canucks	Victoria Cougars (WHL)
116	Mike Eagles	Centre	Quebec Nordiques	Kitchener Rangers (OMJHL)
117	Bill Schafhauser	Defence	Chicago Black Hawks	Northern Michigan (CCHA)
118	Paul Guay	Right wing	Minnesota North Stars	Mount St. Charles (Rhode Island HS)
119	Bruce Milton	Defence	Boston Bruins	Boston University (ECAC)
120	Todd Hooley	Right wing	Calgary Flames	Windsor Spitfires (OMJHL)
121	Andre Villeneuve	Defence	Philadelphia Flyers	Chicoutimi Saguenéens (QMJHL)
122	Ali Butorac	Defence	Buffalo Sabres	Ottawa 67's (OMJHL)
123	Brad Thompson	Defence	Los Angeles Kings	London Knights (OMJHL)
124	Tom Anastos	Right wing	Montreal Canadiens	Paddock Pool Saints (GLJHL)
125	Peter Aslin	Goaltender	St. Louis Blues	Alk Solna (SEL)
126	Chuck Brimmer	Centre	New York Islanders	Kingston Canadiens (OMJHL)

Round seven

127	Peter Nilsson	Centre	Winnipeg Jets	Hammarby IF (SEL)
128	Greg Stefan	Goaltender	Detroit Red Wings	Oshawa Generals (OMJHL)
129	Jeff Larmer	Left wing	Colorado Rockies	Kitchener Rangers (OMJHL)
130	John Mokosak	Defence	Hartford Whalers	Victoria Cougars (WHL)
131	Risto Jalo	Centre	Washington Capitals	Ilves Tampere (FNL)
132	Andrew Wright	Defence	Toronto Maple Leafs	Peterborough Petes (OMJHL)
133	Geoff Wilson	Right wing	Pittsburgh Penguins	Winnipeg Warriors (WHL)
134	Craig Hurlley	Defence	Los Angeles Kings	Saskatoon Blades (WHL)
135	Mike Guentzel	Defence	New York Rangers	Greenway (Minn. HS)
136	Bruce Holloway	Defence	Vancouver Canucks	Regina Pats (WHL)
137	Vladimir Svitek	Right wing	Philadelphia Flyers	Košice (Czech.)
138	Marc Centrone	Centre	Chicago Black Hawks	Lethbridge Broncos (WHL)
139	Jim Archibald	Right wing	Minnesota North Stars	Moose Jaw Canucks (SJHL)
140	Mats Thelin	Defence	Boston Bruins	Alk Solna (SEL)
141	Rick Heppner	Defence	Calgary Flames	Mounds View (Minn. HS)
142	Gil Hudon	Goaltender	Philadelphia Flyers	Prince Albert Raiders (SJHL)
143	Heikki Leime	Defence	Buffalo Sabres	TPS (FNL)
144	Peter Sawkins	Defence	Los Angeles Kings	St. Paul (Minn. HS)
145	Tom Kurvers	Defence	Montreal Canadiens	Minnesota-Duluth (WCHA)
146	Erik Holmberg	Centre	St. Louis Blues	Sodertälje SK (SEL)
147	Teppo Virta	Right wing	New York Islanders	TPS (FNL)

Round eight

148	Dan McFall	Defence	Winnipeg Jets	Buffalo (NAJHL)
149	Rick Zombo	Defence	Detroit Red Wings	Austin (USHL)
150	Tony Arima	Left wing	Colorado Rockies	Helsinki Jokerit (Finland)
151	Denis Dore	Right wing	Hartford Whalers	Chicoutimi (QMJHL)
152	Gaetan Duchesne	Left wing	Washington Capitals	Quebec (QMJHL)
153	Richard Turmel	Defence	Toronto Maple Leafs	Shawinigan (QMJHL)
154	Mitch Lamoureux	Centre	Pittsburgh Penguins	Oshawa (OMJHL)
155	Mike Sturgeon	Defence	Edmonton Oilers	Kelowna (BCJHL)
156	Ari Lahteenmaki	Right wing	New York Rangers	Helsinki IFK (Finland)
157	Petri Skriko	Right wing	Vancouver Canucks	Lappeenranta (Finland)
158	Andre Cote	Right wing	Quebec Nordiques	Quebec (QMJHL)
159	Johan Mellstrom	Left wing	Chicago Black Hawks	Falun (Sweden)
160	Kari Kanervo	Centre	Minnesota North Stars	Turku TPS (Finland)
161	Armel Parisee	Defence	Boston Bruins	Chicoutimi (QMJHL)
162	Dale DeGray	Defence	Calgary Flames	Oshawa (OMJHL)
163	Steve Taylor	Left wing	Philadelphia Flyers	Providence (ECAC)
164	Gates Orlando	Centre	Buffalo Sabres	Providence (ECAC)
165	Dan Brennan	Left wing	Los Angeles Kings	North Dakota (WCHA)
166	Paul Gess	Left wing	Montreal Canadiens	Bloomington Jefferson Minn. H.S.
167	Alain Vigneault	Defence	St. Louis Blues	Trois-Rivières (QMJHL)
168	Bill Dowd	Defence	New York Islanders	Ottawa (OMJHL)

Round nine

Pick #	Player	Position	NHL team	College/junior/club team
169	Greg Dick	Goaltender	Winnipeg Jets	St. Mary's NCAA D-II
170	Don LeBlanc	Left wing	Detroit Red Wings	Moncton (MJHL)
171	Tim Army	Centre	Colorado Rockies	East Providence R.I. H.S.
172	Jeff Poeschl	Goaltender	Hartford Whalers	Northern Michigan (CCHA)
173	George White	Left wing	Washington Capitals	New Hampshire (ECAC)
174	Greg Barber	Defence	Toronto Maple Leafs	Victoria (WHL)
175	Dean DeFazio	Left wing	Pittsburgh Penguins	Brantford (OMJHL)
176	Miloslav Horava	Defence	Edmonton Oilers	Kladno (Czechoslovakia)
177	Paul Reifenberger	Centre	New York Rangers	Anoka Minnesota H.S.
178	Frank Caprice	Goaltender	Vancouver Canucks	London (OMJHL)
179	Marc Brisebois	Right wing	Quebec Nordiques	Sorel (QMJHL)
180	John Bennis	Left wing	Chicago Black Hawks	Billings (WHL)
181	Scott Bjugstad	Centre	Minnesota North Stars	Minnesota (WCHA)
182	Don Sylvestri	Goaltender	Boston Bruins	Clarkson (ECAC)
183	George Boudreau	Defence	Calgary Flames	Matignon Mass. H.S.
184	Len Hachborn	Centre	Philadelphia Flyers	Brantford (OMJHL)
185	Venci Sebek	Defence	Buffalo Sabres	Niagara Falls (OMJHL)
186	Al Tuer	Defence	Los Angeles Kings	Regina (WHL)
187	Scott Ferguson	Defence	Montreal Canadiens	Edina West Minnesota H.S.
188	Dan Wood	Right wing	St. Louis Blues	Kingston (OMJHL)
189	Scott MacLellan	Centre	New York Islanders	Burlington (Ontario Jr. B)

Round ten

190	Vladimir Kadlec	Defence	Winnipeg Jets	Vitkovice (Czechoslovakia)
191	Robert Nordmark	Defence	Detroit Red Wings	Frolunda (Sweden)
192	John Johansson	Centre	Colorado Rockies	Wisconsin (WCHA)
193	Larry Power	Centre	Hartford Whalers	Kitchener (Ontario Jr. B)
194	Chris Valentine	Centre	Washington Capitals	Sorel (QMJHL)
195	Marc Magnan	Left wing	Toronto Maple Leafs	Lethbridge (WHL)
196	Dave Hannan	Centre	Pittsburgh Penguins	Brantford (OMJHL)
197	Gord Sherven	Centre	Edmonton Oilers	Weyburn (SJHL)
198	Mario Proulx	Goaltender	New York Rangers	Providence (ECAC)
199	Rejean Vignola	Centre	Vancouver Canucks	Shawinigan (QMJHL)
200	Kari Takko	Goaltender	Quebec Nordiques	Pori (Finland)
201	Sylvain Roy	Defence	Chicago Black Hawks	Hull (QMJHL)
202	Steve Kudebeh	Goaltender	Minnesota North Stars	Breck Minnesota H.S.
203	Richard Bourque	Left wing	Boston Bruins	Sherbrooke (QMJHL)
204	Bruce Eakin	Centre	Calgary Flames	Saskatoon (WHL)
205	Steve Tsujiura	Centre	Philadelphia Flyers	Medicine Hat (WHL)
206	Warren Harper	Right wing	Buffalo Sabres	Prince Albert (SJHL)
207	Jeff Baikie	Left wing	Los Angeles Kings	Cornell (ECAC)
208	Dan Burrows	Goaltender	Montreal Canadiens	Belleville (Ontario Jr. B)
209	Richard Zemlak	Right wing	St. Louis Blues	Spokane (WHL)
210	Dave Randerson	Right wing	New York Islanders	Stratford (Ontario Jr. B)

Round eleven

211	Dave Kirwin	Defence	Winnipeg Jets	Irondale Minnesota H.S.
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Dale Hawerchuck & Doug Smith (#1 & #2) at Montreal Forum on NHL draft day 1981.

It seems the further I get from my old mindset the less I am able to remember how I felt that day. I guess everyone knew the draft was going to go the way it did, but I still did not see myself as anyone different or special. I just saw myself as someone who was having fun and was just a part of the team. I knew I loved to play sports but my age was so low and my naïveté level so high that the significance of the moment did not really sink in. I guess I just thought this was the way it was supposed to be. Didn't everyone have it like this? I had not known anything but going from game to game and doing the best I could. There was never an excuse for not giving my best every single game and I knew that when I had not given my best I would have my dad to answer to.

Who would play that father-figure role in Los Angeles? Who would actually tell me the truth in a way I would accept and respect? What were the expectations of this professional team?

Even though there was nothing worse than those quiet rides home in the car after I had been dishonest with my teammates by giving up on a back

check or not blocking my man from getting to the net, those car rides had moulded me over the years and I understood them. My mom had always told me, as far back as I could remember, that I could be the best at anything I did.

Now suddenly take that daily support and reassurance away, move the child from Ottawa to the bright lights of Hollywood and Beverly Hills, and then factor in a race-horse mentality and an ADD personality; it was a lethal combination. I was never a tactician; I played with reckless abandon. It was not just hockey that brought out the recklessness in me, it was any sport. I attacked the coast and its many playgrounds like a kid in a candy store. Mastering the Frisbee, body surfing in hurricane waves, scuba diving with spear guns in the kelp beds, riding surf boards with jets on them and wave jumping Boston Whalers off the west coast of Catalina Island: that was just the beginning. Then there was the Beverly Hills and Hollywood scene and the social circles of a city and an era that was in the midst of creating the first wave of pop stars the world had ever seen. These photos and stories will make their way to my blog as I relate them, not just as entertainment but as valuable lessons learned at a young age. Some people strive to reach the red carpet: there is nothing wrong with that and I want you to see it. I have been there. But I ask you one simple question: Then what are you going to do?

The coast of California is one of the most laid back but exciting places I have ever been in my life. The Pacific Coast Highway (PCH) that runs along the ocean from Mexico to San Francisco, and then northward to Oregon and on to British Columbia, is one breathtaking experience after another. Along with the view from that magnificent West Coast journey, the PCH also runs through the South Bay Cities, where I had a chance to experience a dream life and developed friendships that continue today. See them and meet them on my blog.

NHL Training Camp

My departure from my hometown Ottawa 67's started with a journey to the West Coast—but the west coast of Canada, where the Los Angeles Kings held their training camp every year. After the flight to Vancouver, the hop to Victoria, on Vancouver Island, is only a 20-minute flight. As the 12-seat plane touched down, I was both excited about being there and unsure about what to expect. The Vancouver Island weather in late August and early September is always spectacular and it doesn't feel like it is time to play hockey.

For the preceding two months, contract negotiations had not been going very well with the Los Angeles Kings. The fact that I had not signed a contract with the Kings lingered in the back of my mind and in my family's thoughts. I was so excited to be entering a new level of competition, but my desire to get on with it was already putting my future at risk. In today's NHL, a first-round pick would never go to training camp without a contract or agreement of some sort. It seems almost insane to have taken such a risk. It was a learning experience for my lawyer and my parents at the same time and I can under-

stand how they were torn between my desires, a new lower age limit in the league and a lack of proper protocol between the players and the league. Today this type of thing would never happen.

Should I go to camp or not? I am sure my lawyer and my parents struggled with this decision but I didn't, and when they asked me, I was interested in only one thing: bring it on. I wanted to go and I didn't care, or understand, whether someone was going to pay me or not. I wanted to see what I could do regardless of the money. This is the way I am in sports and in life.

If the Montreal Canadiens or the Toronto Maple Leafs had drafted me, the question of whether or not I should go to camp would never have arisen because the fan pressure would have been enough to get people making decisions in a timely fashion. Getting drafted to the Los Angeles Kings at that time, in 1981, was like falling off the edge of the earth into hockey obscurity, largely because the media did not have the same reach it has today. Technology at the time allowed for only a regional focus. I could not have been more removed from the hockey world than I was in LA.

This was a time when many teams in the 21-team NHL struggled with a return to the 18-year-old draft. For the previous 10 years players had to be 19 to be drafted and in most cases the player would not go pro until he had completed his time in Junior. It was a very rare occurrence to see even a 19-year-old playing in the NHL at that time. But start-up leagues like the World Hockey Association had put pressure on the NHL, and it lowered the age qualification to protect itself from losing top players to competing leagues.

Training camp in Victoria was like a dream come true. Victoria is like a warm, sunny, smaller version of Ottawa, right down to the government building, which resembles a smaller Parliament Hill.

I was in awesome shape coming into camp. Unfortunately, the requirement at the time was actually to *not* be in awesome shape. Average shape seemed to be OK with the organization and for some, being 25 pounds overweight was fine and would sort itself out over the three weeks of exercise. I remember being confused because there was this pressure to not push it too hard so no one would look too out of shape.

This attitude was fostered by a small group of people, as it usually is, and everyone else seemed to follow along. I remember being told to slow it down during the skating drills. To me, at the time, this meant I was going to speed things up. For an 18-year-old, this was not how to win friends and influence people.

But my naïveté would get the better of me for most of that first year. I had an idea of how I wanted things to be and it was rare for me to back down from anyone who I did not think was in it to win. My heart was in the right place but my head did not understand the politics of a man's game and there was no one there to protect me and teach me the rules both inside and outside the game.

Negative political move number two: It was four days into training camp and we still had not signed a contract. It must have been obvious to players and management that I was fast enough and strong enough to play with the men because I seemed to be holding my own, or better, but the contract games persisted. After a discussion with my lawyer and my family, I simply went to the airport, got on a plane and flew home to Ottawa. My family and lawyer instructed me not to tell anyone I was leaving and as confusing as that was, I did what I was told.

The junior hockey season would be starting in a week or so and it was time for me to take my place with the Ottawa 67's as captain of the 1981/82 team. After I played one game, logging one goal and two assists, along with 17 minutes in penalties, we settled on a contract with the Los Angeles Kings for four years plus and option year and a \$100,000 signing bonus.

That was a different time for the NHL, not just in the amount of money players made, but for hockey in general. A tremendous amount of change would occur in the league over the next 15 years and it was all starting with the 18-year-olds coming in. The next year the first Europeans would arrive, then shortly thereafter the Russians, and then the big boom that would come from a league-wide understanding of the value of content, communications and technology, all of which I will get into later in the Transition Series.

The NHL had always been a "control or be controlled" environment. An impenetrable old-boys club was making most of the decisions and doing most of the backroom deals. Of course, when you run your business network this way it is always vulnerable to bright, talented outsiders who know how to play the game of business and exploit any loose ends created by a lack of corporate governance. It's no different than leaving the back doors of your computer network open: you will be exposed to viruses.

Alan Eagleson would prove to be one of those bright, talented individuals with a different agenda, for which all the players who played through that era are continuing to pay today. For a great book on what a man like Eagleson can do to your business, pick up *Game Misconduct: Alan Eagleson and the Corruption of Hockey* by Russ Conway.

It takes years for people to realize and admit that what you were doing was the thing to do and that they should have taken the opportunity when you offered it. Since wisdom is like the Nobel Prize and given to you by your peers, you must allow them time to realize you were on the mark.

***—Doug Smith,
journal entry, May 1995***



The Los Angeles Forum in Inglewood, California.

Hello, Hollywood: Rookie Season

As an 18-year-old, I moved into the Airport Park Hotel across the street from the Los Angeles Forum in Inglewood, California. I practised with the Kings a couple of times and then started my NHL career against the New York Islanders in New York on October 7, 1981. For the next two months I lived at the hotel while the Kings' management tried to figure out whether they were going to keep me or send me back to Junior. If you know Inglewood you probably know the risks I was exposed to living there. In fact, I kept a loaded long-barrel .38 Special revolver under the driver's seat of my new Porsche. Thank goodness I never had to even consider using it anywhere other than the shooting range.

I guess it is almost every guy's dream to walk into a Porsche, Ferrari or Lamborghini dealership in flip-flops, shorts and a tee shirt and ask to take a particular car off the showroom floor for a test drive and then hand over a bag of cash. If you are thinking that would feel pretty good, you are absolutely correct. Too bad I didn't have the brains or the advice to put 10 percent down, make payments and write off the interest like you can in California.

If you have an 18-year-old at home you are probably wondering, What was the team thinking? And asking yourself the same question my parents were asking themselves: How was this kid going to survive?

If you are around 18 years old you are probably thinking, That's pretty cool—LA, a Porsche, and professional hockey. Not to mention the opportunity to test the first-ever inline roller skates with team-mate Steve Jenson, life on the beach, socializing in Beverly Hills, the surreal times hanging with Paula Abdul, Rick Dees and the Laker Girls, diving for lobster and spear fishing off

the California coast or life on Body Glove's boat, *The Disappearance*.

As I approached the two-month mark and had played every single game, I seemed to be improving as a player. But the stress of playing on the third line, no power play time and killing the odd penalty was weighing on my mind. I have never been great being alone in my stress and tend to look for activity to distract me from thinking about what's stressing me. This is something I work on every single day but my awareness of that potentially destructive trait was non-existent at age 18. I had been programmed to react and my inability to control that urge would end up causing me more and more frustration with the state of affairs in the Kings organization at that time.

With literally no power play time, third-line assignments covering the best players in the league, like Wayne Gretzky, Denis Savard and Gilbert Perreault, I was the only player on the roster to play all 80 games for the Kings that rookie year. I managed 16 goals and 30 points with 64 minutes in penalties, but I was not happy with my production.

All those feelings would fade away as we moved into a brand new season: the playoffs, against a heavily favoured Wayne Gretzky, Mark Messier and the Edmonton Oilers. The Oilers had dominated the NHL that year, finishing second overall to the New York Islanders. As a motivator, the owner of the Kings had offered up an all-expense-paid trip to Hawaii for each player and a guest if we could defeat the Oilers in the five-game first round.

That playoff series between the Kings and the Oilers would make history and as of 2010, Game 3 of the battle still holds the record for largest single-game comeback in NHL playoff history. It served to humble a team that would become a dynasty and win four Stanley Cups over the next seven years.

In Game 3, down 5-0 at the end of the second period, we came back to score five goals in the third. Scoring our second goal and assisting Daryl Evans on the winning goal in overtime was a highlight of my career. After losing this game in such an extraordinary fashion, the Edmonton Oilers were done. We went back to Edmonton and won 6-2, and took the series in five games. The Los Angeles Kings finished the season with 63 points, 314 goals for and 369 goals against, compared with the Oilers' 111 points, 417 goals for and 295 goals against.

The Kings then proceeded to lose to the Vancouver Canucks in the best-of-seven second round in just five games. The Canucks went on to reach the Stanley Cup finals and we, unfortunately, went to Hawaii.

The Myth of Eliminating Change

What can Mickey Mouse teach us about hockey, professional sports and the transition to the real world? Pretend for a moment that from the age of 16 you have been wearing the Mickey Mouse costume at Disneyland and the requirement for you to advance your vocabulary has been completely removed. Imagine you have no ability to speak or have a meaningful and valuable conversation with anyone, yet your presence was captivating for everyone around

you. People would flock to you every day, wanting you to pose for pictures. Kids would want to touch you to see if you were real. Some would not even be able to speak because they were so excited to see you.

Then one day one of the Seven Dwarfs comes up to you in the dressing room and tells you that you have to go and see the general manager. You get that awful feeling in your stomach that you are not wanted anymore. Your worst nightmare is coming true in slow motion as you are escorted to the front gates and asked to hand over your costume. Out onto the streets of Anaheim you go for the first time since grade 10. All of a sudden, everyone sees you as an average person but all you know how to do is wave and pose for photographs.

After the first few hours you become confused. Why are people not responding to you? In fact, they are looking at you like you have a problem of some kind. After only a few days, depression would set in and after a few weeks you would probably be institutionalized.

Regardless of your level of success in life the pain and confusion of transition are going to be as constant as your breathing and heart rate. Some of that transition you will initiate and some will be, all of a sudden, thrust upon you. Some will be physical transition and some will be emotional, but no matter what form transition comes in, we can never stay the same. Knowing and understanding this will allow you to think more clearly, think things through and not over-react to situational change in a confrontational manner.

I wish I had been more aware of this during my first few years in the NHL. Because boy, did I make things difficult for myself. Looking back at myself when I was 20, playing for the Los Angeles Kings, it seems like I had everything going for me. I was driving a Porsche, living on the beach sometimes and on a boat from time to time; body surfing and volleyball one day, scuba diving and spear fishing the next; dating a Laker Girl and hanging with Hollywood stars and playing basketball with my buddies from Beverly Hills against the regular ballers on Venice Beach.

But just as the idea of security—a nice car, a boat, a beach house or a beautiful partner—being a solution to anything is a myth, the idea of eliminating the pain of change from your life is also a myth. I once heard a professional speaker say, “When you seek silver, you will never be happy with silver.” I have found that to be true.

Imagine that when you are just eight years old, you get a pair of skates or a set of equipment to play your favourite contact sport, whether it's hockey, football or whatever. Putting on that equipment for the first time is an exciting moment for an aspiring young athlete. Now imagine what you are thinking when you put on that suit of armour: “Now I can run into things without hurting myself!” If you had a feeling of invincibility before you put the equipment on, it has now gone to a whole new level. Add conditioning from your family, teammates and coaches and the winning formula looks like this:



Nepean Baby Raiders at 9 years old. (Top row second player from right)

1. Knock people down
2. Intimidate them
3. Take what they have
4. Expose every weakness

If you are really, really good at these four steps, the audience gets bigger and bigger and more and more people encourage you and justify your actions as “the right thing to do.”

By the time you turn professional you have 20,000 people every second night plus the media telling you that is the way things work. Can you imagine the difficulty of making the transition away from this type of programming after 25 years? I am not saying that these tactics aren’t necessary inside the game; I am attempting to create awareness so that players, parents and fans can look at the game from a different perspective and consider the long-term effect.

The way young players are treated in the NHL needs to continue changing to protect the players—the teams’ investment. There have already been tremendous adjustments made at the front end, when young players enter the system, for that reason. The tragedy occurring today is on the back end of a professional sports career, when the fans stop cheering. The NHL understanding is that the cheering fans are the measure of the player’s self-worth. Changing this way of thinking is really about the league becoming aware of the fact

that it does not matter how much money you throw at the players; there is a much greater responsibility. Just as things have changed for the teenage prospects, it can change for the valuable human beings that are retiring from the game. The answers are available if the league is really interested in looking deep enough and taking responsibility.

The one great thing about LA is that at least there are plenty of distractions. I would spend the next four years up and down emotionally as the Kings franchise installed a revolving door on the coach's office: Parker MacDonald, Don Perry, Rogie Vachon, Roger Neilson and Pat Quinn. But with all the sunny days, fantastic times and great experiences came monotony. People weren't coming to our games—sometimes we couldn't fill even the lower level of seats in the arena. I missed playing in hockey country. By the early part of my third year with the Kings, I had made my interest in being traded known to management through the proper channels but they were not taking me seriously. With management and coaching changes happening so regularly, I can understand why.

I should have realized this and backed off but I had not yet learned or been taught about reading between the lines. By the fourth year the situation in LA had become unbearable, my patience ran out and I took matters into my own unwise hands.

Chapter 5

Reality of the Rollercoaster

Even though we are still in Europe, it is wonderful to be home with Patti, Jenna and our golden retriever, Fuchsia. We have my hospital bed set up downstairs in the living room and Patti will sleep in our bedroom on the second floor. Though I attempt to sleep in the same bed as my wife, my sleep patterns are extremely erratic and I am still dealing with tremendous pain. It is best for me to sleep at a 30-degree angle and to knock myself out with medication.

I have become accustomed to my new metal cage and we are able to be in our own space and do our own thing for the first time in many weeks. We pass the days taking walks and playing cards and after everything we have been through, both Patti and I welcome and appreciate the down time. We do not have to go anywhere, at least for a couple of weeks.

My neck needs more time to heal to ensure that it is stable enough for me to make any type of journey; the earlier we leave for Canada the riskier it will be for my health. There is still swelling around the injury and being at a high altitude for a prolonged period could have a negative impact on the swelling.

There are many things I cannot do on my own, including washing myself, so my being at home adds some burden for Patti, but I am able bodied and every day that I remain that way is a blessing. What we don't need is another emergency.

When it is time for me to go to bed I am always exhausted. I take my medication and fall asleep very quickly. One night, I am in that state of being sort of asleep and sort of awake. You know—one of those times when you like to stretch out your legs but you are still quite groggy. When you are in a halo fixation device you spend your days wanting to stretch because of how ridged the contraption is. On this particular night, at about 3:00 a.m., I am in

that groggy state, pushing my shoulders up into the halo's vest, and suddenly *snap*—the front left bolt breaks out of my skull, causing a vicious torque in the other three bolts. The equal pressure on the bolts is thrown off and I am suddenly afraid for my life.

As I yell for Patti, the blood starts pouring out of the hole in my head, down my forehead and into my left eye. We had no warning, no idea that this was even possible. Patti immediately calls an ambulance. When the ambulance arrives it is obvious the attendants have never seen anything like this before. We move slowly but efficiently as they transfer me very carefully to the ambulance. The hospital is ready for me when we arrive. They are waiting with the special wrenches to put Frankenstein back together again. A new hole is drilled and equal pressure is restored.

As the days and weeks pass, I go to the rink from time to time to visit the guys, but it takes every ounce of strength to be there; it is both comfortable and uncomfortable. I know intellectually that I am experiencing the dressing room for what will be the last time. I know I will never be able to dress for the game again. My head understands, but that's the easy part. My heart is the part of my being that is having the most trouble acknowledging it.

Deep down, Patti and I long to return to Canada and to our new home, which has just been built on the tenth green of the Canadian Golf and Country Club. We are excited to see our new home but there is a lingering worry that goes along with that excitement. We are just trying to balance the world on a pin.

Six weeks after shattering my neck and battling through adversity together, we make the decision and begin the planning and preparation to make our way home to Ottawa. We can't wait to see family and they can't wait to see us.

Aside from the broken neck it has been a wonderful experience having the opportunity to play a professional sport and see the world. We did it together and we have survived. The long plane ride will be challenging in traction but the excitement of home is a carrot well worth the effort and pain. The hospital at home has already been notified of our arrival in Canada and an appointment for us to meet with a doctor is set up for the day after we get home.

That first medical appointment is routine, but Patti and I are reminded that with an injury this severe we are far from being out of the woods. The doctors in Ottawa have looked at all the x-rays and scans and concur with the doctors overseas. The possibility of me requiring stabilization surgery is very real. They also remind us that it has been only six weeks since the impact, so the bones have not completely healed.

Home

It is a return to isolation but isolation in our brand-new dream home overlooking the golf course. The greenery is poking through the snow and we decide to take it one day at a time and get the most out of each day as the countdown to May 1st and the removal of the halo begins. We do our best not



Ottawa Senators jersey presented to Doug in 1992. Photo courtesy of Jamie Smith

to expend energy thinking about how we are going to manage our financial future. We don't spend time thinking about anything past next month.

Patti decides that if we are going to be stuck in our home it is time to set up the office. Neither of us is in a position to go and get a job working for someone else so we decide to buy a computer for Patti to start organizing our financial life. When my mother had introduced Patti and me at Nortel Networks, Patti was just 21 but already a five-year veteran of what was to become one of the biggest boom-and-bust companies in the history of Canadian business. She was already an assistant to top-level management and was tracking a very promising and lucrative career. She understands the technology that will eventually take me out of the dark ages and introduce me to this incredible, amazing window into a new world.

For the first time in my life I become passionate about the creation of something other than a hard shot, an accurate pass or a stronger muscle. The Ottawa Senator's organization asks me to do the initial research on NHL alumni associations and to submit a proposal to start the Ottawa Senator's Alumni Association at the same time the new NHL team is preparing to get started in the fall.

I discover a passion that came from deep within. I find that the time flies by as I accomplish two things at once by leveraging technology. Technology allows me to learn how to be more effective while at the same time doing the research and building the platform for an organization that is allowing me to give back to the game that has given me so much. It is a match made in heaven and I know I can never go back. The Senators would later honour me with a Smith #92 jersey.

I am now excited to get up in the morning; I have something to work on. But mine is still a very sedentary existence. I look out the window and see the brush building up on our two-acre lot, and one warm day near the end of April I decide I will get creative. With my halo on, I get the gas-powered weed trimmer out and put on the big metal blade. I commit to levelling half an acre of junipers, weeds and, unfortunately unknown to me, poison ivy.

Once again, compulsion to act, as opposed to thinking then acting, creates a painful situation as I, with goggles on my eyes and only the plastic and metal halo vest covering my chest, proceed with enthusiasm to spray poison ivy juice all over my upper body, face and neck. I hadn't considered the possibility that this toxic plant lived close to the ground in the weeds. Two days later, the effect of that error in judgement comes out all over my body in living colour and oozing blisters.

Finally the day comes when the bolts will be removed and x-rays taken, and we will be able to see the status of the injury. It has always been clear to Patti and me that allowing the severely broken bones to heal is the first step and once that is complete, we will analyze the situation.

With x-rays and CT scans you can't be sure about the status of ligaments and soft tissue. Once the bone had healed, and the neck and head could move again in a controlled environment, the interaction between the bones in the neck would be a clear indicator of which ligaments, discs and soft tissue are or are not working properly.

What we discover during this appointment will send us on a new journey: the doctors tell us that the ligaments in my neck had been torn so badly that they could never be repaired. We are faced with two options:

1. Living a sheltered life with the constant possibility of dislocation and paralysis
2. Undergoing major fusion surgery, disc removal and stabilization

That day, I am fitted with a Philadelphia collar, a high, rigid collar that stabilizes the head and neck. We go home to think about the future and make some final decisions. It was to be a restless night, but all the wishing and hoping and dreaming for things to go back to the way they had been before would not make any difference to our situation.

Reflections on Going to the Buffalo Sabres



I was 22 and single, sitting in Los Angeles, the centre of excitement, warm weather, bikinis and fast cars, and all I could wish for was an opportunity to return to the cold, the snow, the winter coats and pickup trucks. Many of you reading this may think I was certifiable and I can understand why. On the outside it looked great but on the inside I was longing for transition.



Doug Smith gets congratulations from Mike Foligno for scoring a goal 13 seconds into his first game in a Buffalo Sabres uniform. BILL WIPPERT/Bufalo News

Making Bowman happy by scoring just 13 seconds into my first game.

Courtesy of The Buffalo News

It had been a bit of a strange year. Rogie Vachon had been hired as a goaltending coach in early 1984, then became head coach before the end of the season and then general manager in late 1984—the fastest rise to the top I had ever seen in my career. An extremely patient and introverted guy, Rogie had always been straight with me; he goes about his business in a very methodical way, just as he had when he was one of the top goaltenders in the game.

Looking back, one of the great honours for me at that time was having the opportunity to play for the legendary Roger Neilson, in 1984, at a time when a little television and a VHS tape player in the back of the weight room was his laboratory. He was years ahead of his time and because of that he battled the superstars who did not want to buy into his transitional ways of thinking. Roger was all about transition and improvement and his rise in a supporting role for some of the best teams in the league proves that you should never, ever give up when you believe in something.

That summer Rogie gave Pat Quinn the head coaching job with the Los Angeles Kings. For the first time in my career, a coach actually asked me what I wanted to do and told me he would support me. From that moment on, I paid attention to what Pat Quinn had to say. Ever since, I have admired Pat for his ability to treat players with the same respect he gives his family. People often ask me which guys I respect most from my hockey career and my answer is always Pat Quinn first. When I talk to other players, almost all who have known him or played for him agree.

My answer to Pat's question was that I wanted to be traded from LA as soon as possible. By now, the players on the team were aware of my deep desire to move on and when everyone knows there is a player in the dressing room who does not want to be there, it causes a world of hurt and throws everything off. It's the same in any job: if someone you work with is not happy doing what they are doing, or with where they are doing it, then the synergy just isn't what it needs to be. That's especially true when you are competing at such a high level night after night.

Pat told me he would do everything he could to accommodate my wishes and asked if I could leave it with him for a few days. When he came back to me he asked if he could make a deal with me: If I worked hard every day and gave everything I had to the team, then he would guarantee a trade by the trade deadline in February 1985.

Come February, I was more than ready to move on. Then came the day when Pat called me into his office and told me I had fulfilled my end of the agreement and he had fulfilled his. He told me that I had been traded to the Buffalo Sabres to play for Scotty Bowman. I later learned that Scotty had been trying to trade for me at the draft in '81 but had not offered enough to the Kings for them to give up their first pick.

I was heading for Buffalo. I couldn't wait to start fresh in snow-filled hockey country. That night, a world that had come to almost a complete stop started to speed up again. Thank goodness for transition.

Chapter 6

Reality of Choices

My choices are to live a sheltered life with the constant possibility of neck dislocation and paralysis, or undergo major fusion surgery, disc removal and stabilization. Life is full of difficult decisions for everyone but this decision is not a difficult one for me, because a life of avoiding all physical risk is not an option. It would be surgery, because to me, it is better to fail in freedom than to succeed in shackles.

Option number one would put me in shackles for the rest of my life, having to worry about a slap on the back or quick movement dislocating my neck and possibly causing a serious spinal cord injury. Having surgery would give me a shot at a mostly normal life: it would remove two of the discs, and wire and fuse the C5, C6 and C7 vertebrae together with bone harvested from the back of my hip, eliminating the need for the ligaments I had destroyed in the accident. Surgery is scheduled for 40 days later, just one week after Patti is due to give birth to Jamie Lynn.

Both Patti and I want to get on with the surgery so we can get on with our lives. We hope that Patti will go into labour on time or a little early so that both she and I will not go into the hospital at the same time. We are concerned about the emotional impact on Jenna of both of us disappearing—and then reappearing with a new baby. As we approach the date for surgery, Jamie is not cooperating; there is no sign of an early delivery.

So Patti is induced to deliver Jamie one week before my scheduled surgery. Boy, does the time go by fast. We are celebrating the birth of beautiful, healthy Jamie Lynn Smith and at the same time, bracing for my surgery, fully understanding the nature of the territory we will be cutting into.

Local anaesthetic is not an option this time around. I will need to be put



Doug (#15) scoring the winning goal against Edmonton in Buffalo. Mail tear out picture from the front of the book, with a self-addressed, stamped envelope for personal autograph. If you want it to be worth a lot more, get the other guys to sign it as well. See video and address at www.DougSmithConnected.com.

to sleep for the six hours of surgery. In between holding Jamie and celebrating with Jenna, Patti and family, I am alone from time to time and when I am alone I drift off and reflect.

Reflections on My NHL Pinnacle

We all have a pinnacle of success in our life and in our profession and I encourage you to identify yours today. As a professional athlete, this goal, frozen in time, against the Edmonton Oilers' top players represents my personal pinnacle. We should all identify our own personal pinnacle—and then strive to eclipse it.

This is how my pinnacle sounded through the voices of the Buffalo Sabres play-by-play commentators:

"The Sabres are using Doug Smith to play against Wayne Gretzky. There's no team in the National Hockey League that just leaves it up to chance. When Wayne Gretzky is on the ice there is a designated line and more specifically a designated centreman who plays against him, and it's recently acquired Doug Smith, who came over from the Los Angeles Kings just three games ago, that has that responsibility."

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Smith-Led Sabres Beat Oilers



Scores 2 Goals In 4-2 Victory

By JIM KELLEY

Doug Smith's second goal as a Buffalo Sabre was every bit as exciting as his first as he lifted the Sabres to a 4-2 triumph over the defending Stanley Cup champion Edmonton Oilers Sunday night.

Smith steered a pass from Mike Foligno past Edmonton goaltender Grant Fuhr at the 13:10 mark of the third period, bringing the sellout crowd of 16,631 in Memorial Auditorium to its feet for a thundering ovation.

The former Los Angeles King, who earlier this season scored on his first shift in a Sabres uniform, also set up the game-tying goal and later scored into an empty net.

The victory was the second for the Sabres in as many meetings with the Oilers this season. It also was the Sabres' fifth straight victory, their longest winning streak of the season.

Smith scored off a quick wrist shot from directly in front after some intense play by the Sabres in the Edmonton end of the rink.

Paul Cyr took a shot that was blocked by the Edmonton defense, but Foligno dug it free and passed back to Smith.

Foligno had knotted the score at 2-2

Buffalo's Mike Foligno puts the game-tying goal past Edmonton goalie Grant Fuhr. RON MOSCATT/Bufalo News

Courtesy of the Buffalo News

You could not have placed Wayne Gretzky, Mark Messier, Paul Coffey, Jari Kurri and Grant Fuhr better if you'd drawn a picture. You know that feeling when you are on a roll? I am so fortunate that a picture was captured and given to me by my best man, Alex Edwards. It represents the pinnacle for me in the NHL.

Here's how my other goal that same night sounded:

"They have found a new hero in Buffalo. What a night for Doug Smith. You see Krushelnitsky pulling him off balance but not enough; he gets the puck up into the empty net in spite of the fact he had been on the ice for an end-to-end rush only seconds before that, he still had the strength and conditioning to out-race the Edmonton player, score the goal and solidify the win."

The same week I scored those two goals against the Oilers, my line—Mike Foligno (right wing and father of NHLer Nick Foligno), Paul Cyr (left wing) and me at centre—led the league with 27 points combined in our first five games together. The highlights of those first five games with Buffalo were starting at centre ice my first game at Memorial Auditorium, playing for the winningest coach of all time, Scotty Bowman; scoring 13 seconds in and being named First Star in my first game; breaking the team's five-game losing

streak by winning the first game; winning five games in a row; beating the Edmonton Oilers 4-2 with two goals and an assist; and being named First Star of the game in three of the first five games.

It was a dream coming true. I remember the euphoric confidence as I became an overnight hero in the city of Buffalo, leading the team to five wins in a row, playing a regular shift, killing penalties and playing the point on the power play with Phil Housley. I had reached that elusive point that every boy or girl dreams of and most people try to imagine: I had arrived, or at least I thought I had. I was healthy, fast and playing with a passion I had not had since my second year with the Ottawa 67's. It was a time when Scotty didn't have to tell me to go on the ice. We both knew when I was rested and it was time for me to get back out there.

Playing with Mike Foligno and Paul Cyr was a dream. We all had very different personalities—Paul was quiet and very serious, Mike was just energy all the time and always happy to be alive, and I was in the greatest shape of my life, buzzing around all over the place. I was the happiest I had ever been in my professional career. I felt free again, like I was back on the outdoor rink. The city of Buffalo has the best hockey fans in the league as far as I'm concerned. They embraced me and this is my opportunity to thank everyone who supported me in Buffalo. We went on a good run towards the playoffs but we fell short in a strong division.

My girlfriend, Laker Girl and actor Nora Heffernan, visited Buffalo several times and I spent a couple of months in Los Angeles after the season ended before returning home to the cottage in Griffith, Ontario, to be with friends and family. At the top of my game, and the top of the world, it was like the battle was over.

That summer I would meet my soulmate and future wife, Patti Connelly. My mother invited me to Nortel, where she worked, for lunch and accomplished her goal of introducing Patti and me. Patti was the most beautiful person I have ever had the pleasure of meeting. The match was right.

But the timing was all wrong. I had no choice but to hurt a very special person, an incredible dancer and actor and today, an accomplished songwriter. It was the most difficult and yet the most amazing time of my life. All of this transpired at the beginning of August, and I spent the rest of that month preparing for the upcoming season.

In training camp I won the Top Gun Award, got 22 points in just nine

I have learned that my value is based on the ease with which I can be replaced—and in the game of hockey, replacing a player is almost always easy. Today I keep the ego out of the way.

—Doug Smith

inter-squad games and signed a new four-year, one-way¹ contract with Scotty Bowman and the Buffalo Sabres. It was clear that I would be an integral part of the growth of the Sabres franchise. A new NHL contract, meeting Patti that summer, playing for hockey icon Scotty Bowman, leading the team in training camp; what could possibly go wrong? It was going to be my greatest season ever. I was on the verge of taking my career from flashpoint to greatness.

But I had started to believe that I was really important, that *I* was the issue. Like photographer, filmmaker and speaker Dewitt Jones aptly puts it, I was more worried about “being the best in the world, rather than the best *for* the world.” The conditioning of a lifetime, combined with the past eight months of success, had gone to my head and I began to make bad choices that would drive any coach or manager crazy and would quickly drive a stake into my relationship with Scotty Bowman.

There was a lot happening behind the scenes in the Buffalo Sabres organization that October. Though I did not have access to the behind-the-scenes discussions, it was obvious to all the players that Scotty was under tremendous pressure, having missed the playoffs the previous two seasons. Those had been the only years in Scotty’s illustrious career that he had not made the playoffs. Something was about to break.

With the team’s win tally at 0-3-2 after its first five games of the 1986/87 season, Scotty made a sudden right turn and sent five regular-shift players to the Rochester American farm team, including me. Each of the other players sent down was brought back to the Sabres over the first couple of weeks but the Sabres left me in Rochester. At the time I was one of the highest-paid players in the minors. It was obvious that Scotty had no intention of ever bringing me back to the Buffalo lineup.

The Sabres continued to struggle over that month (4-13-3), putting more and more pressure on Scotty. Then, one evening in my hotel room in Rochester, I received a phone call from Joe Crozier, Scotty’s assistant coach and right-hand man. Joe told me that it looked like the Buffalo Sabres were going to fire Scotty, and Scotty had asked Joe to tell me that Scotty held me responsible and that if it were up to Scotty, I would never play another game in the NHL.

Three days later, the Sabres fired Scotty Bowman, Craig Ramsay took over as interim coach and I was immediately brought back to the Sabres. Scotty disappeared from hockey for an extended period for the first time in 20 years. Scotty had taken a chance on me and I had let him down and missed an opportunity. He would not forget, and would be in a position to get his way in 1990. In 2002, after plenty of time to reflect and grow, I would attempt to make things right between Scotty and me, through communication with Dave Lewis. Dave was my former roommate and had been captain of the LA Kings and was Scotty’s assistant coach in Detroit.

¹ In a one-way contract, the player is paid the same salary whether he plays in the NHL or in the minor leagues. Most contracts pay considerably more when players are playing in the NHL and less when they are in the minors.

Today, I look at the positive and learn from the negative. The most recognized coach in NHL history saw something in me from the time I was just an 18-year-old and he opened up a world of opportunity for me to step into. As a result, for the first time in my career, I began to think I was more important than I actually was. I have since learned that my value is based on the ease with which I can be replaced—and in the game of hockey, replacing a player is almost always easy. Today I keep the ego out of the way.

How many times has this happened to you in your life? How many times have you missed an opportunity because of bad decisions or simply not thinking things through? Sometimes, everything we could ever want is right there in front of us but we don't see it. Maybe it's as simple as not believing that you actually deserve it. Could it be that if you don't believe you deserve something you will do things to sabotage the achievement? Looking back, I believe that even as talented as I was, there was something missing in my heart. Maybe the price I had paid was not high enough yet. Is the price you are paying high enough to allow you to believe you deserve success?

Chapter 7

Reality of Risk

There is so much valuable insight that has never been passed on to others because of the choice most people make to bury the most devastating emotional experiences in their lives. They just want bad experiences to be gone forever, as if they hadn't happened. Many of us don't share the intimate details with others because we feel that it's in the past or that it's not as bad as what has happened to someone else, or we just can't seem to get it out without breaking down or getting angry. Whatever the reason, exposing weaknesses and leaving oneself open to judgement is a risk most people will never embrace, trapping all of that energy inside of them, until one day they realize it has to come out somehow. It is important to be aware that all we have is our experiences, good or bad. Just because an institution didn't organize them for us to share in a textbook does not mean they can't teach us as much as a school book.

Being the high-energy person I am, holding bad experiences in has never been an option for me—there was just no space to store more energy. My biggest challenge has not been gathering energy but channelling it in a way that is most productive and benefits the people around me.

How do you focus and maximize the energy? Think about what your story of grief or devastation could do for another individual or group of people going through a similar event or trying to find answers for a family member or friend. On the flip side, think about how your story of accomplishment or perseverance might help them see that they can achieve what they want as well. You might have the answer they are searching for. Are you willing to take a chance and release it? Take a chance, let it out and it will probably improve a life and may even save a life. If you are not sure whether you have been

through anything physically or emotionally devastating, then I encourage you to take more risks. I don't mean crazy, mindless risks; just find a few things that scare you a little and go and do them. You will be glad you did.

One of my goals in life is to be OK with my achievements. For most of us, being comfortable with what we have accomplished will become a lifetime mission sooner or later. If you don't have a clue what I'm talking about, don't worry. You just haven't arrived at that place yet.

Each of us has the opportunity to take the energy from any situation and mould it into a message that will give people the assurance that they can break through adversity to reach their goals and dreams. This does not mean you need to be pumped up every single minute but there is some thought that needs to go into the process of transferring that energy. I have invested that thought in telling my story for the past 15 years.

I started in a roundabout way at the beginning and over the years learned how to focus the energy and give it understandable meaning and purpose. Only by getting out there and making mistakes did transformation occur. There is a lesson in everything that happens to us in our lives and we have an opportunity to discover what that lesson is, buried in the devastation or the joy, and to share it. Could it be that finding that lesson and that purpose is one of the keys to our longevity? If we are living on purpose and sharing the good and the bad, could it be that we are more useful to keep around on this earth as long as possible? I'm betting on it.

Everything Changes

The drive to the hospital the night before my neck surgery seems to go by in a flash. With a lump in my throat I can see that Patti is feeling the pressure of the possibilities running through her mind. Patti, in her strength, reassures me like she has always done when I am feeling desperate or when she feels I am unsure whether I can pull something off. When she leaves me that night, I lie in my bed, in a room by myself, doing everything I can to not contemplate what is going to happen the next morning. It is time to let go.

In the darkness, my consciousness suddenly delivers me into a new dimension. My mind seems to be engaged but my body feels like dead weight. "Oh, fuck; I can't move," I say to myself as I slowly open my eyes to see Patti standing by my bed. There is helplessness in her eyes as she moves towards me and I know the worst has come to pass.

I am unable to move my body below the chest.

My bladder and bowels have shut down completely and of my four limbs, I have only about 20 percent of the movement in my right bicep and no real use of my left arm. My left arm, though, is hypersensitive, making any

When you feel one negative emotion, you feel every negative emotion.

—George Zalucki
author, *Network Marketing: Straight Talk*

kind of touch feel like burning embers. “I need my legs back. You have to get me my legs back. I don’t care if you cut off my arms but I need to get my legs back,” is all I say before closing my eyes and wishing I could go back to sleep and leave the nightmare behind.

Right from the initial impact and analysis months earlier we always knew a spinal cord injury was possible. That possibility has now been realized. The severity of my injury—the broken bones and the torn ligaments—had finally caught up with me and it was time to deal with the consequences. There is no way to protect ourselves from it now; we are in it and there is no point in looking back. Sleep and medication will be my only rest from the horror of paralysis.

The Journey Back

After speaking with thousands of people about the subject, I have found that the biggest fear for over 90 percent of the population is being able to think but not being able to move. But the number of people who actually experience this situation first hand is only a fraction of one percent.

After spending 15 years in advocacy for people with mobility disabilities I have yet to meet anyone who has suffered a spinal cord injury who did not want to die at some point during their rehabilitation. Many survivors spend the rest of their lives trying to kill themselves. This type of injury sends you to the darkest place you have ever visited; landmines and seemingly insurmountable hurdles litter the journey out.

The law of gravity hits you smack in the face as your body becomes so heavy you can’t lift it anymore. We all know that feeling of waking up at night to discover one of our hands has fallen asleep, or of having a leg fall asleep while sitting in an airplane. Imagine this happening to your entire body. You can’t shake it out, and everyone is telling you it may never come back. It is a feeling that cannot be explained; you must experience it to fully understand. Over the years many people have asked me what it is like and even though I am an articulate person it is extremely difficult to explain. I liken it to trying to explain to someone who does not have children, what raising a child is actually like. The only salvation when you suffer a spinal cord injury is medication that knocks you unconscious. Sleep is the only thing that protects you from your new reality.

For Patti and I it was worse than starting a project over again; it was like going back to birth and starting life over in a new world with new rules. Learning how to walk as an adult is significantly different from learning to walk as a child. Babies know they are going to walk but their brains have not developed to the point where they know that they know. But the adult with a spinal cord injury must do his or her best to think like a baby again and not question the brain’s ability to do what it was designed to do, which is to find the pathways to instruct the body on how and where to move.

The Law of Facilitation: When an impulse has passed through a certain set of neurons to the exclusion of others, it will tend to take the same course on a future occasion, and each time it traverses this path the resistance will be less.

Over the next two years there would be a lot of kicking and screaming, a lot of tears, a lot of failures and a lot of accomplishments as our family and close friends formed a network around Patti, Jenna, Jamie and me. My support team put together a plan and we went out into the world to find ideas and solutions. Through that experience I met an incredible person and healer, Ryno Tomlinson. You will learn more about him later in this series, when we tell the detailed story of how the body is designed to unwind out of trauma. (If you cannot wait to learn about this process, please go to www.DougSmithConnected.com.) We will also delve deeply into how the body accepts, deals with and then releases trauma so you can live without the excruciating pain associated with physical and emotional trauma.

When I look back, I think I may have limited myself right from the start by offering to sacrifice my arms to save my legs; I should have asked for everything back. Today my right arm remains largely paralyzed, and I have sporadic numbness from the chest down. I have no feeling in the tips of my fingers, other than in my right index finger. I am fortunate to have developed some dexterity in my fingers, which allowed me to learn to type quite well. The hypersensitivity in my left arm would drive just about anyone insane until they had adapted to it. My right calf muscle is spastic.

During those early days of paralysis, the light would come up to reveal frustration and anger, and darkness would fade to unconsciousness and peace. Even the worst nightmare in sleep was easier to take than the nightmare that waited for me when I woke. As I slept I dreamed about hockey. The people who believed in me then became an integral part of the sanity I needed to survive those conscious moments.

Reflections on Hockey after Scotty Bowman

After the Sabres fired Scotty Bowman, I was back in the NHL after self-inflicted chaos. Many people had reason to question my viability. There was nothing I could do but put my head down, work hard every day and regain the respect I had lost during the battle with Bowman—but more importantly, the battle I was having with myself.

Even with a respectable record of 21-22-4 in the last 47 games of the 1986/87 season, it would be too late to make the playoffs for interim coach Craig Ramsay, and then new head coach Ted Sator, and their new game plan to save a season that started in total disarray. The strong finish in a tough division that year gave us some light for the following season, however.

There was light in my personal life as well. That August, Patti and I were married in a beautiful ceremony in Arnprior, Ontario, with a reception at her parents' farm just outside Ottawa.

Buffalo regrouped as a team and a franchise and came out strong at the opening of the 1987/88 season and finished third in our division that year. But we met the Boston Bruins in the first round of the Stanley Cup playoffs and were eliminated by a strong Bruins team led by Cam Neely. It had been apparent that Ted Sator was not happy with my play towards the end of the season and it seemed as though I was not being positioned for a future with the Buffalo Sabres.

As hard as I tried to figure things out, my perception of the situation would cause me to blame others instead of taking responsibility, doing my job and earning respect. My mind was too wrapped up in my own world to see beyond my self-centred viewpoint. People would ask me why I was not in the lineup towards the end of the season and I recall thinking that there was something wrong with management and the coaches. When I did not dress to start the playoffs against Boston for the first three games of the series, it was obvious something was drastically wrong.

If only I could have seen that what was drastically wrong was my point of view. I still had not felt the pain necessary to jar my head into a place where I could see that the world did not revolve around me. I was spending the bulk of my time worrying about problems that did not exist and creating problems to fill idle time I had on my hands.

Patti was beginning to realize why my mother had dedicated her life to keeping me busy. She did it because if I was not busy competing or fighting for survival I was busy destroying. This way of being had served me well because when I was engaged in competition I had a mission to focus on. It didn't register, for example, that I was actually friends with someone on an opposing team—a few times in my career I came extremely close to physically hurting good friends on opposing teams because of my recklessness on the ice.

Awareness: zero.

Focus, competitiveness and determination: 10.

Are You Doing Everything You Can?

We all know someone like this, someone with all the potential in the world but who seldom experiences a teaching moment, or who continuously has to be convinced of the talent they possess. It's like trying to fill a balloon with a slow leak: no one has the time or the energy to monitor another person's belief system. Looking back on these tumultuous times I can see so many people who attempted to help me and guide me, but I was not open. My way of being had gotten me this far; what did they know?

This line of thinking is a perfect example of why the executive coaching realm has exploded since about 2006. Executive and professional coaches are

in demand today for many of the same symptoms I was suffering through what was supposed to be a stellar professional hockey career. Looking back, the best investment I could have made would have been in a career/life coach to guide my moves and provide immediate feedback before I stepped out into the world and messed things up.

Are you open to that possibility? Could you be in the same position today? There are some questions on our companion website that can help you discover more about the way you see the world. Consider finding a coach to help you and verify that you are doing everything you can to make the world a better place. I have found through serious physical poundings that our only other option is to use physical and emotional pain as our teacher. Hitting that wall, though effective as a guide, can have all sorts of negative effects.

Chapter 8

Reality of Wanting to Die

Almost no one is allowed in my hospital room. Anyone brave enough to try to come in had better be prepared. There are good patients and there are bad patients; I was the latter. Like an angry dog in a cage, I was going to bite off any hand that got too close. My immediate family are the only visitors allowed. Against the hospital's wishes, my mother stays overnight in the hallway in a chair.

I cannot let anyone else see me like this. My whole life, I have always been measured by my physical abilities. My efficiency in that physical domain had always allowed me to get what I wanted by applying brute force and perfect coordination.

Patti and Jamie are troopers and are by my side most of the days. Even though Jamie is only a week old and is not aware of what is going on, her energy is a catalyst in those first few days. Patti's parents, Jim and Dixie, take shifts with three-year-old Jenna so she does not have to endure every day at the hospital. My parents are both devastated but supportive and madly searching for solutions. We had just completed that dream house a month before the accident; we are now told to prepare for ramps.

Over the next two years it would be Patti's incredible strength that took on the challenge of dealing with an angry, frustrated, dependent, elite athlete while nursing a newborn baby and taking care of a toddler. I still find it hard to believe she survived the fallout. It would be almost four years before Patti finally hit a wall and succumbed to exhaustion and the silent devastation of emotional trauma.

The rain in the summer of 1992 in Ottawa breaks all records so I am

not missing many great picnics or camping trips. On the bright side, at least I am dry. But on the dark side I am a physical and emotional basket-case. One particular rainy day, my family will be visiting me and I am determined to spend a record amount of time in the spine chair (a chair that starts out as a bed but breaks down into a chair). I am determined to be taken out into the hallway and I am determined to get myself cleaned up in the shower room down the hall. The doctors and nurses take Patti aside and make her aware that they do not think this is a good idea, that I do not have enough function to be taken to the shower room and that it will only result in frustration and disappointment. It doesn't matter to Patti. She is going to pave the way for me and if it means frustration and disappointment then so be it. Better to try and fail than never to have tried at all is just the way she thinks.

The shower room on the hospital's orthopaedic floor is designed so you can simply push the wheelchair into the 8 × 8 room. The only thing in the room is a showerhead halfway up the wall and big flat eight-inch stainless steel "hot" and "cold" paddles that the patient just needs to hit with an arm or hand. The paddles require just a small amount of pressure to get them going and you're in business.

As I am wheeled into the room I have an overwhelming need to be left alone and I tell Patti that I can do it myself and not to come in and help me unless I call. So she closes the door and I hear the click of the lock from the outside. "I will be right out here if you need me," she says.

For the next 15 minutes, getting the water turned on becomes an obsession, like throwing that lacrosse ball against the wall. I struggle with all my energy to lift my hands and put enough pressure on the paddles to move them to the "on" position. I fight like I have never fought before, but I cannot get the water turned on. For the first time, I feel I will be totally dependent for the rest of my life, and I cry as I continue to fight to lift my hands and hit the paddles.

When I call to Patti to help me I know she can see the devastation. As she pushes me down the hallway towards my room, with tears running down my face, I tell her that I can't go on with this. I ask if she will help me kill myself.

Patti has other plans.

The Starting Point: A Toe

As we go through our lives we tend to remember great moments, times when we accomplished something we had doubted we could ever do. I have found that it doesn't have to be a big thing, it just has to be a turning point where we get that first glimpse of freedom. For me, that glimpse is a tiny, barely visible movement in my toe that I will never forget.

It is almost involuntary at first. As my Aunt Judy massages my left leg, she sees my toe move and asks me to move the toe on my own. I focus every bit of

energy on that toe and then, after three seconds, it moves. Just a couple of millimetres, but it moves. This is the starting point. I move that toe three more times that day, though just a few millimetres. The effort of making that tiny movement exhausts me but after a week of very little hope, it is an exhaustion that feels good. That exhaustion gives me the best rest I have had since becoming paralyzed. Knowing that there is something to focus on and to develop tomorrow makes my life exciting again.

I am rarely alone through the darkest days but when I am, I spend my time using my one bicep muscle, lifting my arm up over my face and letting it fall onto my forehead with a slap. I do this for hours, hoping that my muscles will start to fire like they had done before. I want to learn how to eat on my own and to do that I need one of my arms.

Halfway through the summer, my right hand and left foot are showing promising signs. I naturally focus on the parts that are working and not on what is not working. My left arm and my right leg are proving to be major challenges; my four limbs have been affected in very different ways. I will talk more about the details of my recovery later in this series.

Eventually, after about eight weeks, I can sit up by myself. Sitting on the edge of the bed is like hanging my feet over the edge of the Grand Canyon. My legs hang straight down and my right foot dangles like a broken branch. I still do not have the power to lift my right foot. But I need to feel what it is like to stand, just for a moment, just to get that feeling again, if only to let my brain feel what it is like. Two of the male nurses volunteer and with my arms draped over their shoulders I stand for the first time. Then I throw up.

But I am starting to feel that I do not have any limits. Within a week of having the nurses help me stand comes one of the proudest moments of my life. I greet Patti one morning holding myself up using an aluminum walker. On my own, I am able to lift my left leg and then drag my right leg. But at 152 pounds, looking like a 90-year-old, in a hospital gown, I can imagine what Patti is thinking. To Patti this must be the first sign of what her husband might look like for life. I don't care who you are, the impact of that realization will make you think hard about the situation you are in.

I need to draw on my past experience to help me break through. I need to remember all the people who have believed in me at different points in my life. It is up to me to pull from the past and remember all the opportunity others have given me, and use that experience and that support to take me to the next level of my recovery.

Reflections on Speed and Stupidity

The speed I craved would teach me a hard lesson for the first time and surprisingly, would not cost me my life. This is a classic story of everything coming to a head. Like a Hollywood movie star out of control, everything about me was extreme. Yes, that extreme personality had gotten me to the pros, but

now that personality was on a collision course with disaster. Even now, telling this story is like watching a movie where I know something really bad is going to happen, and it does.

The 1988 season ended with the Buffalo Sabres disappointed in me and me disappointed in the Buffalo Sabres. It had become obvious that Ted Sator and I would never get along. Looking back, I don't blame him. A couple of days after the season ended I asked for a trade and without hesitation the coaching staff agreed that it was a good idea. I was a marketable player and with the right public relations person, I could have come out smelling like a rose. Too bad I didn't have a clue, and wasn't interested in what a public relations person could do for me.

I had it all figured out, and the way I figured, buying a couple of ATVs and putting my butt in the seat of a 250 cc two-stroke was the answer. Why not? I had the money and they would be fun to zip around on at the cottage. The weather was nice and I (with a capital I) had to get to the cottage. At this point, I was also being extremely selfish with respect to Patti's own goals and dreams. At that stage, she must have thought she had married a Neanderthal. For reasons I can't put my finger on, I was acting crazy. I guess it was because I had never hit a wall in my life. You might think that the battle with Scotty Bowman would have changed me, but when I looked at it through my twisted lens, he was gone and I was still playing. I didn't know the meaning of the word remorse.

I am starting to feel that I do not have any limits. Within a week of having the nurses help me stand comes one of the proudest moments of my life.

—Doug Smith

My body had always performed the way I wanted it to, I had always got the girl of my dreams, I could afford to buy cool things, I was a superstar in Buffalo, there were people hanging off the screens for autographs, I was getting all sorts of requests to go here and go there. I did not possess a frame of reference to tell me it would not always be like this. Off to the cottage with our new machines we went and boy was it going to be a fun summer: go fast and blow off some steam.

The last thing I remember clearly about that warm spring day was stopping on a bridge just south of Griffith, Ontario, and my Patti telling me to please slow down and please put the visor on my helmet down. I put the visor down, ignored everything else she said, pulled a wheelie and sped off down the road on my killing machine, about to commit the biggest error in judgement a professional athlete could ever commit. Not five kilometres farther on, I was travelling at 75 kilometres per hour on a sweeping blind downhill right corner when a Pontiac Parisienne came around the corner in my lane.

We hit head on.

I went into the car's rear quarter panel, blowing out the windows and catapulting end over end 105 feet down the road into the ditch. Meanwhile, Patti was driving her machine sensibly and had fallen back a couple of kilometres. As she came around the corner the panic had already begun. The driver of the car ran to Patti yelling, "He's alive, he is unconscious and he is breathing." For Patti, everything moved into that slow-motion, fish-eye lens view as she began to realize what had happened. She saw my machine in the field to the right and the top of my head lying motionless in the ditch on the left side of the road.

We were 10 kilometres from any phones, out on the Calabogie Road halfway between Centennial Lake and Black Donald Lake, where we were going to celebrate Mother's Day with Patti's mom and dad, Dixie and Jim. Instinctively, Patti knew she could not go to me or she would not be able to leave me. She knew I needed help and that she would have to get to a telephone, fast. She turned her machine around, had trouble figuring out how to drive all of a sudden, but finally started back the 10 kilometres to the Centennial Lake store, a drive she now barely remembers.

Meanwhile, I was miraculously regaining consciousness after 20 minutes, but when I tried to move, my whole left shoulder felt separate from my body. Using my right arm, I was able to get to my knees and crawl out of the ditch. By now several cars had stopped and everyone was telling me to stay down. But the cut across my abdomen from the machine's handlebars was bleeding profusely and I knew I had to move towards help. In my semi-conscious state, I crawled into the back seat of one of the cars and asked the driver to take me to the Centennial Lake store. To this day, I do not know who those people were but I would like to take this opportunity to thank them for allowing me to bleed all over their back seat.

By now Patti had reached the Centennial Lake store and had called the ambulance at the hospital in Renfrew, almost 45 minutes from the store. She immediately left the store to return to the scene of the accident, imagining the worst—that I had not survived. Patti had no way of knowing that she passed me, lying in the back seat of that car, at about the five-kilometre mark. When she arrived back at the scene of the accident, I was no longer there. Quickly informed of my whereabouts and relieved that I was not dead, she began the journey back to the store, arriving at almost the same moment as the ambulance.

I was on my way to the hospital and Patti was with me in the ambulance. The blood coming from my stomach was the biggest concern for everyone. My brain was not functioning properly because of the impact; I had a major concussion. I was later told that every 15 seconds I would repeat the same thing, over and over: "Am I bleeding to death?" and "I love you, Patti."

That's the last thing I remember of that day and the next few days, except for a flash of awareness as they moved me immediately to Ottawa, because along with the superficial wound to my abdomen I had a broken scapula (shoulder blade)—the bone was turned completely upside down. I had finally

run into something that was a stronger force than I was. Looking back, I realize that I had set the whole thing up myself. It is not unusual for a professional athlete to miss warning signs that are in plain sight. After all, they have 20,000 people every second night telling them that they know what they are doing.

Over the next 48 hours, my entire body swelled up by 25 percent; the risk of surgery remained too high for the first six days. My recollection of those days is completely wiped out but I do remember, after waking up from surgery on the seventh day, being told for the first time in my life that I would probably never play professional hockey again. On top of that, it was likely that I would never be able to lift my left arm above my head.

The last thing on my mind during those initial days was hockey. The concern about the functionality of the arm for day-to-day activity weighed heavily. The doctors had had to cut me from the base of the neck across to the tip of the shoulder, peel back the skin and soft tissue halfway down my back, turn over an eight-centimetre square of bone from my scapula, fit it back into place, form a 15-centimetre stainless steel plate across my shoulder blade, drill six screws through the plate into the bone to hold it and do a bone graft to hold everything together. The biggest obstacle to me playing again would not be the orthopaedic issue—the bone would heal. The biggest obstacle would be the loss of function in the nerves, muscles, tendons and soft tissue that the doctors needed to sever to get to the bone. The chance of getting my external rotation back in my left side was slim.

This would prove to be the greatest test of my mind and body to this stage of my life.

Needless to say, the Buffalo Sabres became fully aware of the accident and the severity of my injury as quickly as the grapevine would allow. And in hockey circles, that's fast.

You might think that the battle with Scotty Bowman would have changed me but when I looked at it through my twisted lens, he was gone and I was still playing.

—Doug Smith

Chapter 9

Reality of Suggestion

It has been weeks of small neurological improvements, bladder infections and testing medication to ease the pain of hypersensitivity in my left arm. And now, the hospital is not set up for the type of rehabilitation I require, but I am not functioning well enough to just go home and rehab on my own.

I convince the nurses to get me on the stationary bike at the hospital. They have to tape my feet to the bike pedals because otherwise, with my limited leg control, they would slip off. I push everyone to keep up with my progress. The more opportunity for recovery I see, the harder I want to work towards getting better. Many of the things I want to do are outside hospital protocol and some are risky, but the way I see it, the risk doesn't matter. How much more injured can I get than paralyzed?

I am turning out to be an unusual case. Everyone can see that I need to get into a proper rehabilitation environment as soon as possible. Euphoric is the only word I can think of when I think back to the day I move out of the hospital and into the rehabilitation centre. Even with the limited functionality I have gained in my arms and the ability I have acquired to hold myself up with a walker, I am starting to feel invincible again. That feeling will serve me in my time of need. I do not see what others see; I do not look in the mirror and see a frail, broken man. I don't look in the mirror at all—what would be the point?

With the move to the new facility, which I have heard much about, my expectations are off the chart. After losing over 30 pounds to atrophy, I focus on one thing: another comeback.

What happens next is a psychological blow that remains vivid in my mind and took literally months to recover from. It is so devastating that a year after

leaving the rehab centre I returned, with the best of intentions, to make sure they understood what an impact such a simple thing can have on a person. I did not want what happened to me to happen to anyone else. The people at the rehab centre were very courteous and listened to what I had to say with an interest in making positive adjustments, and I understood there had never been any intention to hinder my progress.

Doug Smith—Quadra Paresis

The day the ambulance drivers come to get me from my hospital room I feel like a puppy at the pound greeting a browsing buyer. I am packed and very ready to go. I am lifted from my bed to the ambulance gurney, wheeled down the hallway and into the ambulance, and then off the ambulance, into the new building, and up the elevator. And then, while I am being transferred from the ambulance gurney to my new bed at the rehabilitation centre, I happen to look down at the bed and there is my file in the middle of the bed, staring me in the face.

On the file folder tab are the words *Doug Smith—Quadra paresis*.

It is the first time I have seen anything to do with my physical status in writing, and it delivers a message exactly opposite to what my family and I have been working towards. The psychological impact literally set me back two weeks. This is my first practical lesson in the power of the written word. It is far more powerful than you might think. The experience becomes a catalyst for me wanting to know more about the workings of our mind and the power of suggestion. This experience will also be a catalyst for me to start writing a journal for the first time in my life. With pain and confusion come knowledge and education.

The excitement of arriving at a new facility turns into depression and anger for the first few days. My walker had given me the freedom to travel farther and farther every day. Unable to walk without it, I am happy to have the extra four legs to get where I want to go. Even though I have a range of only about 50 yards, that is still far and above what my three roommates have. Two of my roommates are amputees—one a double amputee—and the other has a complete spinal cord injury and will, most likely, never walk again. It is challenging to be happy about my progress when my roommates, guys I get to know and who I talk with in the night, will not get this second chance that is being revealed to me.

I will learn through this process that getting out of the institutional and hospital environment and around my children, who are learning how to walk, and around other people who are walking can only add to the speed of my recovery.

As I progress with my good friend and security blanket, my walker, I sneak away at night with a ball, a little smaller than a tennis ball, in my pocket and go down the elevator to the pool area, where I sit on the floor in the hall. I throw the ball against the wall with my left arm and try to catch it, for hours on end. Then, I work on my right arm until I can't stay awake, and then make the journey back to my room. I learn that the narrower the hallway the better



*1993 – Atrophy from
185 lbs to 152 lbs.*



Exercising in our driveway.

when throwing the ball, because when I miss the ball it hits the wall behind me and comes back. I still do not have the strength to get up and down too many times. The muscles that are firing have very little stamina and begin to shake and spasm if they are overworked. So I overwork them.

Your Priorities: Front and Centre

When we take a course at school today, the school tests us regularly so we are able to see where we stand and how much we have actually learned. Rather than going to class for an entire year and writing just one test at the end, the school system has developed a scientific process that constantly checks to make sure we are grasping the different components or modules as we go. If there is a problem with a specific component, one of these tests should pick it up and we can then focus on that area with a tutor or get the help of the teacher to bring us up to speed.

With a spinal cord injury in 1992 there did not seem to be any sense of urgency to test the individual components of the body and determine how they connected to the brain. The technique called biofeedback did exist then, but it was expensive, only select patients were introduced to it and there seemed to be an endless lineup—not surprising considering the cost of computing power and storage at that time. Biofeedback is a technology that sends an electric shock through, for example, a muscle and measures the strength of the signal that the brain receives from that muscle. In essence, it gives the patient and the

medical staff a clear picture of what is working and what is not working, and therefore provides a benchmark against which to note any improvement when tested in the future. Biofeedback will also detect a faint signal and point to where more work should be done.

I want to be tested every couple of days. It becomes an obsession to get into that lab and have every possible measurement done on me as soon as possible and as often as possible. To me, this is something I do not have the luxury of waiting for. Hoping and wishing that the hospital will give me access to it is not an option. After several attempts to go through the proper channels, without immediate success, I turn to the telephone and start pushing up the chain of command until I get an answer. Sometimes we are left with no choice

but to become that squeaky wheel and that's OK.

It is amazing what happens when you keep your priority front and centre and move into action. Within three days I receive a call from the head of the hospital, asking me to please stop being so disruptive. I agree to stop being disruptive once I am accepted into the biofeedback lab. We make a deal: I get what I want and for the first time I can see a mathematical picture of where the signal is weak and where the signal is strong. I can see the truth.

Are you keeping your priorities front and centre in your life and in your business? Are you taking action to achieve that priority goal?

Understanding biofeedback and getting into a biofeedback lab is a critical component of my success path. Observing the recovery process after a spinal cord injury is a bit like watching grass grow. Without knowing where you are today, how will you know how much you have grown tomorrow? This slow process can be agony without the numbers and information required to measure and celebrate success. Having the report gave my brain a clear and irrefutable diagram of what I needed to work on in an attempt to regain the functionality I once had.

The View from the Bed

Identifying with what it is like to live inside an institutional rehabilitation facility for neurological trauma is impossible unless you have had experience in these types of facilities. Even then, until you have seen the environment from the bed outward and have been privy to the messages only patients hear, it is extremely difficult to understand. Nurses and rehabilitation specialists are people, and people have bad days. As a patient in this world, the challenge is to avoid participating in other people's bad days; you can't afford it. Your strength is so depleted that you are open to negativity, and unfortunately, the clock is ticking and you don't have the time or energy it takes to overcome negativity.

We have all seen movies and television shows that show the darkness associated with this type of environment. I can tell you that the stereotype is mostly true. Most of us have visited family in the hospital for a couple of hours or have even been admitted for a short time, but within a couple of days we are off and running again. When the entire population of the facility has very little chance of physical recovery, but instead are mostly learning how to get along in society with their mobility disability, it casts a different light on the situation.

***At the bidding of
unlawful thoughts
the body sinks
rapidly into
disease and decay;
at the command of
glad and beautiful
thoughts it
becomes clothed
with youthfulness
and beauty.***

***—James Allen
theologian, anthropologist,
philosopher, poet***

The unfortunate reality is that most people would rather turn their heads and look away from mobility disability because it is so painful to look at. It is painful to look at even if you do not know the person. Many would say it shouldn't be that way but the fact of the matter is that it *is* that way. All one has to do is look at the amount of money raised in Canada for advocacy groups representing people with mobility disabilities and compare that to the much larger amount raised for research or prevention initiatives. Once the damage is done, like so many situations in life, you are on your own, with only your family and loved ones to support you. Even though you might not be able to get on your feet again literally, you must, even if it is only in your mind. I don't blame the average person for looking away but I encourage you to raise your level of awareness so you are more comfortable. The only one causing the discomfort is you and you need to take steps to resolve it.

Weekend after weekend goes by and fellow patients receive their opportunities to leave the facility for a couple of days as outpatients. Being in a large room with three other patients, all there for extended stays, I get to know their families a little. When it is time for them to visit their homes, it is a combination of glory for the patient and fear for the family. As close as the family might be, the fear of the unknown is as real as it has ever been. The question, Can I pull it off? is in the face of each mother, father, wife, husband, girlfriend and boyfriend. It is impossible for anyone who has not experienced the emotional trauma of these moments to understand.

My slow progress is faster than that of most of the people around me and even though my bladder and bowels are not functioning and I am constantly fighting infection, I want to get out of this place. "The walls are closing in" is the best way I can describe it. As the date approaches for my first weekend as an outpatient, Patti and my family naturally start the cycle of fear.

Oblivious to how anyone else feels at this stage, I plough ahead. I watch the clock tick, second by second, on this endless Friday afternoon, waiting for my release. Patti has been instructed by the nurses how to deal with both my physical and psychological situation. They give Patti a mini-course on my medication and on how to use the catheter kits to empty my bladder three times a day. Secretly, my plan is to never return to this place.

When I return to the facility on Sunday night that weekend I can see the relief Patti and my family feel. I have always been high maintenance but this weekend took it to another level. Over the coming months our new home will be transformed into a daycare/hospital and Patti commits to taking care of me before the hospital is comfortable letting me go. Patti will be a mom to our kids and a nurse and wife to her husband. Eventually this would take its toll on her. Today we remain open to the possibility that the situation may have

***I watch the clock
tick, second by
second, on this
endless Friday
afternoon, waiting
for my release.***

—Doug Smith

had, and might still be having, an impact on Jenna and Jamie.

Back in the rehab centre, I reflect on the drive, determination and focus I had four years before and the commitment required to make a comeback in the NHL against all odds. I will now need this kind of strength and more.

Reflections on Fighting Back into the NHL

Needless to say, the Buffalo Sabres management must have been rocked by the news they received about my head-on collision. I had asked to be traded just weeks earlier and now I was broken so badly that no one, including the doctors, believed I would ever be able to play again. With three years left on a one-way NHL contract, I had become a major pain in the rear—not just to the team but to everyone around me as well. I am ashamed of myself deep down, but shame does not make things better. Learn from it, don't let it drag you down and take responsibility.

After major surgery on my shoulder blade to insert a plate, screws and a bone graft to hold everything together, I was put in a cast from my shoulder to my wrist to immobilize my left arm and shoulder. I'm left-handed, so I took the opportunity to challenge myself to become more effective with my right arm. June and July were long months but the cottage was the best place for us and both Patti and I loved to be in the woods and by the water. Family helped get the boat in the water and we just enjoyed each other's company, knowing and respecting that what had happened was as close a call as you can have and still be alive.

I don't remember either of us ever talking about me not playing again. We knew we were going to have to do a tremendous amount of work but that nothing would get in the way of that work. July came, and after x-rays were taken to see if the bone graft and metal plate were holding, it was time to remove the cast, put my arm in a sling and very slowly start opening and closing my hand to get the motor working again. The doctors told me once more that the chance was incredibly slim that I would regain any feeling or strength in the muscles that would allow me to rotate my left arm away from my body—and that without this function I would not be able to play professional hockey. I would not be able to push guys off my left side. My only question for the doctors was, When will I be allowed to lift weights?

August was approaching fast. During the last week of July we had another meeting with doctors to look at the possibilities. I had dropped from 187 pounds to 172 and my left arm was half the size of my right. Doctors had not given me permission to put any stress on the left arm and shoulder, but we thought that this week I would get the green light. When the green light came, I couldn't wait to learn what I needed to learn and to start strengthening my entire body. Think: what actions can I take to make the situation better? If I don't have the answer, who can I ask for help? What help do we need? What do we need to know? What equipment, like ultrasound or electrical stimulation, would we need to come into town for?

Teach Me What to Do

I wanted to be taught what to do and what not to do. I did not require someone there to help me with the exercises—and neither do you. It is my experience that if you go at it—whatever you are doing—with the right perspective, if you have access to help on the phone, if you have the equipment, if you have a vision of what you want to accomplish and you believe you can pull it off, you will succeed. You may not always succeed in the form you expected but you will achieve more than you will if you don't take this approach. And “more” equals success.

With just six weeks until Sabres training camp and my career on the line, we put a plan together to follow at the cottage. I would hit the weights and the calories like I had never hit them before. My metabolism runs so fast that it had always been difficult for me to put on weight, but this time we were on a mission, with a very definite goal and a very definite timeline. My goal was to become the biggest I had ever been and to put on 20 pounds of muscle in 30 days. Some would say this is crazy—and I would not disagree—but we did not leave ourselves any choice but to succeed.

Daily Menu:

6,000 calories

1½ hours of rehab exercises

1½ hours of strength training

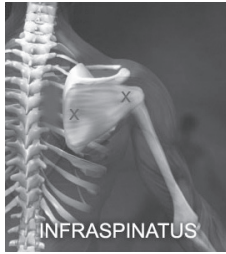
20 minutes of aerobics

We scheduled the time of day I would perform each exercise over the 30 days; there would not be an exercise missed, ever. We would follow the plan to the letter, ensuring that muscles did not get overworked. I would use the exercise bike only sparingly and for warm-ups, ensuring a low calorie burn.

The good news was that after 30 days I had put on 27 pounds, weighing in at 197 pounds, with 10 percent body fat. This was 10 pounds heavier than I had ever been in my life, with only a two percent increase in body fat. The bad news was that my left arm's external rotation was still not functioning. Even though I had put on all that muscle, when I was lying on my right side I could not move my left arm away from my body. This had been the doctor's concern and was the one component that if missing would prevent me from passing the physical examination in Buffalo, in just two weeks' time.

Think. What do we do next? What are we not doing that we could be doing to help our progress? What are we doing to hurt our progress that we can stop doing?

Through this analysis we decided that by getting a clear picture, by x-ray, of the exact reason the muscles and nerves were not functioning, I would be able to see it as it was and then visualize it working. For the next six days, the supraspinatus and infraspinatus muscles (part of the rotator cuff), along with



The large scapula bone was broken in half and the bottom piece inverted. After major surgery to install a plate and six screws, nerves would have to reconnect somehow.

the nerves feeding them, would be my entire physical and emotional focus. Just five days before training camp started, the nerves and muscles started firing together. Once they started firing, I kept pouring on the visualization and regimented activity with those particular muscle groups. We were doing it!

As I got stronger the excitement began to build. I would have to prove I was physically ready and able to play. The first step was proving it to the local doctors and then asking them to write the supporting letters necessary for me to pass the physicals I would be facing just days later. The Buffalo Sabres had not communicated with me once since the accident. They had drawn a line in the sand next to the one I had drawn when I had asked them to trade me just six months before. The only action I could take was to show up at training camp as though nothing had happened and have the letters from top doctors clearing me to play professional hockey again. The Buffalo Sabres were hoping that I would not be showing up at all.

Training Camp

The day I had been fighting so hard to get to had finally arrived. The first day of training camp was spent on weigh ins, physicals examinations, blood tests and so on. I wasn't sure what to expect from the Sabres management. The ball was firmly in their court and they had not communicated what their intentions were to me or my lawyer. Armed with letters from two orthopaedic surgeons and a rehabilitation specialist, I was ready to face the medical exam I was required to pass to go on the ice for training camp. I had done everything I could possibly have done to make things right.

The letters from my Ottawa doctors gave the Sabres the coverage they needed from an insurance perspective, but there were loopholes. If the Sabres felt they needed to teach me a lesson they would exercise one of those loopholes even if it pitted one doctor against another. Talk about nerve-wracking. I hadn't seen the players or talked to management all summer, and all I could do was fall into line with the other guys. Boy was it good to see Adam, Norm, Phil and a few

***When you walk
with sight you see
what is. When you
walk with faith you
see what can be.***

***—John Canary
author, Breaking Through
Limitations***

others for a few minutes before it was time for us to go to separate rooms.

We were in a gymnasium and the exam rooms had been created with black fabric supported by metal tubing. I sat on the bed in the room waiting for the team doctor and staying positive in my mind. When he came in it was clear he knew my background. I handed him the letters from the very well-respected surgeons in Ottawa. He studied the letters carefully and then began a series of strength tests to confirm I was ready to play. I seemed to do great and when we were finished he told me that it was incredible how I had recovered after such a terrible accident. From what he could determine, I was OK to play. Just as those words came out of his mouth the Sabres' general manager, Gerry Meehan, opened the curtain and asked to speak with the doctor outside the room.

All of a sudden, everything went to slow motion. The fear of the unknown welled up in me, making me feel sick to my stomach. I can't remember for sure but it must have been no longer than 30 seconds before the doctor returned. He tried his best to look me in the face as he told me that I would not pass the physical exam. I scrambled for a minute, asking about the documents I had provided and what he had discovered in his tests, but I quickly realized that this had gone political and I needed to get away from this space to think and then act.

The Buffalo Sabres had, in a very calculated manner, made their move and it was clear that their intention was to get out of the three years left on my four-year contract. Failing me in my physical was a risk they were willing to take because all I could do was force medical arbitration. I was now crossing over into the business side of hockey, but regardless of the obstacles, business or otherwise, the Buffalo Sabres could not take away my goal of getting back into the NHL. I had made a non-negotiable commitment to return regardless of what they threw at me. The ball was now firmly back in my court. For the second time in my career my lawyer and family advised me to return home to Ottawa. Just as in my NHL rookie year, I would get support from Brian Kilrea and started skating with the Ottawa 67's during their training camp. It would get me in shape for what I was about to face.

Buffalo had drawn a hard line. That same day they sent a letter to my lawyer stating that because I had failed the medical examination in Buffalo, I had broken my contractual obligations; my contract was now null and void. I was completely blown away by what was happening but I could not let my emotions get the best of me. My goal was to get back into the NHL and this remained my focus. We would file the paperwork, take the Buffalo Sabres to court and begin medical arbitration proceedings. It did not make any sense to

***All of a sudden,
everything went
to slow motion.
The fear of the
unknown welled
up in me, making
me feel sick to my
stomach.***

—Doug Smith

me that the team would pursue this route, knowing that more than one doctor had already approved me to play—and not just any doctors, two of the most respected guys in the business.

The Sabres argued that because the doctors were in my hometown they were prejudiced in my favour. The US court threw out the letters for that reason and decided to send me to the world-famous Mayo Clinic in Rochester, Minnesota, where I spent two days being analyzed like a lab rat. Each doctor I met had trouble understanding how I had recovered from the accident. Every one would comment on how lucky I was and how they had seen this kind of injury before but had never seen anyone recover to the extent that I had. After two days and four doctors, it was unanimous. I was fit to play in the NHL. I had gotten one step closer to my goal.

I was excited again to get back to Buffalo and get on the ice with the team. There was only a week left before the start of the regular season so I had a burning urgency to get going. When I arrived at Sabreland in Buffalo for the last three days of training camp I was focused and ready to go. The feeling of being back in the dressing room is indescribable. My smile was ear to ear; it was great to see my teammates. I felt I needed to prove that I still had what it took to play in the NHL.

Even after everything I had been through, I did not feel anger towards the team's management. I understood that they had done what they felt they needed to do; I may have done the same thing in their position. As usual, Mike Foligno was there with a big smile to shake my hand and let me know that he was happy to see me healthy. Most of the guys were great, but a few were very cold and I could tell that the rumour mill had been spinning. When the rumour mill spins it is wise to just go about your business and not make too many waves. I felt strong, I felt confident and for the first time in my sports career I felt humbled.

I did not even suspect that at the same time as I was putting on my shin pads and skates there was a meeting of coaches and managers going on upstairs. They were literally trying to figure out what to do with me now that they had to pay my salary. As I started to put on my shoulder pads and jersey to go on the ice, Rip, the assistant trainer, approached me to tell me that I had to go upstairs for a meeting with management. Overwhelmed with emotion, I thanked Rip, but I could see the concern in his face. He is a wonderful person and has spent his professional life protecting and supporting the players while working for a common manager. He was like one of the players and did not want to see me hurt again after everything my family and I had been through.

With confidence and pride I removed my skates, put my track suit on and climbed the stairs to the office overlooking the ice surface. When I walked into the room, the general manager, head coach and assistant coach were there to talk with me. They told me point blank that even though they had to pay my salary they did not want me around the team or on the ice with the Buffalo

Sabres organization.

The bottom line is that they had not been happy with the way I was playing. We all knew that things weren't working out with respect to my playing time, my role and my responsibility. My lack of diplomacy and patience had created an environment in which it was not possible for me to improve.

It was a confusing, painful blow, which I needed to absorb and move past as quickly as possible. My only response as I sat at the table was that they had to either play me or trade me. There was no response and the meeting ended as quickly as it had started. As I walked out of the office I returned to the dressing room, where Rip told me that he had instructions to escort me to the exit immediately. As we walked to the emergency exit at the side of the building I asked him if I could get my equipment so I could skate in Ottawa. He told me to return after the afternoon skate and back my car up to the back of the building and he would have my equipment waiting for me there. When I returned later, I backed up to the Zamboni entrance and he threw my equipment in the back. This is the way my business relationship with the Buffalo Sabres franchise ended.

With only five days until the start of the season I was still focused on my goal. As impossible as it seemed, we remained positive and I continued to strengthen my body and my mind. Would there be a trade? What would be the Buffalo Sabres' next move? The ball was in their court. I was still a protected player with the Sabres and the next possibility was the waiver draft in a couple of days.

This is how the waiver draft worked at the time: There were 10 rounds in the draft and if during any round the Sabres where to pick up a player for their roster, they would have to leave a player unprotected. The later in the waiver draft you got left unprotected, the smaller the chance that another team would pick you up. It was not unusual for teams to use the waiver draft for punishing players by burying them in the minor leagues, where no other team could claim them—even for someone like me, who had a one-way contract.

There was no Internet or real-time mass communications technology at that time. The newest technology in the late 1980s was the fax machine. By the eighth, ninth and tenth rounds, most general managers would not be paying very close attention. In the eighth round, Buffalo picked up a player and left me unprotected. Thanks to Oilers' head coach and general manager Glen

Sather, the Edmonton Oilers picked me up the very next pick. Just three weeks after the Oilers had moved Wayne Gretzky to the Los Angeles Kings, I was on my way to Edmonton to play centre for the Oilers. We got the call from Mr. Sather, and I was on a plane the same day, had one practice with the Oilers and started the next night in the home opener wearing #8 on the first line at centre ice.





Talk about big boots to fill. But I was ready for the challenge. It was a dream night as I scored the first goal of the season for Edmonton from Jari Kurri and we won 5-2 against the New York Islanders. The next day, I was on the front page of the *Edmonton Sun*. I was back, and I had achieved my goal. We had accomplished what we set out to accomplish.

Even though that year was a tumultuous year in the Oilers' organization, our appreciation for Glen Sather's and assistant coach John Muckler's belief in me remains. They believed in me and gave me the window to get back into the NHL and prove myself. At Christmas that year, it was time for me to go down to Edmonton's farm team in Cape Breton and get into the kind of shape I needed to be in. I asked Sather if he would please trade me and we made the same deal I had made with Pat Quinn three years earlier. He would give me my wish if I worked hard for Cape Breton head coach Ron Low.

Chapter 10

Reality of Addiction

It takes only one person's belief to change the belief of the world. To me, that person has been my wife, Patti.

It is August 1992. The rain continues to pound the Ottawa area—it almost seems a fitting backdrop for the emotional agony of dealing with a spinal cord injury. But the weather is the last thing on our minds as I struggle constantly, feeling like I am being suffocated with a plastic bag. Patti goes from nursing a newborn to playing with a two-year-old to taking care of me and my crazy needs. It is absolutely insane but it teaches us that anything less than insanity, we can handle.

The biggest challenge is that there can be no letting up. We have been through serious rehab before and we came out the other side, and we both believe that this will not be any different. I will study the exercises given to me by the rehabilitation specialists and modify them as I improve. Patti does not give me even two seconds when I start to complain that I can't do something. She just tells me to figure it out. And I do, sometimes to please her and sometimes to prove to myself that I can do it.

The tasks I am talking about are no big deal for someone who is able-bodied; they are simple, basic things, like putting toothpaste on the toothbrush, clipping my fingernails or tying my shoe. Even though she might not know it, pleasing Patti is the number one motivator in my life and it has worked for us. Who is motivating you to do a great job? Who drives you to be better every single day?

The weeks pass, the weights get heavier and my balance slowly improves. Our good friends Pete and Sarah Smith give me a wooden balance board that

Pete had made in his workshop at home. I spend hours on that board, getting better and better.

The kitchen is a bit of a risky place for me because I still have no feeling in my fingers and hands, so plastic cups and Corel dishes are best for me. It doesn't matter how much enthusiasm you have, when you touch an element on the stove you get burned, but when your nerves aren't working, you smell the burn before you feel it. I sometimes try and do too much or move too fast and the result is a burn or broken glass. This is a small price to pay for learning how to function again. We adapt by switching to unbreakable dishes and getting long gloves to protect me from the stove.

Think about how you are adapting to transition in your life. Are you OK with making mistakes, dropping a glass or spilling something? Can you handle that, or would it push you over the edge, forcing you to quit trying?

What's Your Reward?

By November 1992 I have been out of the hospital and living at home full time for almost two months. I forget to use my cane, I am still extremely careful with my grip around the stairs and I stumble from time to time, but at least I am moving under my own power. It is a naïve, happy, drug-clouded existence, but I never let up on my exercises and my desire to get back everything I possibly can. I am becoming able to start taking risks again. When you are seemingly down and out, remember that you are either teaching someone or being tested. It will help you to elevate your game and your spirits.

Even as the body regains neurological function, one thing you cannot adjust to is infection. To anyone who has had a spinal cord injury, infection becomes the number one biggest threat to survival, and the most common breeding ground for infection is the bladder. I had been through two bladder infections while in the hospital and with the third, my body becomes immune to the antibiotic being used to treat me. After another try and no results the doctor urgently orders a five-week course of a strong antibiotic, the type of drug you do not want to get into the habit of using because of what it destroys as it fights the infection in your body.

As the snow begins to fly in the fall of 1992, we realize we need to do something about my bladder; just going along on the same path we have been following is not the solution. We have to transition our way of looking at the situation. It is time to think about what we could do—or stop doing—to improve the situation. The infections are from inserting the tube into the bladder three times a day, so stopping that should solve the problem. To stop this painful and risky operation my bladder will need to start working on its own again. The bladder is not functioning because the signal pathway from my brain to the bladder has been disrupted at the C5 level of my spinal cord. We need to look at all the things we can do to improve the signal. We determine that the most obvious way to improve the signal would be to eliminate the pain

medication and sleeping medication. It becomes a choice between bladder function but pain, and no bladder function but no pain. I have been taking 200 milligrams of morphine and 50 milligrams of Halcion per day for over nine months and there is no doubt I have a morphine addiction. We prepare a plan to get me off all medication over the next two weeks. The countdown to detoxification begins.

For the first week we cut my doses in half, then down to a quarter for the second week. I remember that last pill even 17 years later. I am filled with fear but there is no turning back. We have made arrangements for the kids to be elsewhere during this process; we are aware of the withdrawal symptoms I could experience: cold sweats, stomach cramps, anger, frustration and nightmares. They come, and Patti is there every step of the way.

Within just two weeks of getting off the medication and with a lot of hot shower time to stimulate the flow, my bladder starts working on its own, a little bit at first, and then over the next 18 months I regain 70 percent function. Today, I still drink cranberry juice and water at least a couple of times a day to keep infections at bay. And as long as I am not half asleep, my bladder serves me just fine.

Sometimes in our lives the sacrifices we have to make seem much too great for the reward we get in exchange. For example, you would probably give up alcohol for three months in exchange for a first-class trip around the world, but you probably wouldn't change your brand of coffee for a free night's accommodation downtown.

For me, the reward was the possibility of having a bladder that functions, a life of independence and a decreased risk of dying from infection. Have you analyzed what your reward for eliminating bad stuff from your life would be? Is the reward big enough? Have you even established a reward? If it isn't big enough, then consider making it bigger.

Reflections on My Final NHL Year

The Cape Breton Oilers of Sydney, Nova Scotia, are a long way from the Edmonton Oilers; it was Patti's and my first journey to the east coast of Canada. I had been skating with the Black Aces (guys who were not dressing for the next game and skated extra after practice every day) in Edmonton for almost a month. John Muckler was tasked with most of the coaching responsibilities in November and December and he also had the job of getting me and a few others into game-ready shape. I compensated for the toll of the head-on collision and the extra weight I was carrying with adrenaline in the first week of the season, but as the adrenaline wore off my body could not seem to keep up. A new test was beginning.

The opportunity to play in Cape Breton came at the perfect time, and everyone—from head coach Ron Low to teammates like local boy Fabian Joseph to the training staff and the fans—was fantastic to be around. The

people in Sydney were like family to everyone they met and it seemed like the whole town would come out to support their team, packing the building every game. We found a nice home about 20 minutes outside Sydney, right on the Mira River, and settled into a new routine. I was feeling good about my game again and the guys in Cape Breton were all so supportive of each other. Everyone just wanted to see their teammates get into the NHL—many guys had never had their opportunity in the show. From ice fishing with teammate Jim Wiemer to seeing Trooper at the Hotspot in downtown Sydney to a winning record, it was a fabulous time.

One of the rituals I had never seen before, and so could not have appreciated then like I did when I left Cape Breton, was the camaraderie around the NHL trade deadline. Every team in the minors has a host of players who will move to other teams and maybe get their shot and every guy playing in the minors must believe that he will go to the next level this year or next year or the year after. Patti and I hosted a trade deadline party at our house: we were all waiting for news of positive movement by any player on the team. When the phone rang, everyone held their breath in anticipation, until we learned that Jim Wiemer was on his way to the Los Angeles Kings and I was on my way to the Vancouver Canucks. It was an evening of mixed emotions. I had grown as close to this team in two months as I had grown to any team I had played with. I wanted to see everyone get their shot and not just the two of us.

Glen Sather came through on his word and Pat Quinn and the Vancouver Canucks had traded for Greg Adams and me. Greg and I had arrived in Edmonton at the beginning of the season but Greg had not gone down to Cape Breton and it was great to see him again in Vancouver. Playing in the NHL in one of the most beautiful cities in the world for a management and coaching staff that I had the utmost respect for was another dream come true. It also gave me the opportunity to get to know Brian Burke and to find out that his snarl is much worse than his bite. I found Brian to be one of the good guys.

We lived in beautiful Burnaby, BC. Patti was now almost three months pregnant with our first baby, Jenna, who would be born September 4, 1989, before that next season. My appreciation for being able to play hockey was at an all-time high. When I think of my career to that point, I believe that I had not been thinking but simply reacting along the way. I remember doing the best I knew how to do with what I had to work with. The one thing about me was that I would always tell the truth, whether it was politically correct or not. I had the naïve idea that the truth was always what people wanted to hear because it was what *I* wanted to hear, regardless of how painful it was to hear it.

I had stopped developing socially at age 18 and I am still not sure whether that came from genetics or environment or a combination of both. I always wanted to do the right thing but sometimes my attitude, or lack of a solid philosophy, got me into trouble. I was often thinking about how things affected me and not about how things affected other people. To this point, I had

been going through my life doing what I thought was what I was supposed to be doing, rising up the scorecard to be the best in the world, as opposed to working towards being the best *for* the world. I had always won at everything I had played so if I wasn't winning it had to be someone else's fault. There are many hockey experts who would agree that I was one of the most gifted athletes in the world and had all the skills to become a superstar in the NHL, but regardless of how much talent someone may have, if they are not able to shift the way they think to see the bigger picture then they will continually bang their head on a ceiling they can't see. I have found it works the same in the business world.

Imagination, will, brute force and boundless energy had gotten me back to the NHL and onto the covers of magazines once again. Would I need to hit my head on the invisible ceiling again? I was just 26 years old and my appreciation for what I had and for where I was gave me some peace for the first time in my life. I was happy to be alive but even after what I had been through I had still not discovered the key that lies within each and every one of us. Every time I went out on the ice I would be beamed back to the old way of thinking. Every time a situation in the dressing room erupted, I had simply learned to do nothing as opposed to getting involved, but I still had not figured out what I was really doing there. I was more comfortable in my skin but still not where I needed to be. I still had not discovered what my purpose was.

I was rising up the scorecard to be the best in the world, as opposed to working towards being the best for the world.

—Doug Smith

That season we made the playoffs and met the first-place Calgary Flames in the first round and summer came early once again. I had finished strong personally, with seven points in just 10 games, and even though it had been another physical and emotional journey, the Canuck coaches and management liked the way I was performing. Pat Quinn, Brian Burke and the Canucks would pick up the option year on my contract. This was it: my career was now on the line. The following season with the Canucks, along with the birth of our first child, would create a defining period in our lives.

I had been fortunate over my almost nine years in the NHL in that I had had only one serious on-ice injury. But after a fantastic training camp and a great start to the season, I tore my hip flexor muscle from the bone in a seemingly innocent play. The injury put me out of the lineup for almost a month. Even though the clock was ticking I never lost the confidence that I would return, shine and continue my NHL career.

As we approached Christmas, the Canucks' win record was just 11-19-7; by the end of January we were 14-30-9 and almost mathematically eliminated from the playoffs. With 30 games under my belt and a young group

of players coming through the system, Pat Quinn approached me and gave me some options. He knew that I needed to get more ice time than I was going to get in Vancouver, considering the situation, and he knew getting a shot with a playoff team could get me into a stronger position to stay in the NHL. The Vancouver Canucks would be working on the younger players in preparation for the following season and though he did not have anything against me staying in Vancouver and working with the young guys, he gave me the choice of a trade and I took it. It was an opportunity to hook up with a team that was going to make the playoffs or a team that was vying for a playoff spot.



When Pat called me into his office a few days later and told me that the Pittsburgh Penguins wanted me, I think Pat was as excited as I was. Mario Lemieux had been in and out of the lineup with a bad back for a couple of months and the Penguins were battling for a playoff spot. With the likes of Lemieux, Paul Coffey, John Cullen, Mark Recchi, Toni Tanti, Jim Kyte and Tom Barrasso, the Penguins had been positioning themselves to win the Stanley Cup.

Through the pain and suffering brought on by my stubborn, do-it-my-way personality, I had begun to learn how to separate the on-ice antics from personal relationships off the ice. I was becoming comfortable in my own skin after nearly nine years at the professional level, though I was still only 26 years old. I had never been just a fan of the game of hockey and had never really felt either honoured or in awe to be on the ice with or against any particular player. But the experience of practising and playing with Mario on my right wing changed that and was one of the highlights of my hockey career. After playing with and against some of the best players and record holders, I can honestly say Mario is the best hockey player I have ever seen.

Mario was in pretty bad shape the week I arrived and would not dress for my first game, but like what had happened when I arrived in Edmonton, I started the game at centre ice with Rob Brown and Bob Errey beside me. Even I was blown away by the string of opportunities that had appeared and my plan was to make an impact right away. There would be no holding back. My hip flexor was strong, my speed was with me and I was ready to make my mark once again. Facing off against Kirk Muller on the first shift of the game, I did indeed make my mark as Muller, angry after I hit him in open ice, took a cross-checking penalty on me in our defensive corner. The crowd erupted, confirming that I had done my job, but unfortunately, I had separated my collarbone from my sternum on the initial open-ice hit. Almost before my time with Pittsburgh had begun, I was on my way back to the dressing room. With the proper treatment, I could return to the lineup in three weeks.

I was running out of time and so was the team. We were locked in a battle with the New York Islanders for the last playoff spot and it was going to come

down to the last game of the season. We would have to win or at least tie for one point against the Buffalo Sabres in the last game to gain entry to the playoffs. Mario came back to play in the last couple of games of the season. I scored the first goal of the game from Errey and Lemieux. Buffalo scored twice, and then I assisted on Mario's goal to tie the game at two.

The overtime rule at that time was five minutes of five-on-five play; if the game was still tied after five minutes, it went in the books as a tie. If we tied we would be in the playoffs. We were almost there when at the three-minute mark of overtime Sabres defenceman Uwe Krupp took a bouncing wrist shot from outside the blue line and it bounced between goalie Tom Barrasso's legs. I will never forget the feeling in that dressing room after the game or the walk to the car in the parking lot at the end of the evening. It was devastating to everyone associated with the team.

The Penguins were interested in working towards the next season with me in their plans, so contract negotiations began. My lawyer was optimistic and I was willing to make sacrifices to secure another season to both stay in the NHL and to play with such a talented team. Patti, Jenna and I made our way back to Ottawa after another season with a move at the deadline, hoping that all the work we had done would be enough to maintain a spot with the Penguins.

Then, on a warm day as we were driving down Highway 417 in Ottawa, the sports came on the radio and the announcement was made that Scotty Bowman would be returning to the NHL as director of player relations with the Pittsburgh Penguins. He had caught up with me, or I had caught up with him. Either way, the Penguins terminated negotiations with me within 48 hours. He had told me exactly 17 months earlier that if it was up to him I would never play another game in the NHL and now, it *was* up to him.

I made a phone call to an agent for hockey in Europe, and eventually signed a one-year contract. We would start to see the world through hockey, living at the base of the Alps where the borders of Austria, Italy and the former Yugoslavia meet. I would be away from home only three nights the entire season, playing Friday and Sunday nights and having Mondays off. With a baby girl just a year old, it turned out to be a dream come true.

We had family come to stay with us and we visited destinations like Venice, Milan and Vienna. Our team won the silver medal that year, exceeding all expectations. The following year I signed with another team in Europe and we lived on the border where Germany, Liechtenstein and Austria meet. And then, in my eleventh season of professional hockey, right around NHL trade deadline time, I crashed at full speed into the end boards and the fight of my life began.

The Annual NHL Draft

In 2005, Douglas Hunter wrote a book called *Yzerman: The Making of a Champion* (Random House Canada). In it he talks about the NHL draft and

going to the right team at the right time for the right reasons. Hunter refers, without naming him, to a young player from Ottawa. I got to know Douglas Hunter and he allowed me to use the reference here. I share it with you because it will give you an idea of how the world saw me and how, if I had seen myself the same way, I might have developed the patience and awareness to succeed and dominate as a boy among men.

“The kids come out for the annual talent auction—which isn’t really an auction at all, because there’s no bidding, just taking, in a set pecking order—and when the last crumbs of potential have been spoken for, those selected are locked into a career path that is in so many ways about as much within their control as a car with a gas pedal and no steering wheel. When each selected hopeful hears his name called and is handed a team jersey to pull on at the draft, there’s no fooling around. As soon as the team comes to an agreement with the player’s agent, the prospect is a franchise’s contractual property, to be played, traded, promoted, demoted, or discarded at will.

It’s not just where they are going to play. It’s who they’re going to play with, who’s going to coach them, whether or not their skills will fit the talent mix of the team and the system of play currently in favor there. Whether or not management is even serious about winning anything, or is happy just to put fans in seats. “He should have played with or under so-and-so,” you will hear people say.

Or he should have played somewhere entirely different. John Ollson, Yzerman’s childhood friend, reminisces about a prospect they both knew who went high in the amateur draft, made it to the NHL, but never really had the career people thought he should have. “He was ten times the athlete Steve was. The best physical specimen of a man I’ve ever seen. Could throw a ball a mile, could play volleyball, could shoot the puck like nobody else. He was running a five-minute mile in high school with no training. All he’d say is, ‘What’s the best time? Well, I’ll just beat it.’ And that’s all he’d need, to be able to do it.” In the NHL draft, he went to a team with especially bright city lights. “Eighteen years old, lots of money. Too many off-ice problems. Not necessarily with drugs, just staying out late and having a good time. I said to him, ‘You needed to be drafted by Winnipeg.’ He could have focused on hockey, and he would have been great. He just went to the wrong damned team.”

Instead of taking control of my feelings from the inside, I allowed others to sort them out. I always thought that I could change my surroundings, when all I needed to do was change my own perspective. What I learned from this experience and my experiences in the business world is that regardless of whether it is sports, rehabilitation from injury, the software industry, the manufacturing industry or the media industry, there isn’t a meeting happening anywhere in the world where a group of people are sitting down discussing how they are going to make *you* a success. Success comes from inside each of us. The amazing thing is that we are all born with it.

Everything happens for a reason and my reason for surviving are the words on these pages and the relationships I have built that have enabled me to bring you this series of books.

Chapter 11

Reality of Continuous Learning

When you play a professional sport you spend all your time training, practising, playing or rehabilitating from injury; all are part of the game in the athlete's mind. Even though it has been nine months since the impact I'm still locked in a battle associated with hockey. Until I feel I have won that battle, why would my mindset change? Even though the transition has happened from an intellectual and physical perspective, my subconscious mind is still in the game of hockey and it will take considerable intervention to break out of that mould.

Around dinner time one evening, the phone rings.

"Hello?"

"Hi, is Doug there?" the voice on the other end of the phone asks.

"Yes, this is Doug," I answer.

"Hi, Doug. My name is David Matthews. We have not had the pleasure of meeting yet but we have a friend in common, John Ollson, and John tells me you are a sharp guy and extremely motivated. In fact, Darren Pang mentioned the same thing about you. Would you have time to have a cup of coffee? We are expanding our business in the Ottawa area and are looking for strong leadership."

I have always been a fairly logical person and there is no way I'm going to turn that kind of invitation down. How could anyone? You'd have to be crazy

We are what we think. All that we are arises with our thoughts. With our thoughts we make our world.

—Gautama Buddha

or paranoid or both.

That's the power of networks: David had talked to Darren, who had talked to John, who had referred David to me. That connection would be the beginning of my life after hockey, a new way of looking at life and the miracle of continuous learning—all coming from a hockey team I was on when I was just nine years old.

"Yeah, that would be great. Can you come to my house? My schedule is fairly wide open right now," I say.

Dressed in my standard hospital cloths and wearing a neck brace, I looked more like a 65-year-old man than a guy who was still in his twenties. I had never been concerned about my appearance too much because I had never understood that people generally look at the outside of a person to judge what the inside is like. David is fairly taken aback, but spends the time to lay out the business plans just the same. I am like a curious puppy and David, former executive vice president of the Jim Pattison Group, is a consummate professional. He has the terminology and a delivery that make him a pleasure to listen to and to be around.

Almost immediately I want to know how to be like that. I believe, in my naïveté, that it would be easy to learn, though I will find out over the years that it will take a decade or more. But the process of learning to speak this new language and to deliver a message from the front of a room will end up being the same process I had gone through learning to be an athlete. There is no easy way: practise, practise, practise, then mistakes, mistakes, mistakes, then feedback, then adjustment and then more action.

David spends 90 minutes with Patti and me that day. He would later tell me that when he left that day he thought there was no way in the world that I would ever be able to persevere through the amount of transition that would be required for me to succeed in business. Enthusiasm was a 10 but listening skills and understanding were a 2. That goes to show you that enthusiasm does make the difference. Don't worry about the skills—anyone can learn the skills, like anyone can learn to swing a hammer. The most important components for success in any field are a burning desire to succeed, enthusiasm and a good coach.

With David, it seems as though I have all three. The monetary cost of joining our first network marketing company is only \$65 and I feel that just meeting David is worth \$65 so we sign up immediately with no misconceptions of what direct sales and network marketing are or are not. We have never been exposed to this industry but we feel that if there are more people like David in the business, it will be a winner for sure.

Unfortunately, the one thing that is missing at that moment is a sense of urgency. But David knew from years of experience that there is only a slim chance that what and when you are selling will align perfectly with what and when the buyer wants to buy, but that if you are patient, if you communicate

effectively and if the value is there, you will eventually make the sale.

The path to a future of networking and business-building has sprouted from a network of friends and teammates from my childhood, brought to life by David Matthews asking my friends and teammates for a referral to a person they knew to have drive and determination. I am indebted to all of you.

Reflections on the Pathway to the Future

All of us run into challenges and adversity that we want or need to overcome. Most people will try 10, 20 or even 50 pathways before they decide to stop looking for the solution and give up forever. If they are in enough pain, some people will find that success is about going down a thousand different pathways until they find the right one. Are you willing to keep searching for the path through your adversity and never give up until the last breath leaves your body? Can you search multiple pathways at one time? If your answer is yes, I want to work with you because the master key is to never, never, ever give up.

The information superhighway is making it easier every minute to get down these pathways quickly and find new pathways through the process of elimination. I have done it, so I can promise you that others are doing it as well and that you can do it too. There is an entire demographic of connectors, super-connectors and network mavens developing at an extraordinary rate and I can tell you that my question has evolved from, How do I write a profile to attract and connect to one person?, to, How do I write a profile to attract and connect myself to other super-connectors? Understanding how to find the super-connectors, network mavens or network thinkers can be a huge asset to your business and to your personal life. Whether you are a hockey player or an entrepreneur, it is the connections you have that can help guide you.

Now that you have started your journey down the road to understanding and documenting both painful experiences and highlights in order to learn, I want to share some very important information that you may not have considered with respect to pain, the role pain plays in our lives and how we can conquer it in the most efficient and effective manner. There is no point in running from pain because running from something that will inevitably help you does not make any logical sense. This rule applies to any type of pain we talk about in this book—physical, mental, emotional. Paralysis teaches you a valuable lesson about pain and the role of pain in our life. When you are paralyzed and you get an infection you begin to understand that pain is good and plays a role in circumventing terrible illness or even death. When you have been paralyzed you tell yourself how wonderful pain would be. That does not mean I have become a masochist, and you shouldn't either, but pain tells you a couple of very important things: you are alive and your brain is connected to your body through your central nervous system.

I have learned to be extremely careful with any type of cut or abrasion on any part of my body that can't feel physical pain because pain is what warns

us that something is wrong and that we should seek treatment. Do not be lazy and naïve and keep treating the symptom; understand how to find the source. When you get an infection in your body but you can't feel that part of your body, the first sign is not pain but a high fever. When a high fever is your first sign of infection, your risk of dying from that infection increases dramatically. The lesson in life and business is that pain is not the enemy, the enemy is our ability to ignore the pain as though it does not exist.

Pain is not telling you to quit trying and lie down, it is telling you to begin your search for the source of the pain. What is really causing the pain? Have you thought about where the source of the pain is? What model are you using to search for the source? This search for the source may begin at the symptom but don't stop there. Do not stop at your doctor if your doctor can't identify the source; keep searching.

Your job is to understand how your body works anatomically so you can trace that symptom back to the deepest, darkest part of your anatomy, the closed oil system and the core rhythm of the body controlling all other body rhythms, such as two very important rhythms you are aware of already, heart rate and breathing. This place is the spinal cord canal, the cerebrospinal fluid, pia mater, arachnoid mater and dura mater, or in simpler terms, your central nervous system, where the video of your life resides.

In business the source of pain is almost always found in one place as well—in the leadership of the organization. When a business has pain, look to the leadership before infection takes over.

Chapter 12

The Next Phase

In the winter of 1993, as I sit staring out the window wishing I could just lace up my skates and go to the outdoor rink, I wonder what will become of our family, thinking of the worst scenarios and the best scenarios. I go back to the process I used when I was fighting to preserve my life that February night. As I had **realizations**, I would **think** hard about them and take action. I never stopped looking for, and being open to, **feedback** from both internal and external sources. My **analysis** of that feedback would subsequently drive the **adjustment** made to my overall approach. As **realizations** keep coming, the loop continues. I am now keenly aware that I live in a world of never-ending change. I am not invincible.

Reflection can be either painful or filled with pleasure, depending on how we have treated others along the way. You don't need to wait for an emergency or near-death experience to adopt a system to get you through transitional periods in your life. Ensuring that you are enjoying your life is an emergency in itself. Practise the small changes first and commit to a life of continuous learning and you will find that you will attract everything into your life that you require for good health and prosperity. When you find something that works, make sure you develop a system to track and share the valuable information you have learned with others. If only one idea or experience from your life makes a positive difference in someone else's life, then your survival means more on that day than it ever has before.

You will never be the person you want to be. You will always be becoming that person.

—Robert Crisp, speaker

It has been almost one year since the impact changed our world. Miraculously, I have been given another chance at independence. My level of appreciation for other people and the world around me will never be the same. There is still a long way to go physically and we continue to lean on the medical system for

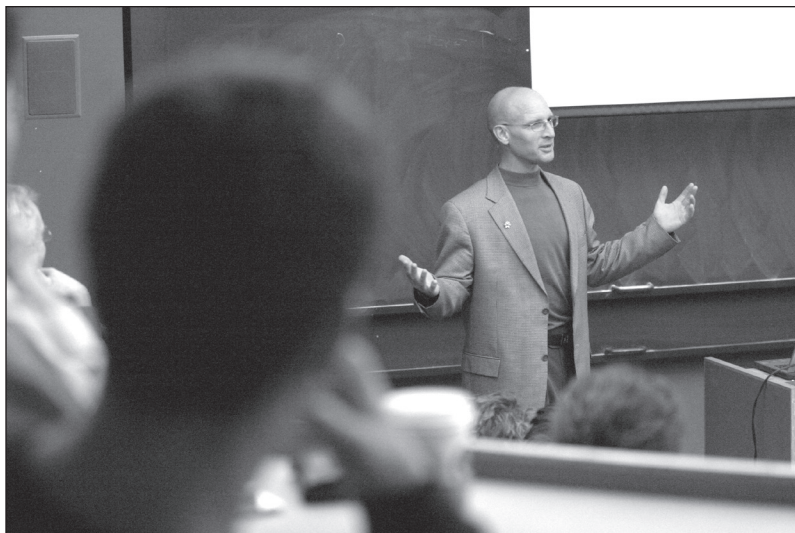
critical physical and psychological support, but we also search inside ourselves for answers because what if the answers are there? I can walk again, drive again and go to the bathroom by myself again. We have beaten the morphine addiction that was holding me back. We are aware that it is time for the next level of healing, which is unknown to us right now, but won't be for long as we continue our search.

Thank you to everyone I have met and battled with inside the most dangerous game in the world, hockey, for your patience and guidance. The speed, balance, talent and teachers that I have witnessed firsthand, and had the opportunity to share the stage with—I have never appreciated them more than I do today. We all have the power to learn a new way.

It is time for us to become the best we can be in another world. It is now time for our transition to life after hockey.

***Those who know,
do; those who
understand, teach.***

—Aristotle



Addressing students at Quinnipiac University in Hamden, Connecticut in 2004.

Postscript

With the many speeches I have given since my hockey career ended I have been slowly making the transition away from being recognized as a hockey player who is doing some business, toward being seen as a business person who used to be a hockey player. Leaving one's identity behind can be a daunting task because of how comfortable it is to slip back into the old mode of thinking and behaving.

I believe it is much more difficult for someone in the business or professional world to make the change they dream about at night than it is for the professional athlete to move into the business world—like the lawyer dreaming of becoming a mountain bike racer, or the corporate executive wishing to become a kindergarten teacher. Many people remain unhappy in life but comfortable in their job or vice versa, always feeling like there is something missing in their lives. Hopefully you can now see that this way of being is not inevitable but a choice.

If you are not sold, after reading this book, that you can transition successfully, I encourage you to watch for the next book in this series and to visit the Further Reading section and pick up a few of the books I have found valuable over the years. Many of them have become a way of life for me. We

Everything I have learned I will give to you. Keep what you want, share freely and stay connected.

—Doug Smith

will be sharing many more books on our companion website. As the series moves ahead, your network and knowledge base will continue to grow. Live long by sharing.

I leave you with an entry I wrote in my journal less than two years after the impact. It was a realization that brought meaning to writing for me. It gave me permission to make the mistakes I needed to make.

As I write in this journal I think of all the times in my life I have seen people writing in journals and how I never understood why they would do such a thing. Now every word I write is a release that I believe is necessary for anyone who wants to truly succeed. I am beginning to understand that emotions are left behind on the pages and create space for us to go on. All with the luxury of being able to recover them and sort through them at any time in the future.

—Doug Smith, December 1994

Other Resources

Let's keep this simple, timeless and success-based. We can take it further when we meet through my blog, through your blog or through some future communication method. I remain open, random and supportive.

If you do not pick up these books or audios it is highly unlikely that you will maximize gain from other books that you choose to read and you will ultimately end up back at these few books. Regardless of your choices, I wish you the best of everything. Find more timeless, hypeless, valuable resources listed on my blog.

How to Win Friends and Influence People, Dale Carnegie, 1937

Think and Grow Rich, Napoleon Hill, 1937

Unlimited Wealth: The Theory and Practice of Economic Alchemy,
Paul Zane Pilzer, 1991

"Yes" or "No": The Guide to Better Decisions, Spencer Johnson, 1993

Breaking Through Limitations, John Canary, 1999

Every Family's Business: 12 Common Sense Questions to Protect Your Wealth
Thomas Williams Deans, PhD, 2008

Your Inner Physician & You, Dr. John Upledger, 1997

If you want to learn to be a better presenter, I recommend Patricia Fripp at www.fripp.com.

Acknowledgements

Patti, Jenna, Jamie and I have an incredible family surrounding us, without which we may not have made it through the valleys we have walked. With love and hugs, thank you to my mom, Carol Smith, who was diagnosed with cancer just two months after my spinal cord injury and passed away at age 52; my dad, Wayne Smith, and his partner, Sue Mullen; Patti's mom and dad, Jim and Dixie Connelly; my grandma, Elsie Parsons RIP; Patti's great-grandma, Marjorie Sword; my sisters, Tracy and Carey and their husbands, Dan Berthe and Derek Curley and our nieces and nephews, Ellina Berthe, Josh Curley and Gavin Curley; my aunt Judy Argue and her partner Dawn O'Leary; my uncle and aunt Steve and Lea Smith; my late uncle Jim Parsons; aunt Debbie Parsons and her partner Rob Lahaie; Caroline and Scott Connelly and our nephews Nathan & Tyler Connelly; Ian and Peter Harlock; Glen Argue; my cousins, Susan and Chris Welch; Jeff and Francis Argue; Steven Argue; Heather and Andrew Stalker; David and France Parsons; Cathy Parsons and Jeff Madore; Donna Parsons; Lisa and Lance Roberts; Derek Smith; Ray Gill; Frank and Debbie Arcchi; John Gill; Sandra Gill; Lorraine and Jim Burwash; Nancy Martin; Sue and Alexander MacGregor; David and Lana Parsons.

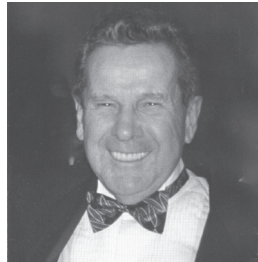
I need to recognize some people who have given their valuable time to support and guide me on my journey to the NHL, my stay in the NHL and through my fights to recover, re-calibrate and transition. Thank-you to everyone who came out and cheered along the way and to my teammates, my opponents, my coaches and all the NHL alumni members who came before me. Today, I am proud to be skating with Terry Marcotte (CTV), Dan Seguin (CBC), the local Ottawa sports media and local NHL alumni every week: great guys, no referees, lots of laughs and the odd goal here and there. Being in the dressing room and on the ice again is more than I ever asked for during the darkest days. It means so much to me.

No one ever makes it on their own in life. There are so many friends and colleagues who have been patient while supporting, helping and encouraging me beyond compare. A lot of you will be featured in future publications so the world can meet you. Some of you coached me and taught me new skills as I grew in sports and many of you taught me the new languages of business, professionalism and diplomacy while allowing me to express myself and follow my heart. A few of you even saved my life. I thank you.

Ches Konecny, Gary Donahee, the late Jim York RIP, Blake Callaghan, Doug Fyfe, (coaches, Nepean Raiders); George Lewis (coach, Nepean Knights); Brian Kilrea (coach and general manager, Ottawa 67's, www.ottawa67s.com); Brian Patafie (Junior "A" and NHL trainer); Larry Kelly (Kelly Santini LLP, www.kellysantini.com); George McGuire (general manager, Los Angeles Kings); Bill Meistrell (co-founder, Body Glove International, www.bodyglove.com) RIP and Lori Meistrell; Jackie Meistrell; Billy and Karin

Meistrell, Bobby and Patti Meistrell (www.bodyglove.com); Parker McDonald, Don Perry, Roger Neilson RIP, Ted Sator RIP and Bob McCammon (NHL coaches); Rogie Vachon, Glen Sather, Craig Patrick, John Muckler, Pat Quinn and Scotty Bowman (NHL coaches and general Managers); Eric Amega; Rick Virag (president, Midget AAA Canada, www.midgetaaacanada.com); Jocko (dive instructor, Dive N Surf, Redondo Beach, www.divensurf.com); Peter Demers, Mark O'Neil and Rip Simonick (NHL trainers); John van Boxmeer and Ron Lowe (AHL, NHL coaches); Craig Ramsay (NHL teammate and coach); Bart Crashley and Ralph Krueger (coaches); The Ottawa Senator's Alumni Association and all members; The Ottawa Senators Hockey Franchise (senators.nhl.com); David and Samantha Matthews; Alison and Alex Edwards; Ryno (Tom) Tomlinson & Abigail Szathmary (Naturopaths); Debra Porszt (VP, Tocara Jewelry, www.tocara.com) and Alan Porszt (principal, www.host.ca); Shauna Petrie (board member, CPA Ontario); George Simpson (board member, CPA Ottawa); Bill Adair (Executive Director, CPA Ontario, www.cpaont.org); John Robertson (The People's Gathering Place, www.tpgp.org); Wendy & John Beard (president, The Cardigan Group, www.cardigangroup.com); Dan Seguin (CBC journalist, www.cbc.ca); Cathy and Ian Salhany (awesome friends and neighbours); Nancy & Jim Kyte (NHL teammate and Acting Chair, School of Business, Algonquin College, www.algonquincollege.com); Chip & Donna Cook (The Alternative Board, www.thealternativeboard.com); The Alternative Board, board members; Tom Murphy (Advisory Board Chair, I Learning Global, www.ilearningglobal.tv); Vera Adamovich (C.F.P. www.veraadamovich.com); Maureen & John Canary (John Canary International, www.johnkanary.com); Gary Gzik (president, www.gettingtosomeday.com); Rob Hall (CEO, Momentous.ca, www.momentous.ca); Liam Maguire (celebrity speaker & journalist www.liam.ca); Chris Beard (VP, Mozilla, www.mozilla.com); David Kennedy (www.permedia.ca); Tom Phillips (VP, Iron Mountain, www.ironmountain.com); Dwayne Winseck PhD (Professor, Carleton University & author of *Communication and Empire: Media, Markets and Globalization, 1860–1930*, www.amazon.ca); Steven Sewell, co-founder, Robert Binnington, engineering manager, Paul Smithers, production manager, Jian Pei, CEO (Arc Stainless, www.arcstainless.com); Calvin Si; Mark Napier (NHL teammate & Executive Director, NHL Alumni Corp., www.nhlalumni.net); Luciano Borsato (NHL alumni and principal, YSN, www.ysn.ca); Jordan Dolgin (president, Dolgin Professional Corporation, www.dpclaw.ca); Joe Jackman (president, RemBrand, www.rembrandlifestyles.com); Barry Spilchuk (founder, You're My Hero, www.ymh-books.com); Michael McGann (teammate & Scotia McLeod, www.mcgannteam.com); Brian Fahey (teammate & TD Financial Services); Michael Nowak (CEO, Lifelong Group of Companies); Lynn Cameron, (president Tech Edge, www.tech-edge.ca); Jane Atkinson (president, Speaker Launcher, www.speakerlauncher.com); Terry Marcotte (CTV journalist, www.ctv.ca); John Ollson (teammate & president, Ollson Sports Group, www.ollsonssportsgroup.com);

Scott Manthorne and Alan Anastos (principals & co-founders, www.athletesandexecutives.com); Luke Clare (Gowlings Lafleur Henderson LLP, www.gowlings.com); Joanne & Jeff York (teammate and president, Farmboy Inc., www.farmboy.ca); James Smith (Partner, Labarge and Weinstein, www.lwlaw.com); Alan McCafferty (owner, Executive Strategies); Steve Bruder; Steve Hyde (president, Hyde Park, www.hydeparkrichmond.com); Pat McGowan (president, inMotion, www.inmotion.ca); Melody and Viv Chander DDS; Tony House (teammate & president, Corporate Hype, www.corporate-hype.com); Thomas Deans PhD (author of *Every Family's Business*, www.everyfamiliesbusiness.com); Peter Fillmore (president, Momenta Systems, www.momentasystems.com); Kurt David (author of *From Glory Days*, www.fromglorydays.com); Tim Redpath (president, Train of Thoughts, www.trainofthoughts.ca); Steve Klein (president and CEO, Marketing Breakthroughs Inc., www.marketingbreakthroughs.ca); Tom Sidney (photographer); Todd Jamieson (president, Envision Online, www.envision-online.ca); Jim Donnelly (senior editor, *Ottawa Business Journal*, www.obj.ca); Bill Bates (president, ECBD Consulting); Nathan Rudyk (president, Market2World, www.market2world.com); Kevan Young (director, Gordon Group, www.gordongroup.com); Chris Beaudoin and Kyle Braatz (partners, Netgen, www.netgen.ca); Nicole d'Entremont (principal, Waterwood Communications, www.waterwoodcommunications.com); Bill Sioulas (www.conundrumcapital.com); Dr. Michael Vassilyadi (Children's Hospital of Eastern Ontario, www.cheo.ca); General David Kinsman and Ron Wiens, partner (Totem Hill, www.totemhill.com); Joseph Skursky (president, Market Leader Solutions, www.marketleadersolutions.com); Dr. Paul Roumeliotis (CEO, Eastern Ontario Health Unit, www.drpaul.com); Bruce Spurr (president, Double Dragon Marketing, www.doubledragonmarketing.com); Andrew Buist (principal, Hinton Productions, www.hintonproductions.com); Robert Swayne (principal, Gailforce Ventures, www.gailforceventures.com); Terry Cairns (CIO, Canadian Blood Services, www.blood.ca); Patti Moran (Patti Moran Graphic Design, www.pattimoran.ca); Donna Dawson, Certified Professional Editor, and Sheila Mahoney, Certified Copy Editor (Mahoney Associates).



RIP—Mother: Carol Smith, Uncle: Jim Parsons, Friend: Bill Meistrell

What the Future Holds

I hope you enjoyed getting to know me and my family a little better by reading *Thriving in Transition* and connecting with us on the Internet. Please pass this book along to someone else or use the tear-outs in the back of the book to send a brand new copy to a friend. I will include a special surprise for them. I also hope you are motivated to share your stories about transition and performance and any related advice at my blog www.DougSmithConnected.com. I would treasure the opportunity to help you share your message with the world for the sole purpose of helping others to overcome their adversity. With your written permission I would love to include all or part of your message in the feedback section of my next book. I promise that you will truly benefit from sharing your secrets and this act will open new doors of discovery for you, your family and people you have not met yet.

Why would you do this you might ask? I know from personal experience that sharing our stories can not only motivate and heal ourselves; it can also motivate and heal others who are going through, or have gone through, a similar type of pain. Regardless of whether your story ever gets published, the simple act of documentation is action, and it is action that pulls us through. We will all discover one day that there is nothing in the world more fulfilling than knowing our actions have helped another person down this road of life.

Here is a snapshot of the content to come over the next few years. It continues in 2010 with a collaborative chapter written by Doug Smith and Ron Wiens called *Phenomenal Outcomes*, which highlights the scientific secrets to competitive advantage inside the organizations of today. Co-authors

of this book include Jack Canfield, Les Brown and Brian Tracy, among others. *The Power of the Platform, Speakers on Life* is put together by the Las Vegas Convention Speaker's Bureau and will be on bookshelves worldwide.

The series of publications profiled below will include more behind the scenes sports and business stories and is based on my journals and relationships over the past 18 years of transition. They feature a line up of experts and academics in business, leadership and healthcare who have all dedicated their lives to helping others achieve their goals

Focus – Transition to Life after Hockey

For a professional athlete, rehabilitation is the exact same thing as being in the game. I had survived, learned how to walk again and, from a physical standpoint, could get around on my own. Now what was I supposed to do? This is where the real transition begins. The world was not going to stop spinning so Patti and I could take our time figuring it all out. We would have to get on with life after hockey. Armed with a couple of machetes and carrying two little girls we began to make our way through the jungle to a new life. In those first few years we would struggle in our relationship, make friendships that will last the rest of our lives and we would meet people who would use our enthusiasm and trust to steal whatever they could get their hands on. Find out how and why we maintained our trust in others and what it did and didn't do for us.

Focus – Transition to Business Thinking

It is said that when someone with money gets together with someone with experience the person with the experience gets the money and the person with the money gets a heck of an experience. From the speedy rise to highly paid Internet and technology executive, to experiencing the technology meltdown in Silicon Valley, to co-founder and president of a design, engineering and stainless steel fabrication company, I have had the opportunity to learn the good and the bad about people from a very diverse group. I am excited to hand you 20/20 hindsight into ideas about where to invest your energy. It will be packaged in easy to follow templates used by some of the top-performing companies in the world. The information in this book will either convince you that you should move forward as an entrepreneur, or it will convince you it is time to focus on working for someone else. I have found that most people love the thought of what being an entrepreneur offers but find they hate, or have trouble, actually being one. If you are a struggling company or want to outperform your competition then this book will deliver the knowledge and tools you need to either stop the bleeding and/or excel. You might not like what you hear but I know you, your family, the board of directors and your shareholders would rather hear it than not hear it. It has been my honour to collaborate with bestselling authors and scientists in business leadership to

explain what leadership means and the critical role that leadership plays in a successful venture.

Focus – Transition to Networks and Social Media

In 2006 it became apparent to me that the world was about to enter another massive acceleration in the evolution of communications and that my deep experiences with professional sports, the Internet, spinal cord injury and business would lend themselves to a scientific theory which I call Sensory and >>>>> (sorry, my advisors tell me not to give this one away until I can take you through the process step-by-step). At the time of the first printing of *Thriving in Transition* this fourth book is over half completed and in 2010 will become a real-time journaling exercise, following my company, DSE Network Inc., and the statistical data associated with our team's strategic plan. The first site (www.DougSmithConnected.com) of several web properties, the content management system (CMS) and our customer relationship management tool (CRM) will launch one month before my first book is released. Automated sequencing is built in for information delivery as well as automated page activation and de-activation. It has been a stressful journey with plenty of sacrifice as we set up the dominos required to get us to this point. I look at it as preparation to be able to stand at the front of the room and ask every single business difficult questions about communication, building markets and leveraging technology. If you are interested in the scientific component of marketing and communications, then this book will show you the science and provide you with the proof.

Focus – Transitioning Health Care

Anatomy, trauma, healing and performance are passions. Mostly academic in nature, this fifth book brings together some of the top minds on the cutting edge of health care and healing. It is about anatomy, how our bodies work and how we can strengthen ourselves to heal and improve our performance. As a group, we can help make positive decisions affecting our personal health and we can also participate in the moulding of our health care system. You might say this is a big pill to swallow, but I assure you, the timing is perfect. It has taken almost two decades to build the relationships of trust necessary to bring you this story and to effect provincial, national and global change. We all have the ability to change the world. We all have a powerful story deep inside of us to get the ball rolling. It only takes one person to change the belief of the world and you can be that person.

Public Speaking

One of the most enjoyable and fulfilling parts of being a writer, speaker and teacher is the opportunity to network face to face with like minded people who subscribe to a philosophy of continuous learning. When I am asked to speak at an event it is about more than just the time on stage for me. It is the time spent with everyone in the room and having a chance to meet the audience personally. I look at pre-events or pre-training as if we are all on the same team and preparing for the upcoming competition. I look at post-event or post-training as an opportunity to wind down, review and clarify with people one on one. My responsibility is to get a clear concise, message across to every single person in attendance and remain open to questions long after the room is empty. When you play a team sport, the 45 minutes before the game and the 45 minutes after the game, when you spend time with your teammates, is a huge part of what makes everyone successful and makes the actual game or event a special, memorable and productive experience for everyone.

Subject Matter Expert

As a subject matter expert on performance and transition, I deliver a focussed, impactful message about of how and why an individual's grasp on these areas will define his or her ability to compete, work collaboratively and will ultimately determine their level of success and prosperity; inside and outside their company. Visit www.DougSmithConnected.com for more details.

The Science

Teaming up with leading academics and scientists in health care, leadership and personal development there is no limit to what we can achieve by working together.

Reach the Team

If you have the awesome responsibility of booking a speaker and want to learn more about how to book me to speak please contact sales@dsenetwork.com or Tony House at Corporate Hype at (613) 797-2089 or thouse@corporate-hype.com

Corporate Responsibility

I will accommodate charity events and a portion of my speaking fee will be donated to a charity in an area that supports head and spinal cord injury prevention, awareness and/or rehabilitation initiatives. I also work at a strategic level with several organizations effecting change in these areas and I am motivated to connect with groups of like mind in your area. If you are passionate about this cause please share your story, comments or questions with me on the site/blog. You can make a difference by connecting.

Photos

52 Pictures – Your Legacy Made Easy

Let's take the last few minutes to focus on how you can start to build your legacy. I promise, anyone or any business can do this. Here are the first two steps in an eight-step process called 52 Pictures that I developed to make it easier for you or your business to get started. It is easy to do and easy not to do, but I promise you, if you do it, it will mean more than you can imagine. Here is how it works:

Step 1

52 Pictures – Get an 8 x 10 envelope, go through your photo albums and electronic files and pick out exactly 52 photos that are emotionally stirring or defining moments in your life. Put the photos and/or CD in the envelope. That's it for step one. Congratulations! You are on your way.

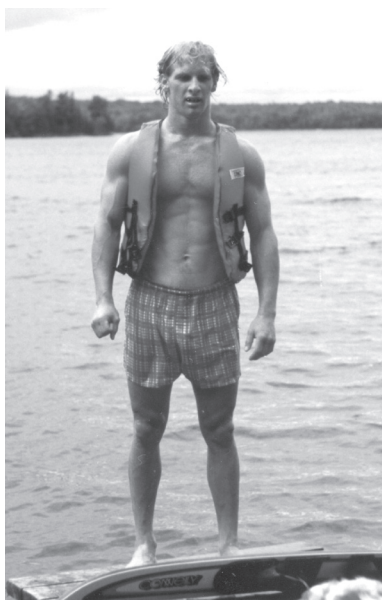
Step 2

140 Characters – When you are ready, write up to 140 characters (no more) about one picture and what it means to you. That's it for step two.

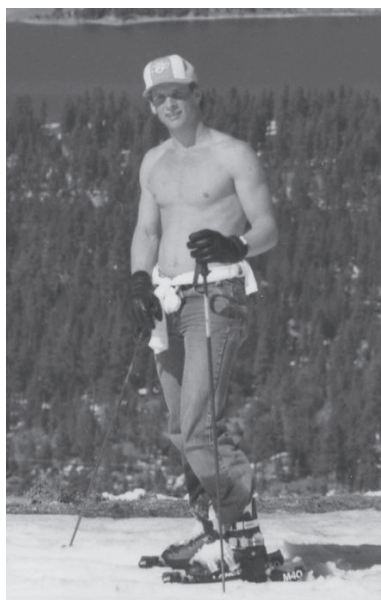
Steps 3-8 can be found on my website. I have included just a few pages of pictures that are meaningful to me so you get the idea. At the back of this book you will find a few pages to begin your journal or make some notes about what actions you are going to take. Sometimes getting started is the hardest thing. I hope this helps and I look forward to getting to know you by seeing your story.



*Christmas 1983, Ottawa River. From left to right:
Mom (Carol), Doug and Dad (Wayne). Sisters (Carey and Tracy) in front.*



Madawaska River, Calabogie, Ontario



Skiing Mt. Waterman, California.



1988 Patti & Doug at cottage, just married.



1987, Patti and Doug sailing with Bill Meistrell in the Pacific.



1987, Patti and Doug on The Disappearance in the Pacific.



*After a slap shot in the face and 15 stitches over the eye,
Jenna's empathy eases the pain.*



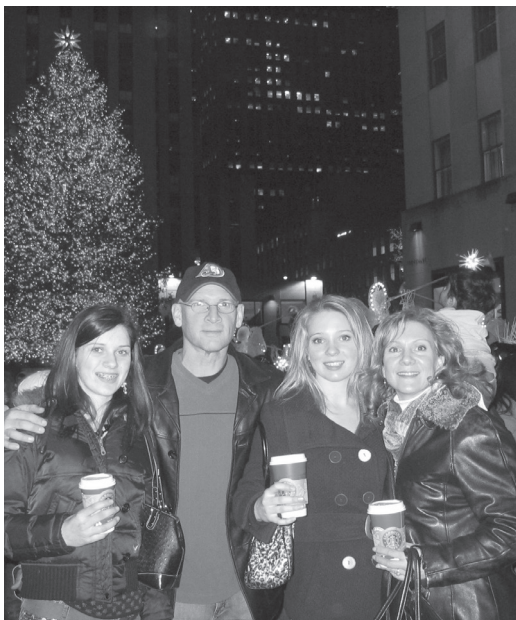
*1993, Jamie Lynn getting mobile
at the same time as dad.*



1992, Jenna Lee Smith, always smiling.



Jamie, Patti, Doug and Jenna in 2002 – all growing up.



*2006 New York City Christmas,
Jamie, Doug, Patti and Jenna*



Jamie Lynn Smith, 18 yrs.



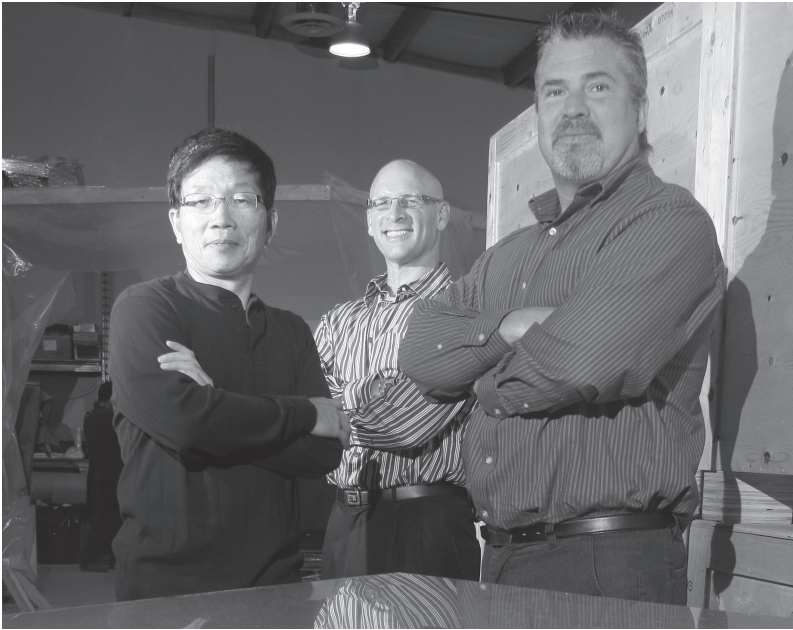
Jenna Lee Smith, 21 yrs.



2009 - Honouring coach and GM, Brian Kilrea, of the Ottawa 67s.



Isolation – Preparing for hard hat dive in California.



Faces of Arc Stainless Inc. – Jian Pei (CEO), Doug Smith (co-founder & bus. dev.), Steven Sewell (co-founder & sales). Photo courtesy of Etienne Ranger



*The Arc Stainless team at 110 Willowlea Road in Ottawa.
We custom design-engineer-manufacture – www.arcstainless.com.*



Colleagues on the Ottawa River – Doug Smith, John Kanary, Alan Porszt, Harish Chauhan, Jim Ruta, Joe Jackman. Photo by Tom Sidney - tom_sidney@yahoo.ca



United Way event, Prescott, Ontario – Gord Brown (MP), Ken Field (CEO, Greenfield Ethanol), Leo Boivin, Doug Smith.

Thank you

A special thank-you to two wonderful, patient, professional sculptors who were a pleasure to work with and who I highly recommend. Call them and talk to them if you require assistance.

Design

P@Patti Moran
GRAPHIC DESIGN

patti@pattimoran.ca • www.pattimoran.ca

Patti has been a graphic designer for thirty years, since graduating from the three-year graphic design program at Sheridan College in 1980. Most of her work has been in the field of publication design and production, with almost twenty years as an award-winning designer/production manager in the community newspaper industry. Most recently, Patti spent nine years as production manager for the *Ottawa Business Journal* and other Ottawa area newspapers owned by Transcontinental Media. While there, she was proud to put her creative fingerprint on almost every one of Transcontinental's 85 daily and weekly newspapers across Canada.

In the fall of 2009, Patti Moran Graphic Design was born, and Patti has been thriving in her own transition, and loving it, ever since.

Editing

Donna Dawson, Certified Professional Editor

dawsonsmith@sympatico.ca

Donna has been a freelance copy editor and proofreader since 1996. Much of her work has been on medical and health information for consumers and professionals and on business and financial material. She has worked in fields ranging from theatre, biography and conservation to education, advertising and business theory. She has brought order, clarity and good grammar to a wide variety of documents, including medical journals, continuing medical education programs, stock market research, web sites, newsletters, books, reports, brochures and dissertations. Donna's rewriting and ghostwriting projects include books, a children's story and marketing material.

Donna is a voting member of the Editors' Association of Canada and has undertaken extensive editorial training with EAC. She was one of the first editors in Canada to achieve EAC certification in proofreading and copy editing.