

Autobiography Attempt #17

Written by Thomas E. Coop For many years I have wanted to be a writer. To write something that would be published. Anything. Anything from comic books, how-to manuals, science fiction, or to writing an autobiography. I have read that you should write what you know best and of course what I know best is myself. Thus I have tried many times before to write my autobiography. **But the same problem always arises. I would decide to tell you the many anecdotal stories about what is has been like to grow up as an unenlightened eight on the enneagram. The enneagram is system developed by the Sufis of classifying all people into one of nine personality types. I have been classified as an eight, which is a person who is confrontational, aggressive, and one who generally gets what they want through intimidation of others. I might have told you many stories of the fights I got into throughout my life.** Or, I may have told you about how intelligent I am. And how many others recognized that fact long before I did and how they tried to convey that message to me so that I would not waste it. Or I would tell you about how insightful I have been about other people and their basic motivations and how good I was telling them what their problems were and what they should do about them. I have written in the past about my emotional issues and how I have attempted to overcome the problems of depression. I explained how there was a time in my life when I felt that was so much pain that I did not want to endure it any longer. In some of my previous writing attempts, I told about my sales career and some small but impressive successes. And I about the 22 months in which I played poker to supplement my income, earning an average of \$1,800 per month when \$1,800 a month was not a bad income. But, who the hell cares. Who cares about these things. Who would want to read and these anecdotal recitations of my successes and my failures. I wouldn't. No, what seems more interesting and more pertinent is the fact that I am now 63 years old, in poor health with a limited life expectancy, and that I feel like a complete failure. I feel like a person who has not accomplished one worthwhile act in my life. A person who has wasted his talents, squandered his resources and has virtually nothing to show for his existence. I feel like a useless eater. Intellectually I know this is not completely true. I have shown some kindness to a few people along the way. And when I wasn't being insensitive to someone or violating their boundaries or out and out abusing them I was occasionally generous and even compassionate. And I never punched anyone who I did not honestly believe was about to punch me first. I am quite honest with my friends and have been selectively honest in my business dealings. There are many people who like me and think of me as a wonderful person. There are just as many who detest me and think I am a total jerk. They are both right. And, of course that still leaves the question, who cares? And I will get back to that a little later. I think that some anecdote may help illustrate who I am and how I got this way. So maybe I will include one or two per cent of my available stories for clarification. For a moment I want to tell you about an awareness that I have that I am feeling somewhat sorry for myself. I feel sorry that for the most part, my life is over and I will never do or accomplish anything great on the grand scheme of things. And as Marlon Brando said in On the Waterfront. "I Coulda Been a Contender" I could have been a contender in some areas of my life. But those opportunities are now pretty much past. **An Autobiography Tom Coop** I am not writing this for the reader, but rather for myself. It is just something that I must say. It is not that I do not care what the reader thinks, on the contrary, I care so much that if I wrote it with the reader in mind, I could not be honest. I would try so hard to impress the reader that my objectivity would be in serious jeopardy. While I have always been quite intelligent, I have never had very much understanding. Since I was young, I have had serious psychological issues. A chip on my shoulder, an adversarial attitude toward the universe and readiness to do battle to whatever the degree that I felt was required at the time, even if that meant putting myself in harm way. I have generally been insensitive to myself and others, unsympathetic, depressed and in a lot of pain. I have always been willing to give everyone else the responsibility for my failures but would never trust giving the responsibility for getting me help, to anyone else. If my entire life has been a continuous test, I have repeatedly failed. In fact if one considers my intellectual potential for success in several areas, i. e. science, mathematics, financial, and mostly in philosophy and psychology, I am an abject failure. However, when one considers my predilection toward self destructive behavior, my anger at the world and my resentment and complete rejection of authority of any kind, I have been a raging success. With all that in mind, I want to be tested on my wisdom by any and all sagacious people that I have any connection with, directly or indirectly from this point in time til my

death. Therefore, I would instead request a single test, lasting from now until my death. A little like an entire course being graded on one term paper. And the term paper of my life as an "operational definition". In other words, the total sum of my activities from now on would be the part that I would be graded upon. Maybe have each one give me a grade based on my wisdom (or lack thereof) on a scale of one to a thousand. A score of 950 or more indicating wisdom of saints and a score of 1 through 50 indication a wisdom no greater than that of world leaders and politicians. Please have these people ignore the fact that no truly wise person would be as concerned as I, with whether anyone else was aware of their wisdom or not. **Born on a dark and stormy night in California on February 24, 1942. (just kidding about the "dark and stormy") I a was a natural born salesman and bully. When the doctor started to slap me on the butt I said, "wait a minute. I won't always be this small and I will remember that you hurt me and I will come back and get you."**

I wish Uncle Tom had realized what a wonderful example of love that he was for me. He was everything I needed, and I think he worked hard to do that for others, at the very least in the last 20 some odd years of his life. ~ Peggy