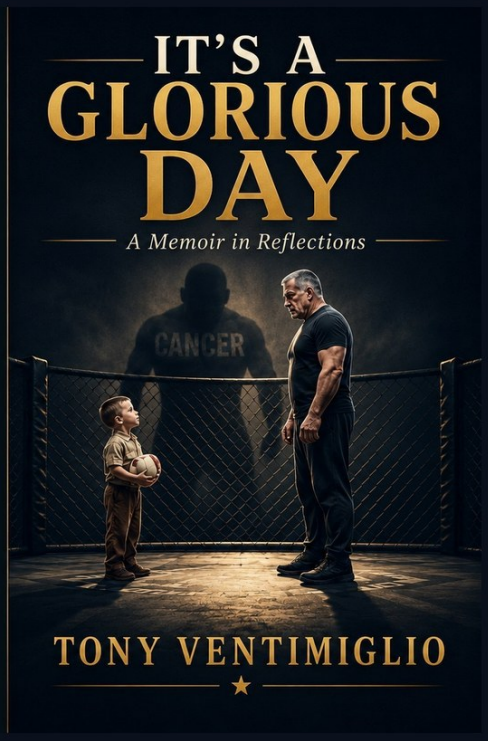
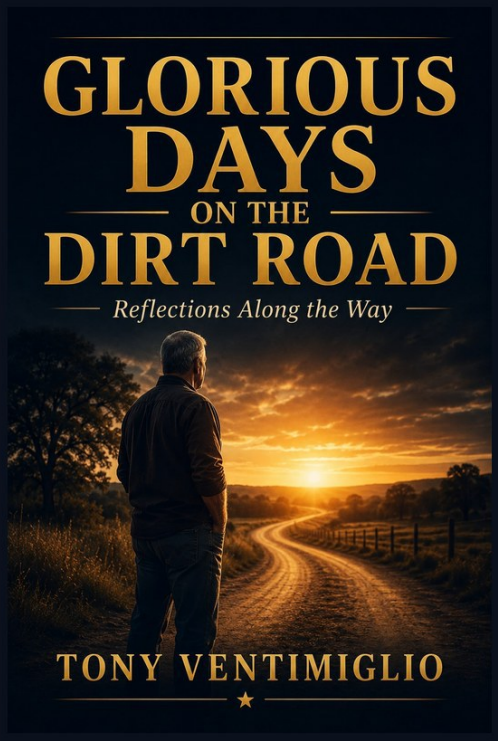
HERE IS A FREE SAMPLE OF MY STORIES

Eight complete stories





TONY VENTIMIGLIO

Author • Writer • Business Leader



A Note From Tony

Thanks for taking a few minutes to read these stories. I don't write as a guru with a formula. I tell stories about family, faith, work, cancer, mistakes, humor, and the lessons that often show up after the fact.

I grew up near Pittsburgh and spent more than four decades in business before writing became an important part of my life. In 2026, while living with Stage 4 prostate cancer and undergoing treatment, I published two books. Writing gave me a way to turn difficult experiences into something useful - and, I hope, something that occasionally makes you smile.

These are eight complete stories. If one of them connects with you, there are many more in It's A Glorious Day and Glorious Days on the Dirt Road.

Thank you for reading.
Tony Ventimiglio

SEE THE BOOKS

A Clean Handkerchief, Shined Shoes and Clean Ears



I was in fourth grade. Our teacher was an older lady. At that age, everybody is older, but this was different.

Mean.

To say it took some time to get used to Miss Simon would be an understatement.

She conducted inspections. Yes, like boot camp. It seems as though they were daily, although that may be an exaggeration.

Everyone lined up, one row at a time.

“Stand straight! Shoulders square!”

Show me your handkerchief. What? You don’t have one?

Now the shoes. Why aren’t they shined? You’re not ready for school. You’re ready for playtime.

Next came fingernails and ears. Yes, you read that correctly. She made sure our ears were clean. I know you are rolling your eyes and thinking, “Really?”

I assure you: really.

Silence was not golden. It was mandatory. Speaking out of turn was a frightening thought. Paying attention was left unsaid, I think. At least I could not help keeping a sharp eye on Miss Simon and listening to every word.

Years later, as an adult, I developed a healthy respect for her.

Miss Simon instilled a way of life: Be ready. Be presentable. Pay attention.

Small lessons from someone who could have been our grandmother—just meaner. At least, that was how it seemed to a fourth grader.

Now I understand.

Inside that discipline was a good measure of love. She made certain the lessons became routine, the routines became habits, and the habits became ingrained for life.

I never saw Miss Simon again after 1968. But if I meet her in heaven, I know she will tug my ear, pull me closer and inspect it to see whether I finally learned my lesson.

Thank you, Miss Simon. You are remembered fondly.

With much respect,

Tony V.

Fourth Grade Class of 1968

Fenton School

I hope you're enjoying these stories.
If you'd like to read more, both books are available here.

BUY THE BOOKS

Dad and Work

April 2023

My Dad worked two full-time jobs for most of my childhood. Not one. Two.

He got up, he went to work, he came home and worked some more. That was the rhythm of our house in McKees Rocks. There wasn't a lot of sitting around.

When he wasn't at one of his jobs, we were working around the house together. Mowing grass. Planting the garden. Painting. He added a room to our house with his own hands, poured concrete sidewalks, reroofed the place, fixed the cars. By the time I left home there wasn't much I couldn't do myself. That wasn't an accident. That was his way of teaching me — not with lectures, but with a hammer and a shovel and a Saturday morning.

He wasn't big on praise. Didn't hand out compliments freely. Affection wasn't something he put on display. But I never once doubted that he loved me. Some men show it differently. He showed it by showing up. Every single day, no matter what.

His first heart attack came at 48. He bounced back and worked as hard as ever. The second one, seven years later, forced him into early retirement at 55. Even then he didn't stop. He stayed active around the house, kept up with the cars, met my Uncle Pete for breakfast, walked with his friends. He just kept moving.

I think about him every day. When my drive is running low and I need something to pull from, I think about what he would do. The answer is always the same.

He'd get up and go to work.

Love you and miss you, Dad.

I hope you're enjoying these stories.
If you'd like to read more, both books are available here.

BUY THE BOOKS

Boy, Was I Wrong



People talk about having a purpose in life, what their purpose is, what they were meant to do, and for most of my life I believed those were just throwaway lines. You know, much like, “Good talking to you,” or “Reach out, let’s connect soon,” and all of those other things that people say. I never really gave much thought to the idea that there was something specific that I was supposed to be doing with my life.

Boy, was I wrong.

Cancer changed that, although certainly not right away. Honestly, at the beginning, right after my diagnosis, my purpose was pretty simple. I wanted to get to the next day. I was afraid. Once some of that fear wore off, the treatments and medications created so much fatigue that survival was still pretty much my purpose. Get through treatment, keep working when I could, take care of myself and my family, and keep moving forward.

Taking care of my family has probably been the closest thing I ever had to what I would call a purpose, and it still is. Being a good husband and father has always mattered tremendously to me. But as far as having some other calling, something I felt I was specifically supposed to do outside of that, I don't know that I could ever honestly say I had one.

Until now.

This is my third go-around with cancer, and when I was diagnosed this time I started thinking quite a bit about what I could do for myself, for my family, and maybe for other people as well. I started remembering the sleepless nights during my first and second battles with cancer. I wasn't really having those anymore, which was certainly a good thing, but I also realized I wasn't accomplishing very much. Somewhere along the way I got motivated.

I thought about a book I had read that helped me through some of my darkest moments. Then I started thinking about my own fear, the nights when I couldn't sleep, the worry during the day, and all of the things that run through your head after you've been told you have cancer. And then it hit me like a train that there were other people going through exactly the same thing.

Somebody else was lying awake tonight worried about a diagnosis. Somebody else was afraid of what was coming next. Somebody else was wondering how they were going to tell their family, how they were going to continue working, what the treatments were going to do to them, or maybe just wondering whether they were going to be okay.

That became the purpose of my books.

I wrote two of them this year while dealing with my third bout with cancer, radiation treatments, and medications that can just knock the heck out of you. There were certainly days when I was tired and days when I didn't feel much like doing anything, but I didn't care. I felt like I had to do this, so I did.

It was labor-intensive and at times it was stressful, but it was also incredibly meaningful to me. For one thing, I thought maybe something I had experienced could help somebody else. Just as importantly, it gave me an opportunity to grab control of something in my own life. Cancer and cancer treatments dictate an awful lot of things. Writing was something they didn't get to dictate. I could still think, still create, still work and still be productive, even if I had to do it differently than I had before.

So I wrote the books, and since then I've probably worked just as hard trying to figure out how to make people aware of them so they can actually read them. That has been an education all by itself.

I write a little differently than a lot of people in this space. I'm not going to call myself a self-help writer because I'm really not one. I tell stories. I think I tell them pretty well. I use humor because that's how I have always dealt with life. I'm also pretty blunt, and I'm not very interested in pretending that difficult things aren't difficult. Somewhere in those stories I usually find a lesson that I learned, sometimes years after the event actually happened, and I share that too.

My hope is pretty simple. Maybe somebody recognizes something they're going through in one of my stories. Maybe it gives them something to hang on to for a while. And hopefully I can put a smile on their face at the same time.

I'm attaching a short video clip that talks about those sleepless nights after my cancer diagnosis. If you've been diagnosed with cancer, or you're dealing with another serious challenge that keeps your mind running when everything around you is quiet, I think you'll recognize some of it.

For most of my life I thought all that talk about finding your purpose was just something people said.

Boy, was I wrong.

I hope you're enjoying these stories.
If you'd like to read more, both books are available here.

BUY THE BOOKS

Never Forget

November 2, 2023

It's tough to stay positive in times of turmoil. Financial struggles, an unpleasant atmosphere at work, family challenges, and health problems can eat at our confidence and erode our well-being. We may not notice it until we have an awakening and think — wow, I didn't used to be like this.

For months I had been struggling in ways I didn't fully recognize or want to admit. Getting out of bed in the morning had become a battle. There were days I couldn't face work — couldn't face the phone calls, the rejection, the grind of recruiting. I'd find reasons to stay home and then spend the day wanting nothing more than to get back into bed. My enthusiasm for life had quietly disappeared. I told myself it was the treatments. I told myself it was fatigue. I told myself a lot of things.

What I wasn't telling myself was the truth: I was depressed.

That word was hard to accept. I pray. I read the Bible. I work on self-improvement, exercise, try to eat right, love my family and friends. How could I be depressed? Depression felt like a weakness I shouldn't have — on top of everything else I was already fighting.

Recently I visited my primary care physician and described the lack of energy. He prescribed bupropion, telling me it should help. He was careful about how he said it — he never actually used the word "depressed." It took me a couple of days to fully absorb what had happened. I think if he had said it directly I would have told him he was wrong.

But the medication worked. Within weeks I was feeling more like myself. Back at the gym. More productive at work. Energy in the evenings again.

Unlike the elephant, I had forgotten what I could be. We can always do better, even when we don't believe it. We just have to remember who we were, use every resource available, and refuse to accept a lesser version of ourselves as permanent.

If you are struggling — really struggling, not just having a hard week — please talk to your doctor. Don't diagnose yourself. Don't tough it out alone. I nearly missed months of my life because I was too proud to name what was happening.

Be like the elephant. Never forget.

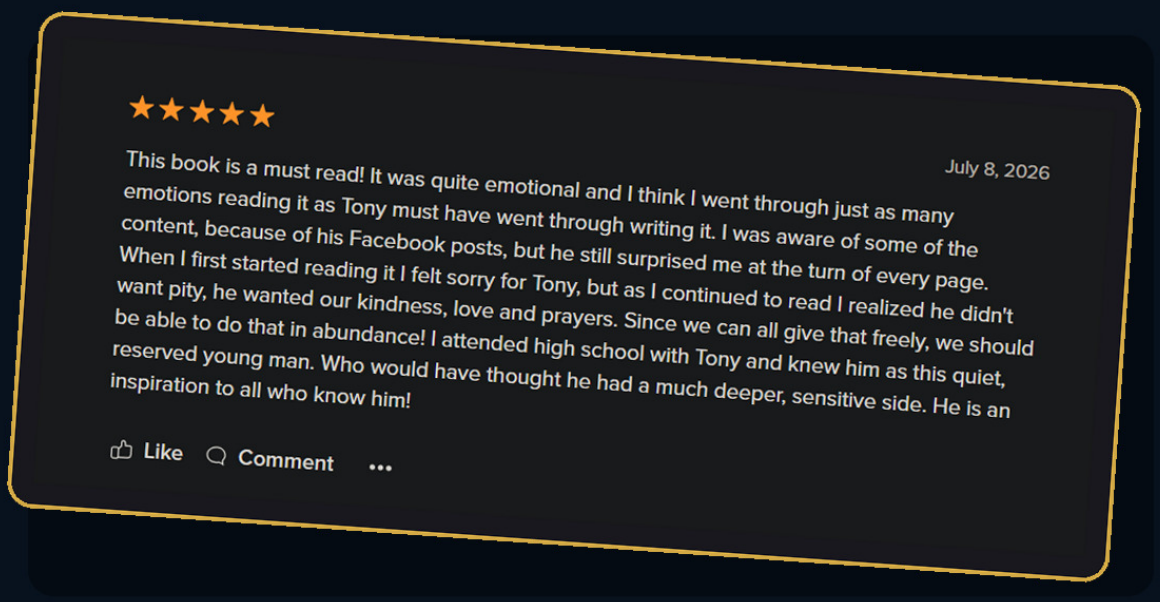
I hope you're enjoying these stories.
If you'd like to read more, both books are available here.

BUY THE BOOKS

WHAT READERS ARE SAYING

When I published these books, I hoped the stories would connect with people. These early reviews told me they did. I’m grateful for every reader who took the time to read my work and share a thoughtful response.

GOODREADS



★★★★★

July 8, 2026

This book is a must read! It was quite emotional and I think I went through just as many emotions reading it as Tony must have went through writing it. I was aware of some of the content, because of his Facebook posts, but he still surprised me at the turn of every page. When I first started reading it I felt sorry for Tony, but as I continued to read I realized he didn't want pity, he wanted our kindness, love and prayers. Since we can all give that freely, we should be able to do that in abundance! I attended high school with Tony and knew him as this quiet, reserved young man. Who would have thought he had a much deeper, sensitive side. He is an inspiration to all who know him!

Like Comment ...

AMAZON



Top reviews from the United States

Steve

★★★★★ Very inspirational book!

Reviewed in the United States on July 15, 2026

Format: Paperback | Verified Purchase

This is an excellent read full of inspirational anecdotes from the author's personal life experiences. Tony describes his battle with cancer and how faith in Christ, family, and sheer determination helps him not only endure but to thrive.

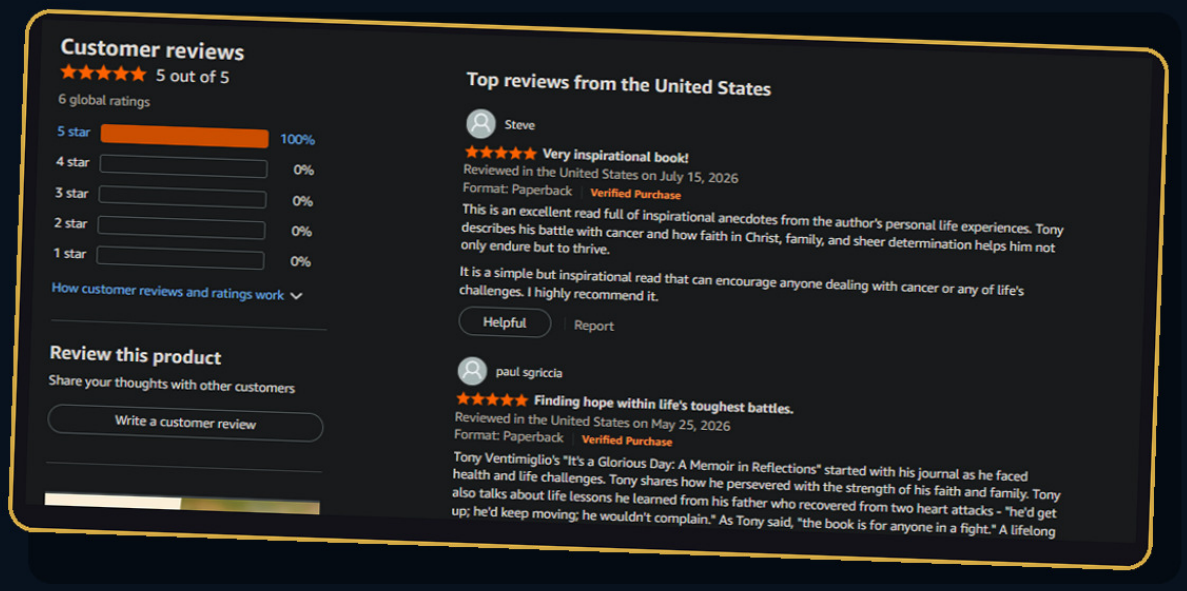
It is a simple but inspirational read that can encourage anyone dealing with cancer or any of life's challenges. I highly recommend it.

Helpful | Report

paul sgriccia

MORE READER FEEDBACK

The ratings summary and additional comments reinforced what I hoped from the beginning: the stories were landing with readers.



TONY C

“Tony grew up in a gritty suburb of Pittsburgh, PA and some of the lessons he learned obviously came from there. I'm sure it also gave him the steely determination to push through the challenges both physical and mental that life has sent his way… this is a highly motivating read to get you through those tough spots in life!”

GEORGE GREEVER

“Tony shares real life obstacles from his life that we can all relate to. How he chose to deal with them and the insight he shares is a reflection of his grit. I would recommend it for anyone who needs a push in difficult times.”

PAUL

“Finding hope within life’s toughest battles… Throughout it all, Tony doesn’t dwell on the negatives but focuses on the positives of his faith and family.”

Enjoying the stories so far?

You can read many more in both books.

SEE THE BOOKS

Life Isn’t Fair

Did you ever have something happen and you thought, “this isn’t fair,” or “why me?” Yeah, I’m sure that you have, we all have.

I received a note from a lifelong friend this morning. I’m not going to share it as it is pretty personal, but it got me to thinking, “life isn’t fair”

Nothing bad happened this time, causing me to think that. It’s exactly opposite in fact. It was a touching reminder of friendships separated by time and distance but never lost. And it’s not fair. I don’t deserve such good friends, and I have more of them than I ever deserved.

You see, that’s the thing. Jesus died to give us grace for our sins. Think about that. Then think about what that means. Grace means receiving something that we don’t deserve. Everlasting life.

Make a list of the things in life that you really don’t deserve, No, not the things that hurt or held you back. If you are honest, you will have to admit that many of those were self-inflicted, taught you a lesson, or were blessings in disguise.

I’m talking about the list of things that you don’t deserve but that have enriched your life. The depth of a lifelong friendship. The love of your wife. The birth and love of your children. Your health. Maybe even your life-threatening health condition.

Yep, I said that. Cancer has terrified me, given me sleepless nights, caused me to feel awful at times but, it has led me to appreciate friendships, become more patient, think more deeply, care more for others, become more selfless. The list goes on but I think you get the message. There is good to come out of the worst of things.

I hope you're enjoying these stories.
If you'd like to read more, both books are available here.

BUY THE BOOKS

A Lesson in Perspective

December 2025

On Saturday I ended up at the ER at a local hospital. I drove myself there expecting a routine visit, but it didn't turn out that way. I needed pain relief and medical attention.

The entire staff was professional and efficient. They demonstrated genuine care and did their best to comfort me.

The procedure was over and I was a mess, but I'll spare the details. I was cleaned up and released under the care of our daughter Adele and her boyfriend Trevor. I truly could not have been in better hands. Adele dropped everything to take care of me. Andrea was waiting for me at home, and I was so touched by how much she worried and waited on me that afternoon. There were quite a few messy moments and she helped graciously. As the day wore on I was thanking God for my good fortunes and the wonderful people in my life.

The next day I was angry because the doctor didn't fully prepare me for the aftermath — what to expect regarding diet, medications, recovery. I felt left out of critical information. Later I used AI to research and understand what to expect. That too was a blessing, providing clarity when I needed it.

For years I expected perfection from everyone. Failure to meet those expectations would set me off. During my prayers at the hospital I was still angry. I was grateful for my loved ones and the excellent care I received, but that wasn't my focus. The things that went wrong dominated my thoughts.

Then it came to me — not anyone speaking, just a thought: Wow. I am really loved by my wife, our daughter, and her boyfriend. I shouldn't let something that sidetracked me for a bit dominate all of the good things that happened.

Be a shining example for everyone you encounter.

I hope you're enjoying these stories.
If you'd like to read more, both books are available here.

BUY THE BOOKS

End of Radiation Treatments

June 5, 2026

This shouldn't really be a big deal. This graduation isn't much of an accomplishment — I had very little choice.

This is my third time with radiation. Twenty-five treatments in 2026, five in 2025, and forty-five in 2023. The most recent sessions really took it out of me. The radiation, on top of Orgovyx and Xtandi, is debilitating. I still have cancer in my prostate, but the plan is for the drugs to keep it in check and, after some time, to take a vacation from them. The only downside is that it will come back, and probably spread. This time the radiation was targeting cells in a single lymph node — a huge improvement from 2023, when it had spread throughout my lymph system. I suppose that's a big victory, and I know I should be grateful, but the fatigue and weakness have taken their toll.

I really am grateful — for God, for Andrea and Adele, for my great treatment team, and for my friends and family. It's just hard to be enthusiastic today.

I've learned that I can survive and bounce back to thrive. Even during this, I continued to work, but missed three days in the last five weeks. I had an email exchange with my younger cousin Joe recently, and he asked if it isn't time to retire. I thought for a moment, but I don't really know what I would do with myself. I enjoy people. I need a purpose — even if it's just getting up and going to work — and knowing that cancer hasn't taken that away from me is something I need.

To everyone out there facing a struggle — health, money, divorce, or something else — you can do this. One step at a time.

Gratitude isn't a smooth road. It's finding God's grace and family's love in the dust of the struggle.

I hope you're enjoying these stories.
If you'd like to read more, both books are available here.

BUY THE BOOKS

Showing Up

September 2024

My alarm went off this morning, a bit later than usual. I hit snooze, muttered to myself, and eventually got up. After shaving and showering, I sat in the living room to read. I really didn't feel like leaving the house. But here I am, on this Friday morning, writing this.

Do you ever have days like that? I've been having too many of them lately. I know I should be getting up earlier and going to the gym, but I just haven't felt motivated.

I've always been a morning person — at least until the last few years. Some of my friends have marveled at my ability to start the day early, while they've struggled with it. I think a slow start in the morning is something a lot of people deal with, and that's why I'm writing this.

When I do get up early and make it to the gym before work, I feel better — physically and mentally. It sets the tone for the day, motivates me to be productive, and even helps me eat better. I feel healthier and more energized. So why, when I know it's the right thing to do, don't I stick with it?

As Richard Whately said, “Lose an hour in the morning, and you will spend all day hunting for it.”

If you know someone who might be struggling with this too, share this with them. It's something we often don't realize others are going through.

As for me, I'll be setting my alarm for 4:45 on Monday and heading to the gym. Hopefully. With your thoughts and prayers, I'll make it happen.

I hope you're enjoying these stories.
If you'd like to read more, both books are available here.

BUY THE BOOKS

About Tony



Tony Ventimiglio is an author, writer, and longtime business leader whose work is shaped by more than four decades of professional experience and a lifetime of hard-earned lessons.

A Pittsburgh-area native, Tony spent 33 years in financial services and later nearly 15 years in executive recruiting. His life outside business has included divorce, career upheaval, starting over, and an ongoing battle with Stage 4 prostate cancer.

His writing focuses on resilience, faith, family, leadership, adversity, gratitude, and humor. He does not present himself as a guru. He writes from lived experience and shares what he has learned along the way.

Tony lives on California's Central Coast with his wife, Andrea, and continues to write, work, and speak about finding purpose, gratitude, humor, and hope even when the road gets rough.

If these stories spoke to you, I would be honored to have you read the books.



SEE THE BOOKS

TonyVent.com