

Richard Meyerson

An Autobiography

I was born in New York City and at the age of two, my family re-located to a small upstate city called Newburgh, where I lived until California called. When I was making a career choice in high school, the first artificial satellite, the Russian Sputnik 1, had recently been launched. America was shocked that our enemy had beaten us into space. Kids everywhere wanted to be engineers and scientists to help catch up. I followed the calling by studying electrical engineering as an undergraduate at Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute in Troy, New York.

But sometimes, the best laid plans of mice and men go awry, and I decided that even though I had earned an engineering degree, business was more suited to my circumstances since my father had founded an electrical products manufacturing company and an executive position was waiting for me. Not being averse to nepotism, I obtained a Master of Business Administration degree from Syracuse University (Syracuse, New York) and took the opportunity available in the family business.

After a few years, fate reared its ugly head when low-cost foreign competition made our manufacturing business no longer economically viable, so I pursued a totally different career path – law – earning a Juris Doctor Degree from New York Law School. I practiced law for two years in New York before my wife and four kids and I decided to go West, moving to Irvine in 1980.

Soon after arriving in Irvine, while waiting to take the California Bar Exam, I obtained a real estate broker license and also took an available part-time position with Saddleback College teaching investment classes (and a course titled “Law for The Layman”) at the Emeritus Institute. I enjoyed the freedom of real estate and decided to skip the California Bar Exam and stay in real estate full-time and teach my Emeritus classes part-time.

Real estate sales is a 24/7 job and after a while it takes its toll. My wife and four kids hardly knew who I was. When I finally decided it was time to ease up and retire from real estate, I obtained a stockbroker license and a commodities broker license (I was personally involved as an investor in the stock and bond markets since 1970 and the markets had become a passion for me) and while working for a small local brokerage firm, I continued teaching at the Emeritus Institute because my students were like a second family to me, and I couldn't leave them.

Needless to say, after 41 continuous years of helping literally thousands of folks improve their financial situation in life, the Emeritus Institute had become woven into my very existence, and I do not think I will stop teaching until Father Time makes me hang up my spurs.