

The Only Way is Up: The Journey of an Immigrant FAQs

What's your book about? It's about empowerment, hope, faith, possibilities and constantly improving ourselves in life, hence the title: *The Only Way is Up*....It paints a picture of just what we can achieve if we start by conceiving it in our minds and then taking action which ultimately brings about a change in our situation. The book also gives a proper perspective on what our priorities should be in life. It manages to do this without being boring or judgmental. It even has elements of humor scattered throughout; a reflection of my spirit, regardless of the surrounding circumstances. It of course also has information about other cultures, tolerance, continual self-reflection, introspection and personal failures. It chronicles how I learnt from my mistakes—it does not tell you about a perfect life at all!

Who's your target audience? My target audience are women, African Americans and Immigrants. That however does not preclude someone outside of those demographics benefiting from the book as my readers have demonstrated.

Is it a Self-Help or How-to book? It does tell you what worked for me and the relationship between several of my life choices and the ensuing result. It however is not exactly a book of instructions. I have been told it sounds more like you are sitting in a relaxed setting and having a conversation about life with your girlfriend. No pressure!

It seems like a book for women? Can I benefit from it? It obviously addresses women probably more than men being written by a woman and from a woman's point of view. However, men have read it and have been able to relate and learn a lesson or two.

Is it a biography? It is not a biography though I do draw on many life experiences to paint a picture of possibilities for those who have little or no hope as well as those who find they are unable to change their situation and repeatedly make the same mistakes.

Is it fiction? No, it's non-fiction. So far, I have not tried my hands on fiction yet and I am not sure I'd make a good fiction writer! We'll have to see....Anything is possible.

Why don't you write your story in the form of fiction? Maybe someday I will. However, though this book is non-fiction, it is an easy read as I have been told by several readers who have finished the book in one day because it was that captivating.

How long did it take you to write the book? It took me five and a half months total from the start through all the editing and proofing. The first draft was finished in a month however.

Where did your inspiration come from? Sometimes I don't know because it happened so fast! I believe God gave me the inspiration, however. It came primarily from watching my husband and daughter interact which took me back in time to my relationship with my father and

his role in my success as the man in my life from the beginning. This was buttressed by a *Larry King Live* special on “Women and Self Worth...” and how it ties into success. Not to underestimate the value of a mother in one’s life which is not quantifiable but I believe a lack of understanding of the role of fathers in their children’s lives (both male and female alike) is responsible for many of the downward trends in our society now. Kids grow up without the balance from both parents and for the most part, both sexes. Also, having a responsible male role model while growing up painted a picture of what a man should be in my life and I was not going to settle for less. Having a happy childhood that was full of love has a direct relationship to who I am today. I make the distinction between wealth that is superficial (material), and wealth of the mind and spirit in the book. It saddens me as I look around daily and realize certain life lessons I took for granted growing up were not taught to many and the so called “common sense” is actually quite uncommon.

How were you raised? The book talks about that exactly and how it made me into the person that I am with confidence (that I can touch the sky), and leadership qualities; as opposed to just being lost in the crowd and being alright with that—not caring to excel.

Who’s on the cover? Is that you and your dad? It’s actually my daughter and my husband—a photo that I took on the day I started to write the book. But that’s exactly how my father and I were. Maybe someday I will write a biography as there is still so much more that could not fit in this book because it was not a biography and I did not want to lose my message in possibly making it become all about me when it was not the place or time for it.

What do you do in your spare moments? I love to have fun, especially with my favorite people—my husband and little girl. I love to travel, love water sports (though a non-swimmer) and I love to read and watch great movies. Guess what else I love? Go carts and *Six Flags!*