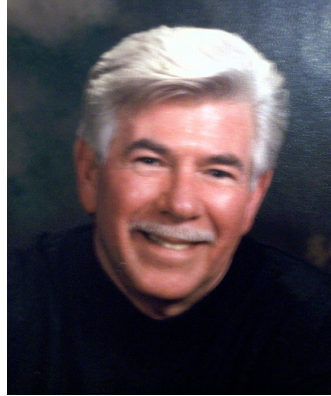


PREFACE



Spencer H. Maynard, BSA, USMC, B.S.B.A., M.B.A., CFO, AAA, AA, AARP, NRFU

My life in a few acronyms:

August 1, 1943 and still counting.

BSA (Boy Scouts of America)

USMC (United States Marine Corps)

B.S.B.A. (Bachelor of Science in Business Administration)

M.B.A. (Master of Business Administration)

CFO (Chief Financial Officer)

AAA (American Automobile Association)

AA (Alcoholics Anonymous)

AARP (American Association of Retired Persons)

NRFU (Non Response Follow UP) (Commonly known as **Census Taker**)

All my life I said someday I would write a book of my Life. It was said tongue in cheek as the many situations in which I found myself seem to predicate they should be put into words. At the time, many of the situations seemed **cool and something to brag about**. As in most cases, hindsight is better than foresight.

Now that I am in my late-sixties, most of the situations were foolish, harmful, and indicative of very poor decisions and choices. The result of these actions have produced many regrets. The following is a paragraph from an article in the AARP, January/February 2008 magazine in an article titled Woulda, Coulda, Shoulda. "Make the most of your regrets," Henry David Thoreau counseled. "To regret deeply is to live afresh." All well and good, but how? A life without regrets isn't a realistic answer for most of us--after all, the hard-earned lessons of our sins and slip-ups make us who we are. "Maybe all one can do," as playwright Arthur Miller wrote, "is hope to end up with the right regrets."

Throughout this book the regrets referred to will be quite obvious. I believe I have learned from the situations which lead to the regrets, or **Have I??**

I have devoted a chapter to Alcoholism. Most readers are aware of the twelve steps of Alcoholics Anonymous. Another reason for writing this book is an attempt to partially satisfy steps 4, 5, 8, and 9. The following four steps are taken from a local AA meeting schedule.

Step 4. Made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves.

Step 5. Admitted to God, to ourselves, and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs.

Step 8. Made a list of all persons we had harmed, and became willing to make amends to them all.

Step 9. Made direct amends to such people wherever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others.

In an attempt to abide by **step 9**, I have not used some names and only alluded to people or situations to avoid any harmful feelings. Similar to the Dragnet television program where names were changed to protect the innocent, I have done that in some circumstances. Not only to protect the innocent, but also to **protect the guilty**.

Throughout the autobiography, I may mention major events of that particular year. Some may be a line or a paragraph based on the impression it had on me. The intention is to jog the readers personal memory of that period or year.

My views on religion, racism, alcoholism or any other topic is only my interpretation and personal opinion. I respect everyone's belief in those matters and in no way intend to alter their positions.

Many events had a cause and affect on the decisions I made. The decisions in many situations steered me in the direction I took. Had I been stronger and not influenced by alcohol, my life could have proceeded in a much different direction, (**Woulda, Coulda, Shoulda**).

CHILDHOOD

I was born in Boston, August 1, 1943 during the middle of World War II on Coast Guard Day. My father, (Theodore, commonly known as Ted or Teddy), elected to name me after two Coast Guard ships, the Spencer and the Hamilton. My father volunteered to enter the war at the ripe old age of 36 years old. The family dog was named CG (Coast Guard). I guess my father was gungho as I would be in years to come.



The Spencer 1944 picture

Giving Coast Guard ships' names to a son was a morale booster during a time of war and supposedly was published in local paper (s). The publishing could not be determined many years later after an exhausting micro fiche search of all that era's newspapers. We searched in the Boston library for publications of the Boston and Cape Cod area. Whether my father was telling stories is not known as the publishing could not be found. A documentation of the news article would have afforded me a place in history. I could have christened the next generation of the Spencer in **1984** had I been able to provide documentation. **Oh well, just the beginning of many disappointments.**

She was launched on 17th of April 1984 and was commissioned into service on 28th of June 1986.



The Spencer 1986 picture

Our family resided on Cape Cod where my sister was born. Only a few memories of the Cape come to mind as we moved when I was about four years old and Judy was two. One of the favorable memories was the remarkable distance the water receded during low tide, it seemed as the ocean completely disappeared. My father at that time worked in a small diner and ice cream establishment. My dog and I would visit dad to be treated to an ice cream cone.

Two unfavorable memories exist also. A hurricane struck the Cape in 1944 felling a tree onto the rented house resulting in major structural damage. The days following were stressful as small animals entered the walls and ceilings. I remember my mother (Ann) running with me in her arms through the rain in night gown and slippers evading the drunken Teddy. **Oh well, just the beginning of many drunken episodes.**

In 1947, we moved to Rhode Island in the southern part of Providence, known as South Providence. It was an impoverished district with relatively poor families. Many veterans of the war were having difficulty procuring employment. Teddy found employment in a local market, but not making enough wages to cover bills. War veterans received a bonus several years later. I remember because my mother promised me a complete cowboy outfit with dual pistols. It was one of the promises fulfilled.

ADOLESCENCE

The summer of 1955 was what I call the year of monopoly. The children of two families whom I lived a few houses from our apartment building were my closest friends. Two boys and a sister of one of them and I became addicted to the game of monopoly. We played from early morning to as late at night as our parents would allow. Other than playing monopoly all summer, the only exciting event in my simple life was I experienced my first kiss. The girl who played monopoly with us was a couple of years older. She had boyfriends and was basically a typical young teenage girl. I was twelve and a little older than her brother and my other friend. I was approaching puberty and becoming interested in the fairer sex. She asked if I ever kissed a girl. Obviously the answer was no. She proceeded to explain how and then she kissed me. It was awkward and somewhat frightening. She allowed me to kiss her a few times. I guess until she felt satisfied that I had learned. We never kissed again and because of the age difference nothing more ever became of it. We were always friends until my family moved the following year. She will always be **the first kiss** and she may possibly always remember the moment she taught a friend how to kiss. This event is nothing exciting to write about except it was the beginning of my maturity and I still remember.

I began playing baseball the following spring of 1956. The much older brother of one of my friends mentioned above was a coach. I was twelve and about to turn thirteen August 1st. That presented a dilemma due to the age requirement to play Little League baseball. Twelve was the oldest one could be for Little League, beyond that you had to qualify for the Babe Ruth league. My birthday was on the cusp. All the Little League teams were full of boys appropriately aged and had participated the previous year. I was pretty good in lot baseball, but organized baseball was completely different. To make a long story longer, my friend's brother coached a team in the Farm League. This league consisted of teams comprised of boys whom did not play well enough or were too young to qualify for Little League. My situation was a little different. I wasn't really that good, almost too old, and the Little League teams were at quota. The coach convinced me to play with his team and that he would advance me into a Little League team should a position become available.

The name of his Farm Team was the Indians. I enjoyed playing and was very good. I was good because my skills improved and also I was much older and larger than many of my team mates. My position was pitcher. Better than half way through the season, my coach advanced me into a Little League team. I was absolutely thrilled. The Little League teams wore complete baseball uniforms whereas the Farm Team only wore team shirts. The Little League Team's name was Rumford Steel. It was sponsored by a local steel wholesaler. My position on this team was second base and outfield. I wasn't a standout on this team. I played my positions well but had much difficulty at the plate. Little League pitching was much improved from the Farm League. The speed was faster and there was a greater variety of pitches.

MILITARY

I joined the Marine Corps at the age of sixteen. Of course I couldn't officially enter until my seventeenth birthday, and upon my parents signing the enlistment papers. A person couldn't enlist on his/her own until eighteen years of age. The only requirement to enter the Marine Corps in 1960 was to be able to walk and hear. The education test was basically to differentiate between a screwdriver and a hammer. A high school diploma was not required. I did not graduate from high school. In fact, local police and teachers of that era would suggest that a problematic young man do just that, enlist in the military. I experienced a minor problem with the law which will be covered at another time. Had I not enlisted, I would have been eligible for the draft at eighteen years old. When you enlist in the military, you have the opportunity to determine which branch of the service you wish to participate, otherwise, it will be decided for you. The draft does not exist today, although that could change at any time.

I was in Parris Island (Marine Corps boot camp) three days after my seventeenth birthday. The anticipation and fear were overwhelming. My friend Bill and I enlisted under a so called **Buddy System**. The **Buddy System** meant we were to receive boot camp training together. We did train and remain together throughout boot camp. That was the extent of the togetherness. Upon graduating from boot camp, we went our separate ways, in fact, we only managed to see each other no more than a half a dozen times the rest of our lives. Also, we could have been very easily separated during training if one of us failed any phase of the training.

The trip to Parris Island was by train. The conductors served us liquor on the train even though we were under age because we were going to serve our country. This was **pre Vietnam** when service of country was still respected. All the conductors were black. I believe this was the first time I met and spoke to a black person. I only mention this now as another chapter relates to racism and prejudice. All the guys partied and had a grand ole time until we arrived at our destination, then **reality** struck us in the face. **WOW!**

On April 8, 1956, six Marine Corps recruits drowned in a disciplinary march into Ribbon Creek. The aftermath caused an overhaul of basic training. The bold print is copied from an article written on the internet. I want to make this statement as many Marines I met in the following years said their training was much more inhumane and rigorous than mine. It may be true although I found the training to be the toughest circumstances I ever experienced. A slang expression is to say **“it scared the s**t out of me”**, well it did not, the complete opposite happened. I think you get my drift.



A picture of me before actual training began. **(I was still smiling at this point)**

The first two days of boot camp involved shaving your hair off, being fit for uniforms right down to underwear and socks. The beginning of many vaccinations were administered. All recruits were given comprehensive written exams, not anything like the hammer and screwdriver test administered at the recruiting center. The Marine Corps breaks their enlisted jobs down into **MOS's, (Military Occupation Specialties)**. Each recruit was given an opportunity to choose two. The Corps would attempt to honor the recruits's request based on results of the written exams. I requested a MOS in electronics as my first choice, and a tank mechanic as second choice. I was inspired to enter the Marines by an older friend who had served in the Corps as a tank mechanic. My test results were all but perfect, so the drill instructor called me back and asked why the hell did I enlist in the Marine Corps. I mention this because it becomes important later in my military pursuit.

One adjusts to the very rigorous training and it does instill a very proud attitude. One completes boot camp believing they are indestructible. Anyone knowing a Marine knows exactly what I am stating.

ALCOHOLISM

I first experimented with alcohol when I was about sixteen years old. A group of friends went to Block Island, RI . One of our friends looked much older than our age and purchased a case of beer with a fake ID card. Most of us hadn't drunk before and the amount of alcohol consumed was minimal as compared to the amount most of us would consume in our future years. Needless to say, we all became intoxicated quickly and then became very ill. We didn't and couldn't cause any harm to anyone or ourselves as we camped out in a Pine Grove overlooking the ocean. I really do not know how many of my friends were discouraged from drinking after that awful experience. If there were any, *I wasn't one of them.* **Oh well, just another of many disappointments.**

Obviously this chapter wouldn't be in the book if I had learned from the above lesson. The major deterrent from alcohol abuse should have been the traumatic experiences with my father, *but it wasn't.* Why??? Who knows???

I didn't drink much until entering the military. Even then, I was mostly a social drinker and basically being one of the guys. The one affect it had on me was a courage builder. I became more out going and being at drinking establishments afforded the opportunity to meet women. I was always a shy person but the alcohol transformed me into a man with courage. I admired all my friends whom had girl friends in High School. Two reasons I didn't pursue female companionship were the fact that I didn't have the use of an automobile. My parents didn't have drivers' licenses or the finances to purchase a car for me. I also was ashamed of my family's living quarters. I didn't feel I had any appeal or was good looking enough. Now with the help of alcohol supplying me with courage and boldness, women started to become a part of my life. I lost my virginity with the aid of alcohol while stationed in Oklahoma. Reflecting back to those days, some forty plus years ago, I realize everything would have happened anyway in the normal course of events. **I wasn't** a bad looking guy, I realized that much too late.

My alcohol consumption continued on and off in the military. I abstained while in electronics school in San Diego, California. Drinking and loose women were the only entertainment in the Far East. Our transport ship made a short stop in Guam to pick up some fellow Marines stationed there. Many of the troops on board were allowed to patronize the base tavern. I proceeded to get intoxicated and upon return to the ship, a fight pursued. The attacker eventually eyed me as a target. The end result was an eye injury that would plague me the rest of my life. Had I been sober, the altercation probably could have been avoided either through negotiation or being able to defend myself.

Alcohol consumption continued upon being discharged from the service, mostly binge drinking. Work and evening college held drinking to somewhat of a minimum, that is **my interpretation of minimum.**

RACISM

I was not exposed to racial prejudices in my youth. South Providence where I spent most of my youth was inhabited by poor white families. As happened in many cities during the following years, African American families began replacing the poor Caucasians. The complexion of these neighborhoods continued to change as Hispanic immigrants and then South East Asian immigrants began replacing the African Americans. It appears all the poor generations of any race had their start in South Providence. This continues to this day.

The above brief history of South Providence is mentioned only to emphasize that as my family was moving, not necessarily up in stature, **only moving**, I was not exposed to any racial issues. It probably wouldn't have made a difference as my family had its own issues.

The first exposure to prejudice was in the United State Marine Corps (USMC) boot camp at Parris Island. I was a naive 17 year old and as previously written, had no exposure or interaction with other cultures or races. The Drill Instructors tended to create tension between the black and white recruits. They would pit the black boxer against the white football player. They made the recruits march backwards and purposely placed the recruits where they knew tension would result because of collisions. In those days, Drill Instructors used slang expressions which was more degrading to African Americans than to others.

My first altercation with a person of another race was in boot camp instigated by the other recruits. I did not receive any satisfaction from that altercation, in fact, I felt remorse because I was friendly with the other recruit.

I was traveling to Oklahoma for my first assignment in the Corps. I had to transfer trains in a Tennessee train station when I experienced the next occurrence of racial prejudice. That was a situation where the segregation of rest rooms existed in the Tennessee train station. This was my first encounter of segregation. My only prior experience was the obvious segregation between middle and poor classes where the difference was who had, and who had not.

I was stationed in the Philippine Islands for a short while in 1962. The only racial segregation occurred while the Marines were on liberty. In the Town of Olongapo, the main street eventually forked to the left and right. African Americans went to the left and the Whites went to the right. This arrangement must have been by choice as there was no evidence of segregation of any kind on the Base.

RELIGION

Religion is a very sensitive subject as is politics. I will be expressing my views and thoughts about religion. My intention is not to criticize or preach to anyone. All religions or lack of has their purpose. My philosophy throughout this book is **to each his own** as long as it does not harm or interpose on anyone's life.

My sister and I were raised in the Catholic faith. My mother converted to Catholicism from the Episcopalian faith for my father's sake. Mother inspired us to attend Mass and attend religious classes when we were not attending parochial schools. Our father didn't do any of the above.

I was a true believer in the dogma of the Catholic faith, mostly inspired by the teaching of the nuns when attending Catholic schools. The nuns were so impressed by my intelligence of the faith, they continued to proclaim that I should be an Alter Boy. I do not know why I never became an Alter Boy. I do not know if my parents were ever approached about the subject. It probably never occurred because my sister and I were attending the school under the poverty provision. **Oh well, just another of many disappointments.**

When I entered the military, I only attended church on rare occasions. My religious beliefs were put on the back burner until I married and became a father. Maureen and I raised the children in the Catholic Faith.

Many events occurred over the years that started my thinking about the existence of God, Jesus Christ, the Virgin Mary, and other facets of religion, especially the Catholic religion.

The first occurrence of doubt was in my biology class in high school. The lesson about the beginning of living organisms. The subject explained the affect of the sun upon amino acids from which developed into the one cell living organism. Obviously, the material being taught was much more extensive than I care to elaborate here. This is not a biology course. Any way, the one cell organism **evolved** into plants, animals, and eventually all living creatures. So the question that sprung into my mind was: **Where does Adam and Eve fit into this picture?** I put this thought away for a long time. Who was I to question, I was only 15 years old.

I began attending college courses immediately after being discharged from the Marine Corps. The first semester included a course in the history of Western Civilization. Again without going into very much detailed information, the Byzantine Era was the subject matter. The material referred to many Popes of that era. The promiscuity of many Popes shocked me. Some of the Popes were illegitimate sons of previous Popes. It started to turn wheels in my head, but I put it away in my memory, as I did with the evolution theory.

ADULTHOOD

Phase 1

The last day of military life began with the final trek to Rhode Island. I was invited to travel to Canaan, Connecticut with a sergeant friend, his wife and two children. The intermediate stop in Connecticut brought me within a few hours bus ride home. My friend invited me to spend the night and proposed we go woodchuck hunting in the morning. He obtained an M-1 rifle with a scope over his several years in the Marine Corps.

The following morning we went woodchuck hunting as planned. He allowed me to fire at the first woodchuck that was spotted. The rifle had a scope as noted earlier. I had never fired a rifle with a scope and to my chagrin, even with his advice, the weapon's kick forced the scope into my face and created a cut circling my right eye. In spite of the injury, I continued to fire the rifle and missed the woodchuck with every shot. It was his lucky day.

We returned to his home and attended to the injury. The cut wasn't too bad but definitely was very visible. The day was spent with his family and then my final journey to Rhode Island began with our bidding farewell to each other at the bus station. The usual promises of keeping in touch were exchanged knowing very well that wouldn't happen, and it didn't.

I arrived home in East Greenwich by taxi from the RI bus station. My father, mother, and sister were very happy to see me but were aghast about the injury to my eye. The last time I went home after my tour in the Far East, I also had an eye injury as was written in the military chapter.

I had barely entered the house when my mother informed me that President Lyndon Johnson was about to make an announcement on national television. The date is August 4, 1964. The president informed the world that Navy and Marine planes were bombing the Tonkin Gulf, Vietnam.

That day's events added another ingredient to an already festering civil unrest. Three major issues were now on the table: Racism, Women Rights, and now the Vietnam War.

The first course of action was to purchase a car. I had saved a few hundred dollars just for that purpose. I think it was the first time I had saved money for anything. My father had done some painting for an used auto dealer in a nearby town. Currently in the year 2010 **used autos** are referred to as **pre-owned**.

I purchased a high mileage 1959 Chevrolet Impala. The price was approximately \$900.00 with a \$200.00 down payment. Now all I had to do was get a job and make the monthly payments.



1959 Chevrolet Impala

My father suggested I work with him painting homes. My dad always relied on his customers or other friends with transportation to move his paint and ladders between jobs, now he had me. I was very leery of the situation as my father's work habits were inconsistent. He always complained that his customers didn't pay him upon completion or what he felt the job was worth. There were valid reasons for his dismay. The major impediment being his drinking. The customer was never sure when the job would start or be completed. This being his reputation and because of it, he was always seeking work therefore potential customers had the advantage. Also the fact that he or the customer must arrange his transportation didn't bode well for him.

Now I came along providing transportation. The situation did not change except for the transportation issue. We lined up jobs but he only worked when he felt like it. I ended up working alone on many occasions. I was not as fast as my dad nor did I enjoy the process.

I enrolled in the University of Rhode Island's (URI) evening division of education. My goal was to earn a Bachelors Degree in Business. The G.I. bill would pay for the accredited courses. The program consisted of three courses two nights a week during the Fall and Spring semesters. The program for the Bachelor of Science in Business Administration degree were the two semesters for a period of eight years. So I began in September of 1964. So now I was on my way to an advanced education.

I had mailed resumes to several electronic companies during the last six months in the military. Honeywell Corp. responded and suggested I make an appointment for an interview upon my discharge. I attempted to do just that but was put on hold for a lengthy period each time. My heart wasn't into the possibility of having to relocate to the Boston area should I have been successful in obtaining a position. The long and short of it is that I never followed through with that lead.

I also received a letter from the Rhode Island State Police requesting I consider making a career with them. I believe every RI resident in the military, especially the marine corps received a letter from the state police. I was not interested at all as the state police were very similar to the military. The state police would be spit and shine and barracks living again. Not at all dissimilar to life in McAlister, OK.

August was a month of transition from military to civilian life. Once I purchased the car I went visiting old friends. Everyone of them had been married for a couple of years with at least one child. There wasn't going to be any carousing and drinking with them. Billy with whom I joined the marine corps with had extended his enlistment, so he wasn't around to buddy with either.

Basically I was out of the service with no place to go or anyone to go with. My sister suggested I accompany her to the YMCA dances in Providence. The participants were local young women and men. A majority of the men were sailors stationed at Quonset Point Naval Station in North Kingstown which I have written of earlier.

My sister introduced me to several woman of which one was a former classmate of mine going back to the eighth grade. We had attended the same high school but only remembered each other from the eighth grade. This particular meeting began our courtship and eventual marriage.

Life was becoming interesting now. I have a car, girlfriend, job, and about to commence my college education. My usual **pessimistic attitude** says things are too good to be true. As usual I was correct.

First fly in the ointment was a letter from **Uncle Sam**. The letter suggested I gather my military uniforms, dog tags, etc. and be prepared to report for duty. A registered letter with instructions would be forth coming within the following thirty days. **Yes, Vietnam** was heating up quickly !! My enlistment in 1960 comprised of four years active duty, one year ready reserve, and one year standby reserve. A total obligated duty of six years. I was fortunate, the registered letter never arrived. The government opted to call up the Active Reserves, normally referred to as **Weekend Warriors**.

ADULTHOOD

Phase II

My new life had begun. I had allowed the alcohol demon to convince me not to reverse my fateful decision. The adjustment to a completely new environment had begun. Everything was different. A strange house, neighborhood, and route to and from work. Many occasions the trip from work to the new house began in the old direction. The mind and heart knew where it should be traveling, but the die had been cast. **Woulda, Coulda, Shoulda.**

The beginning of the second phase of my adult life had begun. My mind was telling me I was in love. O yea, the grass was definitely greener! **NOT!**

I would make many trips to the family home to participate in family functions. My second daughter had just finished her junior year of high school. My son was participating in free style bicycling and I would watch him participate in competition. All the time I felt I wasn't welcome, and the fact of the matter was, I wasn't. I had become a part time dad. Hind sight proved that was all I was.

My wife and I obtained the same lawyer to begin the process of drafting the divorce documents. We agreed on many of the details regarding property division, financial support of the children, and custody of the children. We were at the stage of our lives where there had been no accumulation of financial assets other than a home and cars. All of our finances were directed towards raising the three children. The child support for Wendy and Scott was established and the major decision was the formal education of the three children. We both agreed that a formal education was necessary. The divorce decree stipulated that agreement and that the costs would be shared by both parents based on their individual capabilities.

Dawn had just completed her sophomore year of a five year program. She would prove to be the least expensive of the three children to educate. Dawn had graduated co-valedictorian from high school and because of that achievement, her college of choice granted her a considerable scholarship. Wendy had just finished her junior year of high school and wouldn't be attending college for another year. There would be at least one child in college for the following nine years; some years there were two in college. Wendy had many scholastic achievements in high school also, but as fate would have it, she competed with many peers with similar academic capabilities.

My forty third birthday occurred that August. My wife had replaced a black onyx stone in a ring that my mother had given me on my twenty first birthday. In spite of my causing all the trauma and upheaval in the family, she graciously invited me to celebrate my birthday with her and the children. They presented me with the newly repaired ring as my birthday gift. That had to be one of the most wonderful and depressing moments in my life. What had I done to this wonderful

family?

The summer of 1986 finally came to an end. I must write it was difficult for the family, my companion, and even my friends. I had changed everything. It was very awkward for my friends as they wished to maintain their friendship with both my wife and I. Lucille and I avoided situations that would make everyone else uncomfortable. That was the initial decision as we knew it would have to change in the future. We all needed an adjustment period.

The holiday season was approaching. The first of many dilemmas began. Where and how will the holidays be celebrated? How awkward and painful will it be?

My family would celebrate their first Thanksgiving without me. Lucille and I planned to prepare a traditional Thanksgiving dinner to share with a few of her family members. A normal event one would think. It didn't turn out that way. Lucille was having chronic sore throat for weeks which her doctor determined was tonsillitis and they must be removed immediately. The basically unscheduled procedure was performed two days before Thanksgiving. We didn't cancel the Thanksgiving dinner upon her insistence. Lucille's recovery wasn't proceeding normally. She was experiencing some bleeding, a little was expected.

I and Lucille's sister prepared dinner. Everyone enjoyed the meal except for Lucille. She was not able to participate because of the operation. The first holiday together had a pall over it, and it got worse. The guests departed after assisting in the cleanup. All was somewhat well until Lucille's slight bleeding became much worse. So much worse that a call to the hospital required me to immediately transport her there. Once there, the bleeding became profuse. She had to be monitored constantly. Her doctor was unable to respond to the situation immediately, as he was away celebrating the holiday with family.

I became panicked as Lucille's vital signs were becoming dangerous due to the loss of blood.. She became faint and I tore through the hospital in a rage looking for anyone to assist her without any excuses. I basically dragged an intern from where he was to her side. I demanded the hospital get some doctor there to correct the situation. Finally her doctor arrived. Lucille's condition had gone from poor to dangerous. Her doctor had to re-suture her throat without anesthesia. Her blood loss had become perilous. The sutures held and the bleeding stopped. She had lost so much blood that there was a great possibility she would need a blood transfusion. That was an event they hoped to avoid because of the danger of contracting HIV or Aids through a blood transfusion. This was the era when it had been discovered that HIV and Aids was being transmitted through tainted blood as well as unprotected sex. She would remain over night in the hospital to determine whether a transfusion would be necessary. Thankfully, it wasn't.

Well, survived that holiday. My daily routine was similar with the exception of where I considered home and to whom greeted me there. Christmas was the next challenge. Challenge only to the point of making it as normal as possible. **Yes, I was kidding myself, as there was nothing that could make it normal again!**