

What if you could channel your fears and manifest your greatest desires? This book – part self-help, part memoir will help you manifest your desires without getting bogged down by what you fear the most.

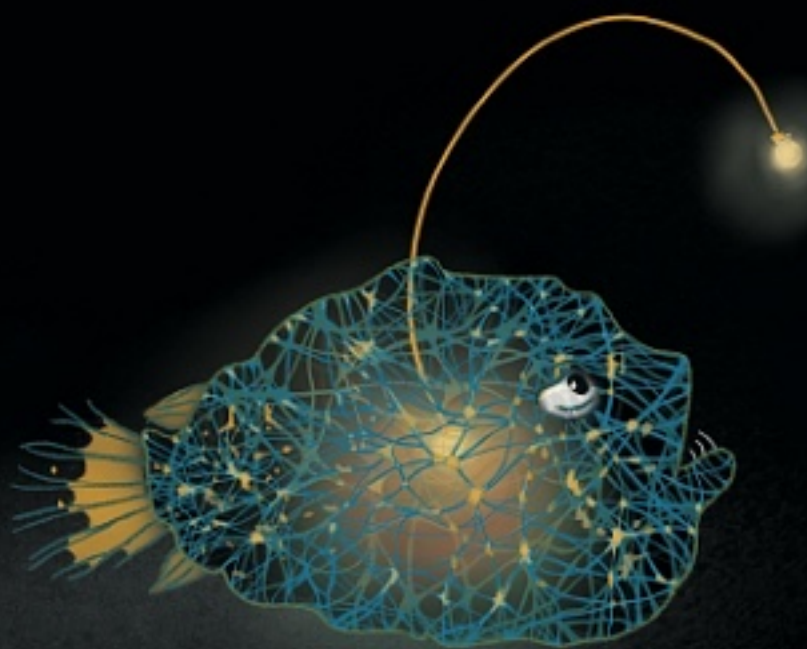
**How I Learned the LAW OF FEAR:
The Journey of Rob Waterlander**
By John White

Order the book from the publisher BookLocker.com

<https://www.booklocker.com/p/books/12944.html?s=pdf>

**or from your favorite neighborhood
or online bookstore.**

How I Learned
the
LAW OF FEAR



The Journey of
Rob Waterlander

JOHN WHITE

Copyright © 2023 John White

Paperback ISBN: 978-1-958889-49-7

Hardcover ISBN: 978-1-958889-50-3

Ebook ISBN: 979-8-88531-484-8

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, recording or otherwise, without the prior written permission of the author.

Published by BookLocker.com, Inc., Trenton, Georgia.

Printed on acid-free paper.

BookLocker.com, Inc.

2023

First Edition

Library of Congress Cataloguing in Publication Data

White, John

How I Learned the LAW OF FEAR: The Journey of Rob Waterlander by John White

Library of Congress Control Number: 2023905943

**How I Learned the
LAW OF FEAR**

The Journey of Rob Waterlander

Introduction 1

CHAPTER ONE: How to keep fighting Life until
it wins..... 3

CHAPTER TWO: Getting back in the game 25

CHAPTER THREE: Five days in Israel 45

CHAPTER FOUR: New millennium,
fresh approach 63

CHAPTER FIVE: Life more ordinary, and more
purposeful 85

CHAPTER SIX: Revelation in Wyoming 99

CHAPTER SEVEN: A concerning thing happened
at the airport 113

CHAPTER EIGHT: Encountering the Law of Fear.... 133

CHAPTER NINE: Journey to new horizons 165

AFTERWORD: The Law of Fear and the World 181

What people say 187

CHAPTER ONE:

How to keep fighting Life until it wins

It's funny, but I didn't expect my conversation with Carol, a counsellor in Tucson, Arizona, in 2007, to connect me with my infant self in the womb, but that's just what she did.

She pointed out that, while I was given up for adoption at birth, before that, when I was growing in the womb, I would have heard all the noises in my mother's environment; which is why I have always been especially fond of that accent from the Delft area of Northern Holland.

But it was more than this.

The rules of adoption in my native land stated that the infant child remained in the state's care for the first three months of life: giving both the birth mother and adoptive parents a period to affirm they are certain in their minds. Due to this, I was cared for by many different people, with nursing staff on a three-shift rotation. And this has shaped my later character and approachability to people. The need to empathise, to reach out as an infant to the people who I interacted

with, to seek comfort from strangers, was perhaps the first thing I truly learned. But I wouldn't connect with this until much later as an adult: a connection that has led me down a revelatory road.

Like many young men who have been adopted, while my adoptive parents were very good to me, in my early teens I started to get restless and play up. It was a struggle for me to get up and going at life; in fact, it didn't really happen until I was in my early twenties.

I left school and tried many things, but none were ever quite right for me. A cherished ideal of working as a boatman on a barge sailing the canals lasted a whole two days before the reality was rejected by my disillusionment. I knew that sinking feeling, 'this is not for me', all too well.

I might have carried on in this vein for even longer were it not for the help of a good woman: my wife! She saw an opportunity with a roofing company that was looking for a sales representative in the local press. And really, because of the qualifications it was asking for, degree level engineering qualifications, I had no reason to think I had an earthly chance. But I was determined to do whatever I had to, to get my life working. My wife said she would help me write a

letter and we would send it off, and that's just what we did. I was pretty shocked a couple of days later to get a call!

In Holland we have a saying, 'Twelve jobs, thirteen accidents', which describes someone who just can't find their place in life. The phrase, together with the judgement of others, haunted me more than a little. I had driven myself hard to get established in life and I wasn't going to give up.

So, I set out that morning and made the drive out to a rural village a few miles outside Amsterdam where this roofing firm was based at a former farm, equipped with my best suit, a firm handshake and a good smile.

As I arrived I took in the scene, parked, and walked through a large warehouse space, where men were moving and storing materials and big roofing trusses. I introduced myself and was pointed to the office where I met Klaas, the owner, and 'Uncle' Siem, who Klaas employed as his manager. I also met someone else I was not expecting to meet, who it turned out made a big difference to how this interview was going to go.

This was former Dutch football legend Dick Helling, who happened to have gone into roofing now that football days were behind him. Of course, I knew all his games, as good as memorised every goal he had ever scored, so that was a big help to getting a warm conversation started.

Turns out, it was like this: the manager, Uncle Siem, had his ideas, based on his management qualification, and what he wanted were salesmen who really understood what they were selling. For this reason, he had advertised for someone with engineering qualifications.

The owner wasn't sure of this. Maybe Klaas thought it was a bit of a waste of a perfectly good engineer; I kind of did, but of course I wanted the job, so I was a little biased. Klaas preferred the idea of someone with charm and get-up-and-go, with the persuasive skills to close a deal: a quality as much to do with instinct as education, as anyone who has ever been in sales would affirm.

So, the end result of the interview was Uncle Siem wanted somebody else, but Klaas and Dick had decided they wanted me; and if I was prepared to give it a go, the job was mine to prove myself with. Finally,

after years of striving, I was being offered this serious chance I could not ignore. Not only did I need to do this to prove my own worth to myself, but because I had a responsibility to my wife and child.

I threw myself into the Job with absolutely everything I had. I strived and studied every hour I could find, to understand everything there was to know about the roofing business. No employer could have asked for more dedication. But funnily enough, I wasn't giving that dedication for my boss, but for me: to make myself as good as I could be. I wasn't thinking about my 'career' or a better job and more money: that wasn't what I wanted. What I wanted was really very simple: to be accepted and respected as someone of value.

Because if people in society could accept I had value and worth, I might finally be able to grasp that belief myself.

And it worked! They were delighted with me: although I was working in the dark in terms of knowing if I was successful in their eyes or not. I just

kept getting more orders and working as hard as I could.

I didn't really reach the full realisation I had become truly good at something until after I had been doing the job for a couple of years. As I travelled around in the industry and started to attend industry events, I got to know a few reps working for other firms.

One evening at the bar, after a long days conference, a couple of the other guys started to quiz me on how much trade I was doing. I admitted to an annual turnover of eight million guilders, but the guy who was quizzing me, who actually I looked up to and thought must be doing super well, certainly better than me ... he was only doing four and a half million. That night I realised I had arrived: I had become good at something!

So, through all of my twenties, once I'd got going, I grasped my opportunities with both hands.

Years later, in that consultation with Carol at her clinic in Arizona, when I related this information about myself, she identified in me an aspect of a Scorpion, which sounds terribly sinister!

What she meant was I was a charming and warm salesman who easily established natural rapport with people, put them at their ease, gained their trust... but at the same time, there was an instinct in me waiting for its moment ... to pounce! And she saw that I still had that habit in how I talked to people years later, a learned behaviour, giving people a little direction, asking them a few questions ... until they give out that signal the time has come to make that move: the same instinct closing a deal for a roof, worth thousands of guilders, as making the defining comment finishing an argument ...

While I was building my career as a roofing salesman, my friendship with Dick Helling grew stronger. We used to spend time together, even holiday together, and Dick was very helpful to me once I started organising youth football charity events.

I had got involved in the charity work of the kids' charity 'Cliniclowns'. This was to lead to me making friends with another famous Dutch ex-footballer, Gerrie Mühren.

Based on the Patch Adams model, the Cliniclowns idea was to provide diversion and entertainment for very sick, or even dying children, so they could have a

time where they could forget about being ill and enjoy themselves instead.

Principally, Gerrie supported me by providing his time and talents for events I was organising, as well as his contacts. I took on the logistics side of organising the youth football fundraising events, and this was to take up more and more of my free time. Cliniclowns was a booming success but this meant ever more work to be done to organise everything, the venues, all the health and safety, the teams, the officials (league referees volunteered their time to run the games, so many great people were involved).

I tended to get drowned in these details a bit, but it was when I went with Gerrie to events for the sick children that I was truly struck by the emotions of what it was really about and why it was worth it. After a while of helping in the background, Gerrie got me to come along with him on a visit to the kids, where he was dropping off signed and framed football shirts for them, as gifts to give them encouragement.

Gerrie was of course a great player, a legendary midfielder, and he had fantastic ball control skills. He used to use a deflated football to show the kids tricks, and his ball control was so good, he could boost their

play at say, keeping a ball in the air, so the kids felt they themselves were doing the trick, and good at it. Their faces were always filled with joy from borrowing some of Gerrie's talent!

Perhaps in some ways an adult's well-meaning deception, the sheer pleasure and joy this brought the kids, something as simple as keeping a ball up, was just so worthwhile, and of course these visits were also special for the kids, taking their minds away from hospital and all that 'illness' vibe.

Gerrie saw the effect this had on me, as I felt it myself, and that deeper connection started to mean a lot to me. Gerrie was instrumental in pushing me to go into sports coaching a few years later.

As I developed into a competent and confident salesman, the 1990s were getting underway, and three years into my job, once I had properly understood I was actually good at something, my ambition started to develop.

I took a trip to America in 1992. As I'll tell you in a bit, this started with me running the New York City Marathon.

After the run (and not much recovery!), business took me to a roofing conference in St Louis. This was my first trip to America, and after a couple of weeks, it was time to go home. But how I felt during this visit, how America's energy and optimism impressed and inspired me, ignited the flame of the American dream in my heart.

From then on, America was always percolating in my thoughts, and I began to think about the possibilities of maybe working and living in the USA.

Two years later, in 1994, I attended another US conference, flying into JFK, and then on to San Antonio, that jewel in the crown of Texas.

With its Spanish colonial origin and rich civil war history, San Antonio's tourist area is a picture postcard of the American South. The atmosphere evokes Davy Crocket, the romance of America – and on lunch from the conference, I was enjoying a riverside walk when something unusual caught my attention. Between the picture-postcard shops, I heard snatches of pop music, and as I rounded the corner, I found the very image of American cheerleader vibes right in front of me:

I found the local branch of Hooters!

And for me, a somewhat innocent Dutchman in my way, this was a revelation!

We had nothing like this back home: the fun, the energy, the youthful vibe, the cheerleader/prom queen culture, and just the effusiveness of Americana; it really blew me away and had a powerful effect on my thoughts.

The result of this was that by the time I had returned from the trip, my ambitions shifted: I would bring Hooters to Holland!

In fact, before I returned, I already started making enquiries, and it wouldn't be long before I would be back in America having meetings at the Hooters headquarters in Atlanta. This resulted in me securing, for a time, the rights to run Hooters franchises in the Benelux countries.

When I set my mind to something, I can be very determined and focused, and for the next year, making these plans to open a franchise of Hooters came to dominate my life.

I was working seventy to eighty hours a week doing sales, plus volunteering, plus planning a new business on top; and I was to find, it was all going to take a toll.

Initially, of course, I put together a business plan and began looking for backers to support me. I secured a prestigious accountant to administer the finances, to give confidence to investors. I began to sink more than a few thousand guilders into the project and plans solidified around bringing an initial branch of Hooters to Schiphol Airport. The backers I was seeking, were the sort of investors with millions to put in.

Unfortunately, the best of plans can struggle with reality, and I was to learn some lessons about how society really works.

Word got to me that a bar in downtown Amsterdam was using the Hooters logo, so of course, I had to go and have a look, and there it was. This bar was blatantly ripping off the Hooters look and name. Well, I went and introduced myself to the owner, explained I held the franchise, and asked him to change the signage. I had to try, but his answer was no surprise, so I went back to Hooters and told them what was

going on, and of course, it became a court case. Certainly, problems I didn't need.

A further complication arose when a friend asked me, somewhat aghast, 'Don't you know what that place is'? It was a fake Hooters downstairs, but upstairs it was the lair of the local mob boss!

What happened next was kind of amusing looking back years later. This mob boss happened to have a name almost identical to that of a well-known car manufacturer, who happened to make the model of the car I drove. When I got a phone call from him, I completely misunderstood and thought he was calling from the garage for a service, or something.

What he was actually doing, was trying to get me to testify against Hooters of America in this upcoming case, and to say there was no problem with him using the signage. Once I did clock on, I didn't agree to that, of course.

However, these complications started to cause delays, which caused expenses, which caused investors to waver, and after almost a year of struggling to pull the deal together, on top of working all hours to make my fair share up of orders for the

roofing firm, and the voluntary stuff, and family life on top, it all started to catch up with me. My attitude and obsessiveness had driven a wedge between my wife and me, and my personal life began to intrude in my work life in a way I didn't know how to handle.

I had totally overdone it, and overloaded myself, and no matter what we think is going on, reality always intrudes on our delusions. It couldn't carry on; something had to give, and that something was me.

Not long before, my son was hurt in a garden accident, which meant he was in hospital for a while, with his legs badly burned. My daughter had just been born, I had plenty of problems on my plate, pushing myself incessantly from the need to keep going, keep earning, and providing for my family.

But there had been another event, a few years before this, that was increasingly making its impact felt. Indeed, I still live with ripples of consequences even today. I'd had an accident of my own.

It had been a typical busy morning and I was rushing to find an apartment building in the residential district of Rotterdam, for a roof inspection of a client's job I was quoting on. The Metro line comes above

ground in the further reaches of the city, and while we do have barriers at crossings, not all do, or at least they didn't in the early nineties.

I was looking for this apartment building and approached the crossing; lights were green, over I drove, but as soon as I did, I realised this wasn't the street I was looking for. Quick as I could I U-turned and headed back towards the crossing; but what I hadn't realised was from this side, and from this close, I didn't see the colour of the traffic lights.

I saw lights soon enough though: two of them, with a blaring horn, just as my car was crossing the tracks!

In horror I realised my danger and tried to accelerate, but my car was in third gear and just wouldn't deliver the power, there was no time to shift-change, and suddenly...

BANG!

The most tremendous violent noise as the back quarter of the driver's side of my car got hit, spinning me around and around like a child's top, my car cartwheeling away from the impact down the road. I remember that moment of horror, then the wrench of the impact, and me helpless in the face of events.

It is the miracle of a micro-second that I wasn't simply crushed beneath the bulk of the front of the train: it crushed the back of the car and would have seen the end of me if I had been caught up beneath it. Thank heavens I was alone in the car!

People started to show up as I sat dazed in the wreckage, and soon it was ambulance and police arriving. Today, standard practice is straight to hospital for a check-up, but there was none of that then, and I waved away all offers of assistance.

Not that I should have done, I was giddy and shook up, but I grabbed my stuff out of the car, took some paracetamol, and pushed on to the appointment on foot.

OK, the car was totalled, but I could still get on with my day...

And 'get on with it' was my whole mindset. I tried to shrug off the accident's impact. But the body is very strange at times, and it can store the shock of an accident to come out as symptoms down the line.

Three months later, I was in my kitchen, making a cup of coffee, when I suddenly got terribly dizzy, fainted, and went down with a THUMP.

This was the start of three weeks of near-paralysis as my body just refused to function. I had tried to ignore the extra strain in my body, same as I tried to ignore everything else in the way of what I was determined to do back then, but this was serious: this could not be ignored. Suddenly all my plans came to a full stop, and I simply couldn't function.

Doctors were mystified. After the full range of tests and scans, they declared it must be psychosomatic, which didn't do much for my sense of self-esteem. When I managed to get moving again, I still struggled with swimmy vertigo and wasn't fit to drive. My firm hired a driver to get me where I needed to go; it was all very surreal.

Years later I got proper answers, from Doctor Taunton, a specialist based in Georgia, USA. He diagnosed soft tissue damage caused by the accident's whiplash and performed procedures to help it rebuild: my neck can still trouble me but is so much better now. I also found Chinese medicines to stimulate my endocrine system most effective. The Chinese herbalist told me that I had used all my energy up, that my glands were overworked, which

the herbs would help. I go by results and concluded that he knew what he was talking about!

Despite these awful setbacks, I wouldn't learn to slow down, and instead decided to speed up. Maybe this was my pig-headed determination to deny problems by trying to smash through them.

So, with my long-time friend Paul, I decided that what I really needed to do was run a marathon.

As I got back on my feet from the dizziness, we began training together. I had taken up running soon after my marriage, and Paul and I began to make a regular Sunday morning out of it.

Paul had a sister who lived in America, with a brother-in-law who worked in 'band management', and they invited us over to stay, giving us the opportunity to run the New York City Marathon and then spend time with them.

And that's how we found ourselves on a grey November day, lined up with twenty-seven thousand others on the Verrazano-Narrows Bridge, as the light went green, and we were off!

The marathon runs through Queens, Harlem and Manhattan, before finishing at Central Park. Running down the middle of the road with crowds lining every step of the way, encouraging us on, is certainly a unique way to see the city, and I will never forget that. It was a special thing to do.

I started to feel it when we ran across the Brooklyn Bridge. The iron surface reverberated up through my feet and began to hurt pretty bad, but I ignored it and pushed on, and it really pulled my quads badly coming down the other side of the bridge..., and as most marathon runners do, I pushed through the pain to continue.

Nevertheless, as the end run came into view down Central Park, and with the cheers of thousands of people echoing in my ears, I did manage that final sprint, coming in for a respectable three hours and forty-two minutes that I was more than happy with.

After the marathon, I only had a few hours to recover, and the next day I had to get on a plane, to get down to St Louis for the roofing conference. I did get some sympathy as I winced and tenderly walked around the conference hall, my legs were so stiff it was unbelievable. But I had done it!

However, this wasn't the ultimate. All runners know that it's under three hours you need to be in the serious 'zone', and I wanted to break that barrier.

In May the next year, I ran my next Marathon, this time back home in Rotterdam, and I got that time down to three hours and twenty minutes ... but by that time, it was enough. I didn't turn my back on marathon running deliberately, but I got too busy, didn't keep the training up, and my focus drifted elsewhere... and that's OK. We aren't all meant to be super athletes. But it's good to challenge ourselves, and if you're thinking of training to run a marathon, I encourage you: it's a great life achievement.

However, all this was a few years before. By the time my daughter was born, I was well on the way to running myself slowly into the ground. It's that feeling when life is just a bit too much to cope with, in all ways: work, relationships, family, friendships, doing a bit too much all over and slowly getting drained.

It took a few years, but I found myself at the end of 1995 totally run ragged and came to the point where I just couldn't do anything anymore.

Dick had seen it coming, and for at least a couple of years beforehand he had been telling me that when I went down, it would be like an oak tree. Both older and wiser than me, he could see what I refused to. I was so locked up in my drive and sense of purpose, he couldn't get through to me; so even as a good friend, all he could really do was watch it all unfold.

I reached the point where the stress was so bad, so absolute, I could hardly breathe; and then one day, I simply collapsed.

It was all very dramatic, and then the recovery took a long time. I still tried to fight against it and keep working, even though I had lost the ability to concentrate well enough to drive. After a little while, my firm had enough of this, and I went on to proper medical insurance and a total break for three months, but I was never to return properly. I had smashed against the ceiling of my own workaholism and I would never be the salesman that I was.

I began to feel a burden on my firm; it wasn't fair, and my lack of performance affected everyone. Neither did things go well at home. My marriage had been through too much and my push for more had ended up being destructive.

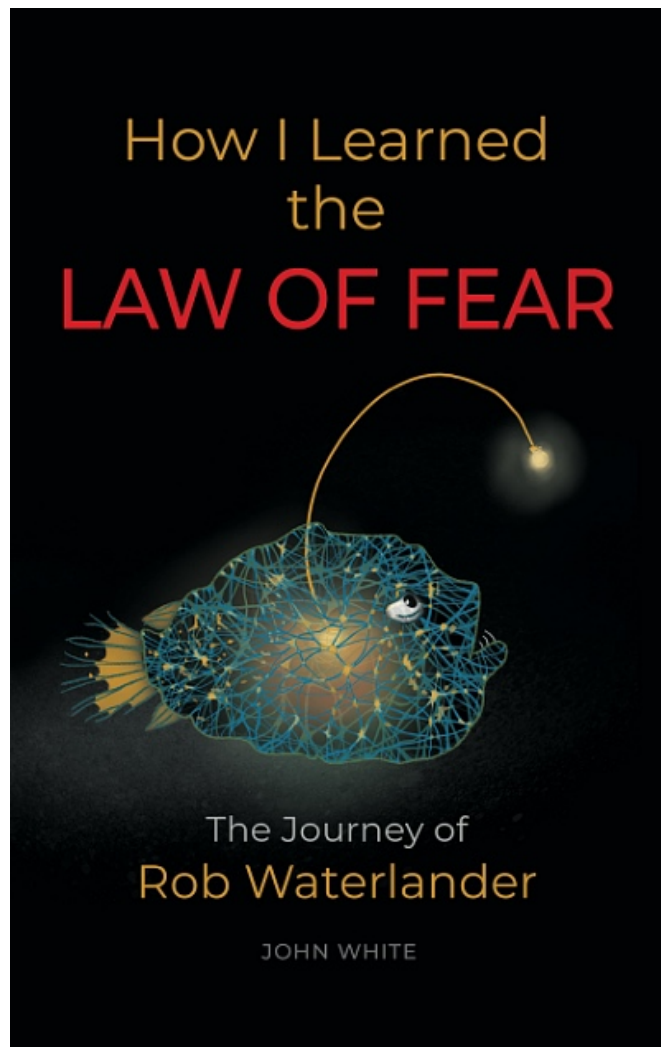
My saddest memory is the parting conversation with Dick at the office, the last time when I was there, when he asked me, 'Don't you feel it was a waste, what you did with yourself?' The words cut deep – even deeper because I knew I agreed with them.

I was in my mid-thirties, struggling with a difficult illness, with my career in pieces and my marriage under strain, feeling I had let down everything I had cared about. It was the low point of my life.

This was the moment I truly could not hide anymore:

It was time to accept my shortcomings, to take responsibility for my actions ...

And to do something about it ...



What if you could channel your fears and manifest your greatest desires? This book – part self-help, part memoir will help you manifest your desires without getting bogged down by what you fear the most.

**How I Learned the LAW OF FEAR:
The Journey of Rob Waterlander**
By John White

Order the book from the publisher BookLocker.com

<https://www.booklocker.com/p/books/12944.html?s=pdf>

**or from your favorite neighborhood
or online bookstore.**