

## **S**omeone was walking with me.

Looking back over many years, I realised from an early age that **someone was walking with me.**

I am going to start at the beginning, school was very difficult for me, not for lack of trying, it was the fact that I had some learning difficulty in today's age. we call this dyslexia, this type of learning difficulty was not really talked about much, teachers did not understand the problems associated with dyslexia.

One particular day I was presented with a Gideon Bible, **(someone was walking with me)** I said to myself I would love to read and understand its contents.

I flipped the pages through and put it in my pocket and forgot about it.

When I left school. I could not spell and reading difficulties made my life very difficult, I felt isolated and frustrated. I had knowledge in my head but I just could not get it down onto paper or express myself due to the fact that my vocabulary was limited.

I thought my job prospects were going to be zero. I needed money. The traditional thing was to go along to the job centre and sign on to the dole.

When I walked up to the glass counter, the lady was very polite and asked, "What can I do for you,?" I explained I have finished school and had no job, she gave me a form to fill in. I couldn't believe it, I said to the lady I cannot complete this form as I cannot spell and I have difficulty in reading; she asked if I would like some help. "Yes", I replied thinking that she was going to fill in the form for me.

She gave me a piece of paper with some information on it about adult literature lessons.

**(Someone was walking with me)**

I went home feeling very despondent. After a couple of days I pulled out the information and something inside me decided I should go and find out about adult literacy.

I walked to the address that the lady had given me; I was very nervous I knocked on the door and went in. I was met

by a gentleman. After explaining to him the problems I had he suggested to go along to a literacy class.

Again, I didn't really want to attend I thought of everything to stop myself from going and then something happened I felt that someone

was with me. and they would take care of me , it was just a feeling so I plucked up courage.

**(someone was walking with me)**

I attended the class my reading improved a little but I was still having great difficulty with spelling. Twelve months later I was helping out a friend of my fathers painting and converting a wallpaper shop into a china-showroom.

I worked hard and when I took any breaks I went into the back of the shop where his son was silkscreen printing.

I found the process fascinating; his father said to me do you think you could do this? I immediately replied yes, no problem.

I felt very confident. The following week I was employed as a trainee on the YTS scheme.

**(someone was walking with me)**

They taught me how to print, and about graphics, I stayed with that company for some time.

Eventually, I left and went to a company to do graphic work, I went to the interview, for some reason he never asked me about my spelling or reading.

I could not believe it, the day I started things kept just going wrong every piece of artwork I looked at involved reading I couldn't read I never understood, or even heard them before, eventually, this was picked up by the manager probably because of all the mistakes I was making. They decided to transfer me to the printing room this is the process I really liked, I felt I was at home. I was learning all about colours, printing substrates, cutting , pressing and etching.

**(Someone was walking with me)**

I became quite skilled in silkscreen printing, and some work was being subcontracted out of the print room but I approached the manager and said I could do this and he gave me the opportunity to prove it.

I had another stumbling block, maths.

There would be 8 logos on the artwork, size 12"x9" 1000 logos need I would work out how many times it would go into a large sheet then guillotine to the artwork size. My maths was a no go area everything that was printed needed to be guillotined more maths.

I don't know if the manager was helping or just having some fun at my expense sometimes when I was printing he would humiliate me in front of other people, he probably didn't realise the effects, it was having on me. He was a great manager I have a lot of respect for him.

I felt some inner strength that was protecting me ***(someone was walking with me)***

He knew my weaknesses and maths was one of them he would ask me to work out how many sheets are on the drying rack this took me a long time to work out the other workers would laugh they had the answer in seconds.

I would normally work this out before printing. It would take me longer than the others to cut up the material and sometimes they would probably get more out of the stock material than I could, but nobody could deny

I was fast and accurate at printing we all have our good points

***(Someone was walking with me)***

I stayed with the company for a few years. One day I received a telephone call this was from another company asking me if I would be interested in joining them, they said, come along for an interview. I decided to go long to the interview I could not believe it, it was all about ceramic printing.

A fascinating area they wanted somebody to work in a printing laboratory that involved testing products and relaying information back to the relevant department also making screens and experimenting. I took the job you, guessed it I had a big problem with reports I had to do some work which involve writing and weighing out materials, dreaded maths crept in, again report work had no chance but to my surprise there was a solution, a secretary a friend of my wife. was working there and when I needed something typing up into english help was at hand. ***(someone was walking with me)***

I loved working at that company but the wages were very low but the knowledge and experience I gained was priceless.

I stayed there about two years. One day my manager said to me a tile manufacturer was looking for a production manager; he thought I was ideal for that position.

I went along to an interview and got the job, it was a big challenge. I needed to increase the output from two thousand tiles to fifty thousand tiles in one month production.

When I started recruiting people I knew my weaknesses I needed somebody with a good head for maths so I employed a packer who was amazing at adding things up, I would just say to him how many cranks on the truck kiln within a couple of minutes I would have the answer but he was not very good with spelling.

When he needed an assistant I employed an assistant who was very good with english spelling and reading.

He filled in all the forms that needed to go back to the warehouse.

All the staff I employed had certain gifts that would contribute to the production team, which enabled us to achieve an output of fifty thousand tiles a month.

***(Someone was walking with me)***

I decided to get involved with computers I thought I needed to understand how they worked and how to use them.

So I brought myself an Amstrad 6128 I set up a full production control on this computer and started to realise the potential that this could help me with my learning difficulties.

I also wanted to go to college and learn about electronics. So I just got up one day, went into the

college and enrolled in a night class studying electronics.

You guessed it, no maths what a nightmare! I sat there in the class wondering what am I doing here. On the blackboard was an equation, everybody seemed to be scribbling on their paper working things out when the tutor came to me and noticed that I had nothing on my paper he asked me what the problem was

I told him I have no maths, he took one look at me and went over to a cupboard and pulled a box out full of bits and pieces he gave me a piece of paper with a diagram on it and said go and build this project. I started to build the project, I had not a clue what I was doing someone noticed that there was a burning smell the tutor said don't worry Mick has got his equation wrong! ***(Someone was walking with me)*** Eventually. I mastered some skills in electronics and enjoyed helping other people in my class I did not take the qualification that was offered due to my literacy problems.

As technology became more and more advanced I upgraded my computer to what is known as a PC I started playing around with speech recognition software, this is an amazing technology.

Over several years I researched into as many utilities as possible that the computer could support and help me with everyday issues.

Some of the utilities that I use on a daily basis are on my web page click on the tab name links [www.weather-above.com](http://www.weather-above.com)

***(Someone was walking with me)***

***One of the most amazing things is that the Gideon Bible that I said to myself I would like to read and understand it has come true.***

***I use an electronic library called logos library system and a screen reader to read out to me through my headphones.***

***I am not just listening any more, I am studying looking at Greek and Hebrew words I would never dreamed of studying and loving words. It is a miracle in my eyes.***

***When I was at school I used to hate words as you can see through my journey I started to warm to words when I heard the Bible read to me,***

***I started to follow it on the computer screen, over time my reading and my spelling has improved and my understanding who was walking with me.***

***I can now put a name to the person, Jesus, who is always walking with us.***

***Everything is possible, you have to find your gifts that you have and use them to your maximum ability work in faith and walk in faith.***

***Mick***