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How to Make Steady Profits by Renting Your Stocks

The Stock Option Income Generator

Harvey C. Friedentag

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Preface

The greatest investment experience of your life begins today. And this experience is really timely, because all the day-traders are gambling without knowing what they are doing.

Thirty-six years ago, working at my kitchen table, I started a unique endeavor for investing. Since that modest beginning, my portfolio management service has grown to be a source of personal satisfaction and income not just for me but, even better, for my clients. And this book will do the same for you.

Why? Because this book covers what I know to be the single most rewarding form of investing in existence—the covered call option.

This book is a road map. I have developed a step-by-step program to make you a successful investor, as I have made my clients successful investors. Let me lead you to the same success.

Let me open your eyes to the facts about this extraordinary investment arena. In the following pages, you will learn the basics of selecting the best stocks for covered call options.

The approach is simple. The complete strategy is easy to execute and will save you both time and money. The first chapters of the book are truly fundamental, dealing with the basics of investing. If you are already comfortable with investing, I suggest you move directly to the advanced part of the book, which tells you how to move beyond comfort to real success.

The methods discussed in this book have achieved proven results over many years. The strategies and tactics outlined will allow you to accumulate assets steadily. You can reach your investment goals within a reasonable amount of time. In studying my book you will learn:

- To heed the lessons of the past
- To invest without doubt
- To make profits in the stock market
- To profit whether the market goes up, or down, or sideways

If this is what you are looking for, read on.

When I finished my last book, *Stocks for Options Trading*, I thought I had written everything I could write about my approach for investing in the stock market. Then several things happened.

The first was a dramatic increase in my advisory business. This drove me to create, develop, try, and perfect my methods for portfolio enhancement—big words for getting more safety and income out of stock market investing in all financial climates.

Then we experienced the events of 2008. You cannot bring up the stock market these days without analyzing the events that have been taking place as I write this book. This has been one of the most unusual times I have ever experienced. I have always believed that investors should ignore the ups and downs of the market. Fortunately, the vast majority of them paid little attention to the distractions cited previously. If this is any example, very few of my clients switched to money market funds during the desperations of the period. When you sell in desperation, you always sell cheap, and truly realize your losses.

Whether it is a 508-point day or a 59-point day, and you are nervous about the stock market, you do not have to sell that day or the next. Maybe we are in a bear market and for the next two years or three years you will wish you had never heard of stocks. But the history of the stock market has been full of bear markets, not to mention recessions, and in spite of that the results are indisputable: A portfolio of stocks with covered call options will turn out to be a lot more valuable than a portfolio of bonds or CDs or money market funds. You could come out ahead of the panic-sellers, because the market will rise steadily eventually. In the end, superior companies will succeed and mediocre companies will fail, and investors in each will be rewarded accordingly.

To some, these concepts seem to defy logic, or at least they defy explanation. Not to me. They make sense. I do them every day, and so will you. I want to change the way you invest.

Every investor must be realistic. You must gather data, analyze them, and strive to come to logical conclusions, whether favorable or unfavorable. Optimism is a tonic. Pessimism is poison. You must become a realist.

This is a book about investing success. The complete strategy is easy to execute and is appropriate to save you both time and money by using tactics designed for you.

If the returns you receive from implementing my strategies seem to defy gravity, then great for you. Keep the gains. I get the satisfaction of knowing you are doing well.

As a registered investment advisor (RIA) with the United States Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC), I have been managing personal portfolios professionally since 1986. The methods discussed in this book have achieved proven results in the past. The strategies and tactics outlined here will allow you to accumulate assets steadily. You can reach your investment goals within a reasonable amount of time.

My point of view is that hindsight or rumor or case studies are only interesting if you can learn a lesson from them . . . that investing well is important, but what you get for the money you earn probably matters more . . . and that you don't have much time or tolerance for clichés, familiar faces, or formulaic advice. *Don't learn the tricks of the trade. Learn the trade.*

Before you take the plunge, consider that investing is like scuba diving: It is not for everyone. But both can be mastered by more people than have so far shown up on either scene. In both activities, it is essential that you be truly aware of exactly what you are doing, and that you are alert to the possible dangers as well as the safeguards available to protect you against them.

In the case of investing, your greatest safeguards are your constant watchfulness, a thorough awareness, and the investment of your time. You should allot part of that time to keeping abreast of outside influences, whether political, economic, or other trends that might affect the present and future of your investments.

I will share the real-life examples that bring my formulas to life. In this book, I give you all the details, methods, and techniques that I use daily to produce wealth. And then if that is not enough, I will share with you methods for serious tax reduction, wealth enhancement, and portfolio asset protection.

HARVEY CONRAD FRIEDENTAG
April 2009

Acknowledgments

A writer writes, a reader reads. As a writer, you know who you are and what the material means to you. But you cannot begin to know who the reader will be, or what background that reader will or won't bring to the page.

I have tried to write a book that will be useful and of value to both investors and prospective investors. It starts out simply and then grows in detail. It reflects my involvement over the years with the investment process. More importantly, however, it reflects some of the accumulated knowledge and experience I have gained as a veteran in the stock market.

To distill a lifetime of my experience and that of my friends and colleagues in investing into a book is a giant task and a near impossibility as well. Something is sure to be left out. Some readers may rise in protest, no matter how honorable my intentions. Yet I want to give as much knowledge as I can to my readers about this marvelous, exciting, fun, agonizing, ecstatic—and, of course, financially rewarding—way of making money called investing. Finally, I want you to enjoy investing.

This book won't make you an instant expert or give you a surefire formula for making money. But it could be an important step toward taking control of your financial future. My goal is to convince and train you to be your own portfolio manager while using a method that enables you to invest without fear.

This book is a presentation of my work and the suggestions of others, gained through broadcast, the printed word, and my face-to-face real-life experiences.

Writing a book is a formidable task that cannot be appreciated until you actually begin work on it. One must summon forth a resolve and commitment that are not normally needed in everyday life.

There are not enough words in the thesaurus to thank Hal and Martha Quiat for their assistance in desktop publishing, grammar, and making me clearly state what I meant to say. They were able to divorce their own egos and personalities from the process and concentrate on drawing me out, which they did flawlessly. Bold and merciless editing to hone the material, to be sure that only the best parts of the document were included, was matched with a stubborn determination to reject anything that did not belong. Behind their engaging and gentle exterior lies a strict discipline to prohibit excess wordage. Hal and Martha's weeding and pruning have been crucial to the presentation of this material. They gave freely of their time and talent, rearranging their workdays to accommodate mine.

Heartfelt recognition is offered to all those who let me interview them, who listened to my long-winded dissertations, and who openly shared their feelings, philosophies, and experiences about investing with me.

I have to thank some long-time friends: Stuart MacPhail got me "computerized"—or I would still be looking at a stack of indecipherable notes—edited my first drafts, corrected my grammar, helped me get my thoughts organized, and helped to get this book completed. Michael Wootan gave constant encouragement, and assisted me with the computer fundamentals and with the manuscript.

Great recognition goes to the members of the Contrarian Investment Club for using my methods and giving me their input. I thank Nate Oderberg for serving 20 years as the treasurer for the Contrarian Investment Club and spending many late-night sessions stock-picking with me. I am deeply indebted to Thomas Tolen, CPA, for helping me with the tax ramifications of covered call option investing. I also thank Guy Simone, who bounced strategies and ideas off my head, and enhanced my investment procedures.

I have to thank my friend Joyce and my family for all the long sessions when I disappeared into my office to work on this book and was not available to them.

Last but not least, my appreciation goes to Dr. Alexander Elder, who greatly facilitated getting my book to John Wiley & Sons for publishing; Meg Freeborn, my developmental editor; Kevin Commins, my editor; and Ted Bonanno, my literary agent. Thank you, all my friends.

H. C. F.

CHAPTER 1

Fear and Ignorance

Fear always springs from ignorance.
—Ralph Waldo Emerson

Why must people have a fear of investing?

Why did the stock market crash in 1929?

Why was it necessary to become jobless?

Why was it necessary to become penniless?

Why was it necessary for people to leap to their deaths out of fear?

Why was it necessary to forgo the American dream?

Aren't investors by definition fearful? With little training in investing, they tend to do nothing, or they delegate investment responsibilities to stockbrokers, accountants, bank trust officers, insurance agents, relatives, or friends—often with disappointing results. After all, no one will care as much about your financial assets as you do. No one will do the job as well as you can.

It is not an easy job. There are thousands of ways to go wrong. Even the most prudent investment decisions may not work (as we know from personal experience and the tales of countless investors). The job may not be easy, but it is doable. I have learned to invest money successfully, and so can you. It takes some study and considerable personal discipline, but you will be well paid for your efforts. This book will help you get started and guide you toward rewarding accomplishments.

The best opening lesson on fear and investing is illustrated by the largest money-losing event, and worst day of fear ever seen: the stock market crash of 1929.

THE STOCK MARKET CRASH OF 1929

The tragedy of this crash is best illustrated in the many news stories of the time, as reported by the telegraphic services of the Associated Press, *New York Times*, *Chicago Tribune*, *Chicago News*, Universal International News, Consolidated Press, and the United Press.

Tuesday, October 29, 1929

Following Black Monday, October 28, 1929, newspapers ran headlines that screamed "Stocks Drop $10 to $70 a Share, Worst Break in Market History," "Billions in Value Are Swept Away by Avalanche of Sales," and "Late Rally Turns Prices Upward, Recovery Small by Comparison; Total Sales Near 16,000,000 Shares."

The greatest break in the history of the New York Stock Exchange (NYSE) continued to slash away billions of dollars in values Tuesday in the most enormous trading day in history.

Prices Seemed to Know No End Positive assurances from the bankers and economists that the bottom had been reached Tuesday brought only a temporary respite; then the market roared downward at wide drops.

Shortly after 1:00 P.M., prices were down 1 to 50 points on both the big board and the curb exchange. New lows for the year or longer were established in many shares. The market value loss was tremendous, totaling more than $50 billion since the terrific downward movement started a few days earlier.

Rallies Were Short-Lived; Stocks Resumed Their Plunge During the day, slight recoveries set in but these were without support; the stocks that had recovered fell back and joined the general downward rush.

All sorts of bait were dangled before the traders in an effort to revive buying. Bankers were helpless to stem the tide of reaction. They resorted to psychological methods to convince traders they were not worried about the situation.

Influential banks were said to have worked out a plan of attack for Tuesday, but it did not make itself felt in the morning. A group of representative institutions marked down the figures at which stock market loans could be made. One broker reduced commissions, and others were expected to follow. The Federal Reserve was in session, with Secretary Mellon in attendance. He was said to have conferred with President Hoover, but no statement was forthcoming.

All of the World on Selling Spree Engulfed in the greatest selling wave in the history of the NYSE, prices were carried down Tuesday under a torrent of liquidation from every corner of the globe. Monday's losses, huge as they were, were doubled on Tuesday.

More than 13 million shares had changed hands on this record-breaking day. Stocks of all kinds crashed. In mid-afternoon, there was a rally from the lows, which brought prices back from the minimums. It still left them enormously down on the day.

A report that the Federal Reserve Board of Governors was considering closing the exchange was denied semi-officially, and it was announced that various investment trusts and banking interests were buying.

Call money, renewing at 5 percent, was advanced to 6 percent in the last hour, suggesting that the investment trusts were withdrawing funds from the call market to buy stocks. Until mid-day, every attempt to stem the tide met with failure. At the end there was a sharp rally. There has never been anything like it.

Wednesday, October 30, 1929

On Wednesday, the papers ran these headlines: "Stocks Advance $5 to $30 a Share" and "Investment Trusts Put Half Billion in Market During Rally."

The bulls staged a great demonstration in the closing minutes.

Prices were whirled up to the highs of the day, a day that had seen prices moving up regularly from the calamitous lows of Tuesday. It was a great climax, and as the closing bell rang traders and brokers shouted, cheered, and threw papers into the air in jubilation at the restoration of confidence in the market.

Investment trusts and trading corporations were heavy buyers of stock over the course of those two days, and purchases were estimated to range from $350 million to one-half billion dollars. These securities were bought outright.

The wave of hysterical selling, which had clipped more than $25 billion from the quoted value of listed securities in the New York market during the last week, subsided Wednesday, and prices rallied briskly in response to what appeared to be strong investment demand. Scores of active issues were marked up $5 to nearly $30 a share in the first hour of trading.

Developments in the Stock Market Situation Wednesday indicated that a mobilization of the nation's leading financial forces had been undertaken to calm the wave of hysteria and restore confidence in the securities markets. John D. Rockefeller Sr., who rarely spoke for publication, authorized the statement Wednesday that he and his son for some days had been purchasing sound common stocks: "We are continuing and will continue our purchases in substantial amounts at levels which we believe represent sound investment values," he added.

Philanthropist Pledges to Help Employees Caught in Stock Crash Julius Rosenwald, philanthropist and chairman of the board of Sears Roebuck and Company, "pledged without limit" his personal fortune to guarantee the stock market accounts of the 40,000 employees of his company. John Higgins, vice president of Sears, was delegated the duty of seeing that the employees' accounts were protected.

Higgins immediately looked up the accounts of all employees—not only in Chicago, but everywhere the company had branches. When he found an employee carrying an account in which, in the present bear market, his margin had grown too narrow for safety, Higgins communicated with the broker handling the account. "We simply put up collateral, so that our employees shall be able to weather the storm," Higgins explained. "One of the things I found out was that a great many of employees will have no need for the assistance offered. Some of them, thanks to their thrift and good judgments, are wealthy. The help Mr. Rosenwald is offering is for those who need it."

According to Higgins, Mr. Rosenwald had adopted a similar plan during the financial period depression in 1921. The sum that Mr. Rosenwald pledged was about $1,600,000, to be used as collateral for employee stock accounts. It was also revealed that Mr. Rosenwald made a gift in 1921 of $5 million worth of his own stock to the company and pledged $20 million more of his personal fortune to see the company through. It was explained that Mr. Rosenwald's 1929 offer applied to all employees' stock accounts, no matter what stocks the employees held.

A List of Stocks That Are Safe to Buy The following information was for persons who wished to purchase sound investment issues—it was believed that the stocks named would yield good income.

Kennecot: Provided price of copper metal is held at 18 cents, Kennecot will be in a position to increase its dividend rate by the end of the year. Paying $5 a share, or better than 7 percent at current prices, Kennecot looms ahead of Anaconda as the favorite of those friendly to the copper group. 1929 range 104⅞–65; Tuesday's close 65¾, down 4⅞.

Pullman: Rated an A-1 investment stock, paying $4 a share, and aided by new car orders, Pullman will earn more than $5 a share this year. It is no stock to buy for trading turns, but it will do well for the investor who is willing to hold it for the long pull. 1929 range 99¼–75⅛ Tuesday's close 75¼, down 3.

American Rolling Mill: Selling at a new low for the year, Rolling Mill is an attractive buy for the long pull. Earnings for the first six months of this year were $3.26, compared with $3.07 for the entire twelve months of 1928. Stock pays a dividend of $2, plus 5 percent in stock. The company owns the valuable exclusive patent for rolling strip steel and is leasing it on a royalty basis to the biggest steel corporations in the world. 1929 range, 144 .62–72; Tuesday's close 72; down 13.

New York Central: Actually the leader of the seasoned rails, New York Central always has held its place as one of the soundest of investment issues, and has done well in price appreciation. Earnings, estimated at $16 or more this year, are steadily increasing, and the company is rich in realty. Central will never cost anyone any money in the long run. 1929 range, 256½–175; Tuesday's close 189½, up 3½.

Pennsylvania: Good management is one of the required attributes of any company to the investor who is buying its stock. Pennsylvania railroad has an excellent management and never has been a market laggard. At current prices, paying a $4 dividend, it yields a little less than 5 percent. 1929 range, 110–72; Tuesday's price 82, down 8.

Underwood-Elliot-Fisher: This company has further merger possibilities, in addition to enjoying the position of the largest company in the business machine and office equipment industry. 1929 range, 181¾–91; Tuesday's close 97, down 13.

American Radiator: Mergers have often been forecast for this company, and undoubtedly they will occur in the course of time. At present, the company is a powerful unit in the industry. Dividend is $1.50 or 4.3 percent at current price. 1929 range, 55⅜–28; Tuesday's close 32, up.

Thursday, October 31, 1929

"Big Buying Wave Sends Stocks Higher," "Profit Taking Fails to Wipe Out Gains Made in Early Hour," "Orders Pour In from Everywhere; Volume of Trade Heavy" were headlines that ran in the major dailies on Thursday, October 31.

The three-hour stock exchange sessions Thursday saw traders push the market forward at such a pace that $10 billion was added to the market's valuation of stock. The trading was terrific. In the short session, thousands upon thousands of shares, bargains as described by such financiers as John D. Rockefeller, were bought. The first half-hour alone was at a rate of more than 24 million shares for a full-day session.

Tickers ran an hour behind, but floor quotations just at closing time showed that stocks were up from 1 to 40 points. Buying was as frenzied Thursday as selling had been the previous Tuesday. Values came back with the vigor of the old bull market that Wall Street had declared dead just days before.

> The desire of knowledge, like the thirst of riches, increases ever with the acquisition of it.
>
> —Laurence Sterne

INVESTMENT KNOWLEDGE + STOCK MARKET = PROFITS

You can make money no matter what direction the stock market is going. You have just seen a brief insight into the 1929 crash and its aftermath. On the day of the crash, stocks were rebounding by the end of the trading day. On the following two days, the numbers were even better:

- October 29, 1929, −30.57 Dow Jones −11.73 percent
- October 30, 1929, +28.40 Dow Jones +12.34 percent

This illustrates that a lot of money can be made as a result of a market crash.

You can now see that financial hell or financial heaven may be just around the corner. I differ from many of my colleagues in my sincere belief that the prepared investor can profit when the market goes up or down. Let us emulate investors like John D. Rockefeller Sr. and Julius Rosenwald.

They say a fool and his money are soon parted. What I want to know is how he got it in the first place.

UNDERSTANDING INVESTOR BEHAVIOR

Behavioral finance attempts to provide a structure for understanding the behavior of investors and the stock markets in which they invest. This framework is complementary to the standard theory of finance, also known as the *efficient market* theory. In this latter view, investors are totally rational beings. In making decisions, they consider all available information and accurately assess its meaning. They determine the probable outcomes associated with various decisions and only take actions likely to maximize their overall wealth and minimize risk.

Under the standard theory, securities markets quickly—almost instantaneously—incorporate all known information. Market movements are based on changes in that information and reflect the collective reactions of rational investors to the new information. Securities are always accurately priced.

Behavioral finance, in contrast, holds that investors are actually not completely rational beings. They sometimes act based on imperfect or incomplete information, and they may misinterpret information or react to it in inappropriate ways. However, behaviorists believe investor behavior is not purely random or totally irrational, either. They believe that even the nonrational behavior of investors falls into patterns and may be somewhat predictable.

Mind over Matter

Market declines are a natural part of the investment process. There have always been momentous events that dampened the markets. But history has shown that markets eventually rebound. Maintaining a long-term perspective through challenging economic times isn't easy, but it can be rewarding. Throughout the history of the market, the ups generally have outweighed the downs, resulting in strong long-term growth opportunities.

> The best way to predict your future is to create it.
>
> —Abraham Lincoln

THE CRASH OF 2008

Official confirmation of the painfully obvious, that the United States entered a recession in December 2007, came from the National Bureau of Economic Research. In reflecting on the calendar year 2008, the sad state of the economy is obvious.

We saw gasoline costs go through the roof and then plummet. The Dow Jones turned into a daily roller coaster, and the $700 billion bailout took shape but did not seem to have any impact on market stability. Terms such as "mortgage meltdown" and "credit freeze" became part of the everyday financial language, and the unemployment rate rose dramatically.

It was nearly impossible to open a newspaper, turn on the television, or surf the Web without coming across a doom-and-gloom story about the economy and the financial markets. While there is no doubt that these are difficult times, this is an ideal time for investors to position themselves for long-term success.

Against the backdrop of the problems in the subprime mortgage sector, the ensuing credit crunch, and the unsteadying influence on markets, investors have been challenged to revalidate their ideas about how best to invest in a rollercoaster market. In the interest of providing context, it is important that the reader understand my investment philosophy. It is based on the tenets of broad stock portfolio diversification and linked alternative investments. We don't engage in tactical or market-timing efforts. Instead, we attempt to execute a strategic asset allocation, with targets adjusted periodically over a long time horizon.

It appears that the United States has plunged into its worst financial crisis since the 1930s. The leadership of Treasury Secretary Henry Paulson and Federal Reserve Chief Ben S. Bernanke in fighting it has been sluggish and inconsistent. The intensity of the crash will surely earn a place in financial history.

U.S. consumer bankruptcy filings jumped nearly 33 percent in 2008 amid a recession that's expected to keep filings rising in 2009.

Overall consumer filings reached over 1.5 million last year. The 2008 rate of increase fell short of the 40 percent rise recorded in 2007, and the annual total in both of those years is still short of the more than two million recorded in 2005 alone. A law that took effect in October 2005 made personal bankruptcy filings more difficult and sharply curtailed filings in 2006 to about 573,000, the lowest level since 1998.

President Obama and his Congress took the reins of the country in January 2009, but it will take time for them to develop policies to stimulate the economy and promote liquidity. What's an investor to do? Understand that when the market changes, people tend to get nervous, apprehensive, and downright uneasy.

> Neither the entrepreneurs nor the farmers nor the capitalists determine what has to be produced. The consumers do that.
>
> —Ludwig Von Mises

WHAT TO DO FIRST

First, do not dump the market by selling your quality stocks. Yes, it is the worst bear market since 2000–2002 and stocks are trading at valuations not seen in decades, but equities will come back. Panics invariably provoke investors to make the wrong moves. So resist the panicky calls from some so-called experts and many of your friends to move cash while you still have some savings left.

If you have uninvested cash, there is an almost endless choice of quality businesses trading at or near liquidation prices. The stock market is on a fire sale. Take advantage.

How patient do you have to be? How long will you have to wait? Some economists argue that it will take years to recover from the worldwide collapse we are facing. I do not agree. The United States and every other economic power know only too well the lessons of the Great Depression. Nobody will try to fight the recession by raising interest rates, or by closing the door to imports, as we did in 1930 with the Smoot-Hawley Tariff Act. We are already seeing global cooperation to prevent real disaster, such as the coordinated rate cuts made in early October 2008 by the Federal Reserve, the European Central Bank, the Bank of England, and the central banks of Canada, Sweden, and Switzerland.

It's okay, change makes everybody nervous. After all, it's more comfortable to stick with what you've always known. The truth is, a change in the market is a positive action. With the knowledge gained from this book, you will not only get the good comfortable feeling of knowing what to do, but also know how to react to anything that happens. People instantly get apprehensive if they think the changes are too big. Actually, as you will see, big changes work to your advantage. Of course, until you prove these facts to yourself, some of you are going to be just plain uneasy. I know no matter how much I tell you, the proof is going to be in the doing.

This book will show you how to prepare—not by hiding in a bomb shelter waiting for adversity to go away, but by arming yourself for battle in the financial marketplace. Take that money out of your mattress. If you do not, you will miss one of the greatest buying opportunities of your life. Times like these, when many U.S. companies are looking cheap, are the times to take action and buy.

Alarming? Not at all. The risk is surprisingly small. The rewards are great. You will learn how to use the psychology of the mob, and how to turn "nervous" into profits. You will be alerted to what it can cost you if you still believe in Santa Claus, the tooth fairy, or the good sense of brokers and bureaucrats.

Regardless of where you see the best value, most money managers agree that it's nearly impossible to predict when the markets will hit rock bottom. They recommend that investors dollar cost average into their chosen investments, regularly depositing money, so they will catch the bottom without resorting to a crystal ball.

Advised and protected by all the ideas and techniques explained to you in the following pages, you can proceed on your way and come home richer than when you started out.

> Therefore, do not repress your spirits or lose your courage. All things work according to law, and all things can be made to manifest this law.
>
> —Anonymous

MY INVESTMENT HISTORY

I just returned from a mutual fund seminar where I learned that if I had put my money with the company 56 years ago, my $10,000 would now be $10,338,589. (Total value includes reinvested dividends and capital gain distribution totaling $3,924,771 taken in shares.)

If I had participated in that scenario, I can tell you where I would really be now: I would be dead from old age. Besides, who had $10,000 56 years ago? How much would taxes have reduced the $10 million end result?

Both beginners and long-time participants dream of—and are unrealistic about—making fantastic gains in a short time. The stock market can make you a fortune, if you are willing to get rich slowly. The stock market is the place to be if your goals are to make money.

Norman, the first stockbroker I ever met socially, said to me many years ago, "Harvey, I can make you a small fortune and guarantee it." *Wow!* I thought. "Just come to me with a large fortune," he continued.

My experience in the stock market is not unique. I grew up in a poor working-class environment, where I received an appreciation for the lifestyle commonly described as the American dream.

When we are very young, we are possessors of a splendid gift—a mind that knows no limits. Faced with a new experience, our minds allow us to make discoveries, gain insights, and with time, learn something more of the world around us. If we are truly fortunate, we'll never completely let go of that early innocence that keeps us forever open to new ideas and permits us to dream.

In the United States, you have to realize that the only real limits to learning and dreaming are the ones we make for ourselves. In the United States, someone with humble beginnings can learn to earn and become a capitalist or even a tycoon.

> I've been rich and I've been poor. Rich is better.
>
> —Sophie Tucker