

# GIVE WINGS TO YOUR DESIRE

I was 30 years old. That evening when the doctor came and said it is aggressive cancer and they have to remove my right testicle, my life shattered into a million pieces. Signing a form that says: "removal of right testis" was a nightmare!

I've been through the whole programme - my health and emotions on a roller coaster - surgery, chemotherapy, self-destruction, depression and luckily, to this day, healthy again.

I made a bucket list when I was waiting for my results after the surgery. I wrote down places I would love to see before I die. (Helicopter ride over Manhattan, active volcano in Hawaii, Golden Gate Bridge San Francisco, Macchu Picchu and the Lines of Nazca in Peru, Great Barrier Reef in Australia, Milford Sound in New Zealand, Glaciers in southern Argentina/Chile...) The fear that cancer returns was constantly on my mind. I resigned as teacher, sold my car and backpacked the world for two years to come to rest with the cancer.

I was working on a campsite in Munich for the summer to earn some travel money. The beginning of the season was quiet and my boss gave me a week off. Travelling was on my mind! I spontaneously booked a flight to New York because it was too expensive to go to Budapest.

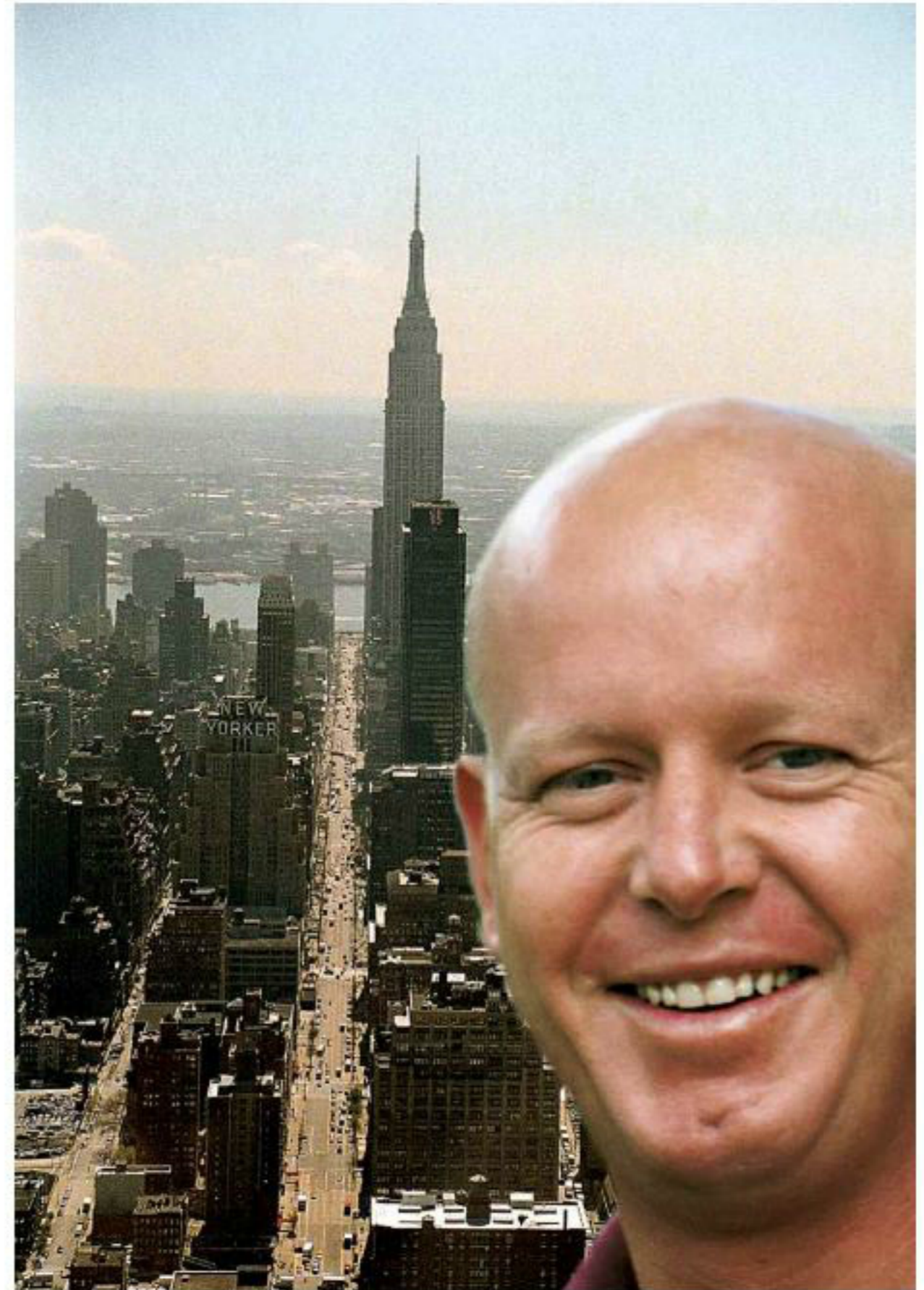
I left the travel agency with my plane ticket, went to the bookshop to buy a travel guide and returned to the campsite. Quickly I packed my bag and then it was already time to get going to the airport.

I only realised what I was doing after checking in. I was about to fly to New York and I had decided to do so just four hours ago. Crazy! I had no idea where I was going to stay and how I would get to Manhattan. I only knew that I would arrive at JFK. A bit of adventure, a bit of excitement, a bit of 1991, a little travelling, a little crazy, but great. Suddenly I was enjoying something again. It was a wonderful feeling! A feeling which cancer had taken away from me.

On the plane I spent most of the time poring over the travel guide. Where could I stay? How would I get there? How was I going to spend this week? There was so much to do and see - so many beautiful things. And there were helicopter flights over Manhattan. 'This is one of my dreams on the bucket list' flashed through my mind. I am going to do that no matter what it costs!

On the fourth morning - sunshine! I went directly to the heliport. I was flying over New York. 'You should actually pinch yourself,' I thought, 'because you are not dreaming. You are really flying over New York!' I had difficulty breathing and my eyes were slightly teary.

I looked out of the window and relished everything I saw: skyscrapers, streets, Central Park, yellow cabs, water, bridges, the Statue of Liberty - all this is New York. A feeling beyond words got hold of me. For the first time in a long time I felt alive again! I didn't even notice the other passengers in the helicopter. I was thinking of the time in Windhoek when I was writing down my dreams. It was a time when I thought that I would never again be able to enjoy anything, least of all having my dreams come true. A time, when nothing seemed to make sense, and try as I might, I couldn't find anything positive about or inside me.



## Dreams can come true. Life can be so beautiful.

That same evening I set a new goal for myself, because I wanted to do something for myself. I decided that after the camping season in Munich I would head for the dream destinations, which I had written down before I left Namibia. Drive across the Golden Gate Bridge... walk through Machu Picchu... snorkel at the Great Barrier Reef... see an active volcano... were all part of my list.

At the end of the week I flew back to Munich. I had to work for five months before I could travel again, but that was alright. One week in New York had done more for me than I thought. I only noticed later, when I was back at work, that New York had revived my travelling bug. The mere thought of it made me feel happy. I had made a dream come true for myself. It brought back my desire to live.

It was a long journey - around the world and back to myself. I undertook an intensive, spiritual examination of the eternal question concerning Life and Death. During these 2 years I've travelled to all the destinations that I had put on my bucket list when I wasn't sure if I will survive the cancer. Travelling to all the places on my bucket list was the best thing I've ever done.

Give wings to your desire! Have dreams and aims in life and fulfil them! My zest for life returned. I returned to Namibia and started teaching again.