

# Mike Tyson's Undisputed Truth: The Latest Great Inspirational Literary Gem

*Jason Goudlock*

After spending the past six months of my over 23-year excessive and unjust imprisonment (for aggravated robbery and felonious assault) battling a bout of one of the severest spells of depression that I've ever experienced, upon recently reading retired legendary boxer Mike Tyson's soul-baring autobiography *Undisputed Truth*, by way of being inspired by his jaw-clenching determination to overcome his many trials and tribulations, I've found the strength to rekindle and intensify my effort towards overcoming mine.

Reading *Undisputed Truth*, I discovered that there are many parallels between my turbulent adolescent upbringing and Tyson's. Like Tyson, I grew up in a dysfunctional household, as well as group homes, behavioral schools, and foster care. And, like Tyson, fueled by the emotional insecurities of not feeling fully loved, I also sought to fill the void of my emotional emptiness through the committing of crimes, and, more significantly, through the undertaking of participating in a sport, which, in my case, was the sport of basketball.

Unless a person as a child has experienced the overwhelming hollow feeling of abandonment, and/or not feeling fully loved by their parents, they will never fully understand the magnitude of the emotional pain in which a neglected child feels, nor will they ever fully understand the scope of the child's relentless determination to try and eradicate their pain. Some children embark on their quest for happiness through the partaking of participating in a sport or art. Some turn to substance abuse. Some turn to committing crimes. And some turn to a combination of all of the above, as Tyson and I both did. Fortunately for Tyson, however, his fascination with the sport of boxing won out, which led to him being introduced to legendary boxing trainer Cus D'Amato, whom, ultimately became Tyson's guardian and boxing trainer, friend and mentor, as well as his beacon of hope.

Blessed with the opportunity to receive the vastness of D'Amato's boxing and life's wisdom, Tyson evolved into a boxing phenom. But before Tyson was able to win a professional heavyweight title for his fatherly figure, tragedy struck when D'Amato suddenly became ill and passed away. Heartbroken, yet with a strengthened resolve to fulfill his constructed-by-D'Amato mission of becoming the youngest professional heavyweight boxing champion ever, on November 22, 1986, Michael Gerard Tyson did just that, when, at the age of 20-years-old, he vanquished Trevor Berbick for his championship title.

Tyson's will to overcome the adversity that he experienced en route to winning his first professional title is remarkable. But what is much more remarkable and revealed in Tyson's autobiography is the inner-strength that he demonstrated to will his way through the waves of adversity that he was confronted with **after** losing all three of his championship titles, and then being wrongfully convicted of raping a woman, who was later revealed to be a serial liar and a repeat false allegation claimant of being sexually assaulted.

After experiencing the wrath of the United States' racist criminal justice system, as well as a betrayal of trust by numerous people, Tyson could have easily collapsed and succumbed to the weight of his

harrowing circumstances, yet he didn't. Instead, he proceeded down the precarious road of enlightenment and he battled his way through his adversity and returned to society, where, ultimately, he regained his hierarchical boxing status after winning back two of the three championship belts that he once held. But, as remarkable of an accomplishment as Tyson's triumph was in the boxing world, his meritorious feat of reclaiming his champion status isn't what exemplified his relentless drive to overcome his adversity. What exemplified his inner-strength was his will to survive his post-incarceration descent from grace, which was a rapid descent induced by Tyson's harbored emotional pain, substance abuse, bad decision making, and the perpetual acts of deceit and betrayal committed against him by unscrupulous individuals, such as boxing promoter Don King.

While Mike Tyson's feat of survival is most certainly worthy of being commended, it must be mentioned that he was assisted with this fight for salvation by a close-knit group of genuine human beings. Tyson's wife, Kiki, is a praise-worthy woman for the unrelenting love that she submerged him in when he was in his most dire of straits. As with her husband's Alcoholic's Anonymous and Narcotics Anonymous supporters, she absolutely refused to give up on Mike, and she is one of the people in the world who loved him unconditionally, with the same intensity that her husband's pet tiger once did (**#IroncladFerociousLove**).

In addition to the harrowing behind-the-scene revelations about the life of Mike Tyson, *Undisputed Truth* is interspersed with some of the most hilarious stories that I've ever read. Tyson's stories about his boxing foe Mitch Green will make you laugh so hard that you will read them again and again, as well as will his stories about the charlatan boxing promoter Don King. Tyson is a masterful storyteller with a Dave Chappelle-like sense of humor.

Overall, *Undisputed Truth* is a spellbinding read about the rise-and-fall and rise-again life of Mike Tyson, and I'd be shocked if someone could read it and not be inspired in some kind of way, as I've been, to make some form of contribution, or greater contribution, towards improving their life and or the life of someone else.

In conclusion, while many people attribute the title "The Greatest" to the late legendary boxer and humanitarian Muhammad Ali, if Ali is, in fact, the greatest, after reading *Undisputed Truth*, there can be no dispute that Iron Mike Tyson, the legendary boxer, survivor, husband and father, is The Latest Greatest.

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