ForeWord Reviews
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AUTOBIOGRAPHY & MEMOIR

An Entrepreneur's Journey
Robert K. Lifton
AuthorHouse
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Five Stars (out of Five)

Robert K. Lifton is a born storyteller, as he proves in this expansive memoir. Lifton's autobiographical account of his long and diverse career showcases his entrepreneurial spirit. *An Entrepreneur's Journey* will interest those who seek a similar path. It will be equally intriguing to the casual reader who wants to learn about a man whose career took him from the business world to the world stage of diplomacy.

While Lifton's book is not a religious one, it does demonstrate how the author's value system has shaped his life. Lifton suggests that because of his Jewish upbringing, including his belief that there is no afterworld, he "always had a strong motivation to do something that makes a difference in this world." As a result, the path he follows leads him to start businesses and, later, to engage in political activities that, he writes, will "leave something meaningful behind after I'm gone."

Interestingly, it is also his Jewish upbringing that drives Lifton to become a lawyer—a choice influenced by his family's expectations. But Lifton's law career is short-lived; the lure of starting a business is just too strong. With little background, the author enters the real estate investment business, and a variety of other businesses follow. It is in the second half of his career, primarily as president of the American Jewish Congress, that Lifton becomes active in global politics.

Lifton's story is animated by the many anecdotes he shares. During his business career, for example, he played an integral role in marketing the hit record *You Light Up My Life*. Lifton also tells stories about his interactions with Donald Trump, James D. MacArthur, Georgia O'Keeffe, and Bernard Madoff. In fact, Lifton was one of the unfortunate victims of Madoff's notorious financial scheme.

On the political side, Lifton regales the reader with accounts of his work on George McGovern's presidential campaign, as well as his meetings with Hillary Clinton, Jesse Jackson, Nelson Mandela, Hosni Mubarak, Benjamin Netanyahu, George Shultz, and other world leaders.

While some readers may view this merely as name-dropping, the author always wraps each encounter in a relevant anecdote.

Lifton unashamedly shares the high and low points of his career, including a financial fall from grace that caused the author and his wife to suffer a dramatic change in lifestyle. His frank assessment of what went wrong should prove to be a valuable lesson to anyone who thinks that, “It can’t happen to me.”

In the end, it is Lifton’s candor and his ability as a raconteur that lifts *An Entrepreneur’s Journey* from a standard autobiography to a very engaging story.

Barry Silverstein