

Evidence Unseen: Finding the Faith to Overcome

Frank Clay Jr.

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Motivational and impactful, Evidence Unseen shows how, through faith and grit, Frank Clay Jr. achieved success.

Frank Clay Jr.'s powerful, insightful memoir *Evidence Unseen* is about overcoming challenges, including racial discrimination, organizational politics, family dysfunction, and other struggles.

Growing up in Philadelphia in the 1960s, Clay lived in constant fear of the gangs that ruled his streets. Accounts from his childhood are comprehensive, covering his relationships with family members, his strained interactions with his father, and how his grandmother functioned as a role model, as well as his efforts to sidestep gang members in his hometown. His determination to get into college despite having little support from his father comes through. These foundations clarify his later struggles, showing how much he had to endure and overcome in order to become successful.

Because he was gifted at sports, basketball became Clay's ticket to college. At Towson State College, he played a significant role in chartering one of the first African American fraternities. Later, Clay continued his family's legacy and joined the military, after which he joined the corporate sector.

The chronological work focuses on each stage of Clay's life in a detailed way. Descriptions of his military experiences capture the grueling nature of basic training at Fort Knox, including the fact that, after fracturing his foot, he had to start his training over again. Important themes, including rank disparities and racism, are also approached in insightful ways. Clay shares how, in his first two jobs after college, he encountered rankism from middle-aged African American men managers who wanted to exploit his skills, achievements, and talents for their gain. Realizing that this was a common issue, he decided to always support those around and under him, even in his later years.

Candid in describing Clay's experiences, including the flaws and strengths of other people in his life, the book reads like a realistic portrait. Clay's mother, who's portrayed as being fond of him and is shown caring for him, is also recalled as having done things that hurt him. He shares that, after he was unfairly accused of stealing, his mother did not believe him; instead, she punished him by holding his hands over a gas stove until they were burned.

Inspiring as it moves from Clay's humble background toward him becoming the president and majority owner of a company that assisted VA hospitals, the book includes accounts from Clay's later years as a founding member of a statewide minority chamber of commerce, designed to promote African American businesses' interests. All of his achievements came alongside his life as a husband and father.

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EDITH WAIRIMU (January 6, 2020)

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