

Unit IV: 9/11 – A Contemporary Case Study

Grade Levels: 7-8

Time: Two 45-minute class periods, but at least a week apart to allow time for students to prepare interviews.

Lessons MIV 9: A Moment in Time

Objective:

The student will describe how September 11, 2001 affected people in their community/state/country.

Materials:

- Timeline – www.nysm.nysed.gov/wtc_timeline
 - Interview questions
 - Testimonies from individuals' experiences on September 11
- Note: Some of these interviews contain graphic descriptions.

Activities/Procedures:

Day #1

1. Teacher will introduce timelines outlining September 11 sequence of events. Read through the timeline.
2. Follow up with stories of people who
 - a. got out of the building
 - b. were stranded at closed airports away from home
 - c. had to find ways to get out of NYC
 - d. lined up to volunteer to help NYC
 - e. were working their everyday jobs
 - f. lost loved ones
 - g. other people
3. As we read the testimonies about those who escaped the buildings, what images, feelings and reactions were contained in their stories?
4. As we read the testimonies of those who lost loved ones, discuss some of their personal reactions. As you asked the interview questions, did they volunteer information beyond your questions?
5. As we look at other testimonies, why do you think people were so affected even if they did not suffer a loss of a loved one? How does a tragedy go beyond those who perished? What are some ways human kind responded to this tragic event?
6. Homework: Interview someone who remembers the 9/11 tragedy. Create a written narrative, Power Point presentation, video presentation, or timeline based on the information your individual shares with you.

Interview Questions - Student Assignment:

Students will interview a person who has a recollection of September 11, 2001. This person could be a parent, grandparent, teacher, etc. Guided questions:

1. How old were you on September 11, 2001?
2. Where were you – town, place, residence?
3. Before the tragedy occurred, what is the first thing you remember about that day?
4. How did you first hear about the tragedy of that day?
5. Tell me what you heard or experienced.

6. What was your initial reaction?
7. After your initial reaction, what did you do next?
8. Was there anyone you phoned/contacted? Why did you choose that person?
Were you able to make contact?
9. Did you have any immediate concerns about your own safety?
10. What feelings or emotions do you remember experiencing on that day or subsequent days?
11. Did you notice any differences in the way strangers treated one another?
12. Did this tragedy change you in anyway? Why or why not?
13. When thinking about September 11, is there anyone you would like to honor?
14. Did this tragedy make you reconnect with someone in your life?
15. Does this timeline invoke any other memories?

Day #2

Student presentations. As students listen to presentations, classmates should take notes about commonalities among testimonies.

1. Class discussion:

- a. List some ways individuals reacted to this tragedy.
- b. Were you surprised by anything you learned in the interview?
- c. Did your individual emotionally react to your questions?
- d. Was there anyone who refused to be interviewed?
- e. How did you feel as the interviewer?

Evidence of Understanding:

Participation, verbal response, completion of interview, completed interview presentation

Extension Activities: Taking Action and Giving Service:

1. Ask an older family member or friend about this event.
 - Why was it so important/tragic for Americans for people all over the globe?
 - Write a letter of thanks after your interview, telling him/her that you appreciate their sharing of this time in their lives and how you reacted to their experience.
 - Choose one service activity to honor your interviewee's help in this project.
2. Identify people who were helpful/important before, during or after 9/11/01
 - What did they do? For what reason were there actions noteworthy?
 - Identify someone in your own life who has been important to you or your family during a time of crisis or need.
3. Draw a timeline of events from 1993 leading up to the destruction of 9/11/2001, the series of events that date, and the events of the following years up to 2010.
 - Include related events in places throughout the world during this time period.
 - Include your own family's events as well (birthdates, work and school, etc).
 - Research changes in safety regulations that have been implemented since 9/11, discuss how they affect your life and whether or not you agree with them.

Interviews:

Dominick

1. Dominick was 64 on September 11, 2001. Prior to retiring from the Port Authority in 1995 he worked in the North Tower on the 72nd floor.
- 2 – 4. He heard about the tragedy from his wife who was visiting their daughter. He was at home and didn't believe it at first. Then he thought it must be a small plane that accidentally flew into the tower. He didn't want to accept what happened.
- 5 – 6. Dominick remained 'glued' to the TV. He immediately thought of the people he worked with and where they were in the building. Kept wondering if they were safe. He was especially concerned about his former boss realizing that he would not leave till everyone else got out. When Dominick worked in the Towers, there had been fire drills. He knew it took 20-30 minutes to get out of the building.
7. He tried calling everyone he knew who still worked in the building but couldn't get through to anyone. When the building collapsed, he cried.
8. He was too upset to contact his own children. His wife called them.
9. Dominick never had concerns about his personal safety because he felt this was an isolated incident.
10. The following days were filled with phone calls trying to get information and then finding out that three or four people with whom he had worked had perished. His former boss was one of them as was a woman with whom he had just worked on a project. He knew that she had young children. Very much later, he thought about the fact that he might have been killed if he had still worked there.
11. Dominick noticed increased hostility toward Muslims.
12. The incident made him feel older. He isn't sure why.
13. The people he knew who he'd like to honor are;
 - Pat Hoey – his boss – his remains were found in the stairwell.
 - Debbie Kaplan – she had 3 young children.
 - There were 3 others he worked with on occasion and he still thinks about them at times.
14. He hasn't reconnected with anyone but did stay connected to some with whom he had worked.
15. Looking at the timeline, Dominick thought these were buildings that would never collapse. He had been an inspector when the Towers were built. Dominick also spoke about a friend of his who did get out. The friend thought everyone had escaped and was shocked to find out that they hadn't.

Kathy

Kathy's initial reaction when she saw the smoke was a surreal feeling, "What is going on?" Then she thought of her husband and how he was going to have to be shipped out again. Her husband is in the reserves. It was not until she was leaving school that she was concerned about her sister who may have been in the city and, in fact, she was. Her sister, thank goodness, was safe and stayed at a friend's place. Kathy remembers a lot of smoke that day and being told to lower the shades. She heard that other people in the building had a view of the towers and saw the planes hit the towers. She did not have a T.V. in her classroom, so she listened to the radio. The whole school was on lock down and no one was allowed to leave. Kathy remembers Amy H., a fellow teacher, getting news of her brother-in-law who was in the towers.

Kathy remembers hearing about Joanne G. getting a phone call from her son, Jeremy, who was on the plane that crashed in Pennsylvania. Then she recalls Joanne getting a phone call from her daughter-in-law and leaving the school.

Channel 12 News had somehow made their way into the school and they were directed to talk to her since she was the history teacher. They were trying to get information from her like a perspective on what was going on. All she could think about was her husband having to be shipped out. They kept insisting that she have an interview, but she told them to go away and speak to someone else.

When she finally left that day and went home, Kathy did not want to watch what was happening on T.V. and instead sat in the backyard. Her kids came home and so did her husband. He kept going inside to see what was on T.V.

The next 4 days at school all the shades were drawn and the students couldn't go outside for lunch. They supplied lunch to the students who did not bring their own. Every day the superintendent would get on the intercom and talk to the students about what was going on. Some of the little children were scared of his voice and cried a lot. Students were not allowed in the school yard for those 4 days. When it was finally announced they were allowed to go out, the older students cheered.

I asked her what she was wearing that day and she told me a black dress with flecks of white and a red belt. Interesting that she remembers what she was wearing.

Brian

The early morning of Tuesday, September 11, 2001 was no different for me than any other work day. It was a beautiful, sunny morning, and I walked from my apartment on 34th Street and 1st Avenue to the 4-5-6 subway entrance on the northwest corner of 33rd and Park. I passed time on the subway ride replaying over and over in my mind the New York Giants' loss to the Denver Broncos the night before on Monday Night Football, completely unaware of the true horrors that awaited me just a few miles south.

I exited the subway train at the Fulton Street Station just a half a block east of Church Street and was immediately frustrated by the crowds of people building on the stairwell to the street. I maneuvered my way up the stairs, and as the darkness of the station gave way to the glorious sunlight of the beautiful late-summer morning, I noticed debris pouring from the sky. It must be a ticker-tape parade, I thought. There is always something to celebrate in New York.

I looked up. One World Trade Center was on fire. Although I was directly across the street from the building, from where I stood the fire looked relatively mild and contained. Sure, over the years I have seen that gaping hole in the building countless times in pictures and videos; but, at that moment, 100 stories in the sky, it looked no bigger than a grease fire. I remember thinking, "I hope no one is hurt."

My office at Oppenheimer Funds, Inc, a retail mutual fund company, was next door on the 32nd floor of Two World Trade Center. Even though the fire in our neighboring building appeared small, my instinct told me not to go up into my office. In fact, I decided to start heading home. It was 9:03 AM. I turned my head from the World Trade Center site, took two steps back from the subways, and then felt the explosion. I never heard the roar of the engine, and I never saw the plane; just a brilliant flash of light. My work home since 1998 was engulfed in flames. The faces started going through my mind. Who was there? Will I ever see my friends and colleagues again?

I made my way east to Broadway and never really looked back. My sole priority was to find a phone (Cell phones were not working) to tell my family I was unharmed. I asked a young lady for a quarter and waited on line to use the nearest pay phone. I called my father's office in midtown...answering machine. "Hi, Dad, it is Brian. Turn on the television. There were multiple explosions at the World Trade Center. I'm fine, but I'm sure I know a lot of people who are not."

I banged on a cab heading north on Broadway. A man was already in the back seat, and he offered to share the cab. I never got his name, and I cannot even picture his face. I don't even know who paid for the cab. All I remember is

seeing more New Yorkers heading south towards the site than were fleeing the area. I was back in my apartment in minutes. Like most of the rest of the world, I actually watched both towers collapse on television.

Fear grew throughout the day. The Pentagon was hit; a plane went down in Pennsylvania. The rumors started flying. More planes were heading towards New York City. We were stuck on an island, literally. The anxiety was palpable as we New Yorkers worked to assist others and keep themselves out of harm's way. I had to get out of town. I couldn't stand the thought of spending the night in New York City. I convinced a friend to drive me home to New Jersey, and after sitting in traffic for hours, we finally crossed the George Washington Bridge into New Jersey just as the (false) news reports were coming out that the bridge was lined with explosives. I finally reached my parents' house and collapsed into a sea of embraces from friends and family. Will life ever be the same again?

Mayor Rudy Guiliani informed us that the loss of life would ultimately be more than any of us could possibly bear. I was fortunate. Every employee from Oppenheimer Funds escaped unscathed. In fact, we were the largest company to occupy either building to have 100% survival. You don't truly know agony until you wait for your closest friends to contact you to let you know that they are alive and well.

Years later, it all feels so surreal. You never expect to be a witness to history, The fear has subsided, but the pain remains. So many young lives lost.

Amina

Amina was 19 at the time of the September 11 attack so she was a student at Rutgers University. She heard about the attack when she was in a child psychology class. No memories of the day before ... "It was just another day." Someone walked into the class and handed a note to the professor who then dismissed class. Amina walked to the student center. The campus was unusually quiet...people were in shock. As a Muslim, Amina was concerned that "this was going to be one of those things that associate terrorism with Islam." There were counselors around to help students. She called her parents. After a few days, there was a growing sense of mistrust, and different cliques started to form. People seemed to be less tolerant and generalize the group (Muslims). "So much ignorance."

Amina became frustrated with some of the media and the bias in the media. Islam is against violence and that was being ignored. Strangers seemed to be more negative towards Muslims. A few days after the interview, Amina related that friends mentioned cars of Muslim students being vandalized.

John

Just passed my 51st birthday. I was on a Continental flight from Newark to Denver. The United SF flight was just in front of us. It was a beautiful day to fly. As we took off, we flew directly over the WTC. The pilot came on the speaker and noted that one of the Towers was on fire. As I looked out, I could see a major fire in one of the Towers; the other Tower was untouched. Therefore, I flew directly over the WTC in between the 12 minutes (I think it was 12 minutes) between the first and second strikes. It looked pretty bad, and so I said a prayer for anyone that might be hurt.

The day was clear, bright and crisp. I was thinking about my business meeting in Denver. We were in flight for about an hour when the plane suddenly started to descend. I was seated next to an elderly grandmother who asked what was going on. I told her the plane was descending and that was not a good thing, but not to worry. Then the pilot announced that due to severe wind shear in Denver the flight was being diverted to Cleveland. At this point I knew something was seriously wrong as 1) the weather in Denver was perfect and 2) wind shear is a sporadic event. The plane would have made its way to Denver and then diverted if a severe wind shear alert was in effect and we would have diverted to any number of large airports near Denver (e.g., Colorado Springs). The plane then landed and I noted that this was not Cleveland. I did not recognize the airport.

Once landed, it seemed like fifty cell phones began to ring and a number of people said NYC was under attack;

another guy said the Sears Tower in Chicago was attacked as well as the White House in DC. I tried to call home on my cell phone, but was unable to secure a line. The pilot then came on the speaker and announced that there was an emergency (he did not say what sort of emergency), and that we should get our belongings and exit the plane quickly and silently. He also noted that we had just landed at Youngstown, Ohio. At that point, I figured flying was probably not going to happen, and called the President's Club of Avis in Youngstown. Incredibly, I 1) got through, and 2) they said they had one compact car left.

As we exited the plane and made our way to the terminal, I continued to call home and my sons in NYC (both of whom worked next to the WTC). I could not get through. The terminal was in chaos with large lines waiting for rental cars. Many people were crying and I started to put together an attack on NYC, Washington, DC, and Chicago. I tried to call my sons, but could not get through. I made it to the front of the Avis line and told them I had a reservation. The counter person looked relieved and said "Thank God, at least now I can tell them all that there are no more cars." I figured we could fit five in the compact car, albeit a tight squeeze. I looked around at several hundred people and announced I was going to Northern New Jersey, would anyone like to come with me? They rushed at me, and I remember feeling in danger and at the same time sorry that they were all stranded. I picked a pregnant lady (who turns out was from Denville) and then closed my eyes and pointed and said "you and you". It was two businessmen, one of whom had already found out that his partner was killed in the WTC attacks.

On the way from Youngstown to NJ, I finally got through to my wife, Janet, who said both of our sons, John and Tom, were fine although John was quite shaken up. I then was able to get through to John and Tom directly as well as our daughter, Betsy, who was in Boston. John related that he was on the street just below the WTC when the attacks occurred. He could not get back into his office building and was directed by police toward the Hudson River and then told to walk north. He related that as he was walking he was "bombarded" by falling bodies, those who chose to leap rather than burn. One of the bodies almost hit him directly, and he was splattered with blood on his face and white shirt. The trip home took about seven hours; we took turns driving. The news reports were coming in and we all got a clear picture of what had happened. There were periods of tears from the pregnant lady and the man who lost his partner. I dropped the two men off in Parsippany where their loved ones had been waiting and then dropped the pregnant lady at her house where her whole family came out and hugged her and then me. It was very emotional.

I never had any immediate concerns for my own safety (but felt a) combination of rage and thankfulness. Rage at the idea that someone would hurt innocent people on such a grand scale, and thankfulness that my sons were not hurt. I picked John and Tom up at the Morristown train station the next day. John was still wearing his blood stained shirt, and I thought he was hurt. He still looked dazed and explained where the blood came from; Tom was fine.

At the airport, I saw the best and worst of human behavior. On the one hand I saw people pulling together in kindness to try and make some sense out of what to do next, and, on the other hand, I saw people yelling and screaming at counter people who were just trying to do their jobs and people pushing and shoving others out of their way as they forced themselves to the front of the line. I stopped one rather swarthy "gentleman" from basically body blocking a woman who was in line for a car.

Profoundly, I think about 9/11 every day, and how lucky I was to have my family intact; that it was not my plane that was hijacked. To this day, I look at all passengers on the flights I take, and pick out the most likely terrorists. I am prepared to take action, and help the flight marshals. I will not go down without a fight like they did in NYC and DC. I think Mayor Giuliani showed extraordinary leadership in a very difficult situation. Our family has always been very close, but the bond from 9/11 brought us together even closer.

Roger

Tuesday morning started out unremarkably. I took my usual 5:10 a.m. bus from the Park & Ride in East Stroudsburg, arriving at North Bridge on the West Side Highway around 6:35 a.m. I remember it being a perfect weather day; almost no clouds and the temperature was in the 70's. I walked under North Bridge (which connects The World Trade Center to The World Financial Center) and entered Tower 1. After passing the security checkpoint, I took an elevator to the 35th floor. The elevator service was shut off to the 34th because of the construction, so you had to go to 35 and walk down one flight.

I was on the floor by 6:45am and sat down with a few of the guys that had already arrived. The conversations were pretty much about the usual topics; ball scores, girls, stupid things the other trades were doing. I wasn't very excited about the work ahead that day. Monday I had been doing tops with L.A. Ray and was not looking forward to more of the same. "Tops" is the sheet rocking of walls above the ceiling line. You have to work on a scaffold up close to all the pipes and ductwork. It's dirty, tedious work and most of us don't like it, but like many things in life, someone has to do it.

I've enjoyed working in Manhattan for the last three years and had been working, on and off, in Tower 1 of the Trade Center for the last two years. I did three floors for Lehman Bros. and a bank branch for Chase last year, a small office on the 84th floor for Temonos USA and had just started working on the 34th floor for Lehman Brothers the week before the 11th. I also had done a lot of work in the surrounding buildings; 1 Liberty Plaza, 195 Broadway (which is attached to the Millennium Hotel), World Financial Center 2 & 3, and the Winter Garden.

At 8:46 a.m. I was standing on the north side of the floor facing west when the first plane hit. We were all knocked off our feet, not really knocked all the way down, but almost as if you had lost your balance and caught yourself with one hand. Thinking back, I recall that I heard the roar of the plane engines a split second before impact. The impact moved the building almost two feet. I was on the 34th floor, so you can imagine how far it must have moved on the highest floors. If you have ever heard a car accident, it was very similar, only deeper. The first deep thud was quickly followed by a bone shaking, "BOOM!" A few seconds later, there was a small explosion in the center north/south corridor. Debris shot out into the main area. Somebody shouted, "Those bastards. They did it again!!" Most of the guys ran for the stairwells. Our company had about 15 carpenters on the floor and the electricians had about 20 men. Looking outside, I saw a blizzard of glass, bits of steel and paper. I'll never forget the incredible amount of office paperwork that was just swirling around outside. You could hear the tinkling of broken glass. I walked around to the east side and met up with Timmy (the foreman) and Tattooed Pattie. The three of us went into the east/west corridor yelling, "Is anybody hurt!" "Is anybody down!" The corridor was thick with dust and it was difficult to see. Timmy was very distressed because he had sent a few men to work in the corridor and we could not find them.

We cautiously approached the intersection of the east/west and north/south corridor. I looked south and saw that about ten feet of wall was missing next to an open shaft. A few weeks later, Richie S. told me that he was working on a ladder right next to that wall. The plane impact had knocked him off the ladder and as he was starting to get up, the wall exploded towards him, and then got sucked into the shaft along with his ladder. Someone picked him up and practically threw him into the "B" stairwell. He's still not sure who that was but was glad to be out of there.

Next to the now exposed shaft, a broken sprinkler main had cracked and was spraying water. I again yelled, "Is there anybody down in here!" There was no response so I headed north out of the corridor. I approached Timmy and said that maybe we should throw the tools in the gang box. In my mind, I thought we would probably be back in the building in a week or so. I grabbed a TrackFast gun that was hanging on a ladder as we walked around the east side to the south side where the gang boxes were. I tried calling my wife, Annette, on my cell phone but could not get a connection. I knew she didn't watch TV during the day, but I wanted to get a hold of her before she found out. I later learned that my brother Charlie had called her from New Hampshire. She was watching before the second tower was hit.

I threw my tools in the gang box along with the TrackFast, and then went to look out the windows on the south side of the floor. The Marriott Hotel's rooftop was about 10 floors below us. There were dozens of little fires on the roof and in the plaza below. There also was a women's body on the roof. Timmy and Pat were standing on the east side. Tim was trying to get a call out on his cell. As I started to walk over to them, I saw Jimmy, the electrician's sub-foreman, walking towards me from the west side. He had two of his men with him. "Jimmy, you got your guys out?" "Yeah, I think they're all gone."

As I approached Timmy, Pat was coming over from looking out the east side windows. He said, "Oh my God, I just saw a body go by." I looked out the east side, into the main plaza and saw many more small fires and debris everywhere. The tinkling of glass was subsiding but the blizzard of papers continued unabated. Hundreds of people were standing across Church Street, and I thought they had better move or there's going to be a lot more people hurt. All six of us were standing on the east side now. The "C" stairwell was only twenty feet from us and I could see it was packed with people. Jimmy was trying to make a call on his cell, without much luck and I tried once again to reach Annette. My cell phone beeped to signal that I had a voice message. I said out loud "Well, she knows now." I got a pit in my stomach because I knew that Annette would be very distressed and I wasn't able to talk to her yet. We were reasonably sure everyone was off the floor, so we headed for the stairs. I remember looking north up the floor and saw the new \$3,500 laser on its stand still running. I thought there goes those batteries, but I'm not going to worry about it now.

The stairwell was crowded, but orderly. It took us almost a half hour to get down but everyone, for the most part, stayed calm and kept moving down. As we were walking down, we heard that an airplane had hit the building. Somewhere around the 20th floor, injured people started passing us. As someone got close, you would hear people call out "Injured people! Move to the right!" and everyone would stop and make an aisle so they could quickly pass by. About a half dozen people passed us that had been flash burned from head to toe. Many had their skin draped on their arms and legs. They looked like they had been spray-painted. Their hair, skin and clothes were all the same shade of dark gray. Below 20, we started passing firemen on their way up. We were all amazed at the amount of equipment they were carrying, air tanks, hoses, axes, etc., fifty to sixty pounds of equipment per man being carried up from the street. There wasn't any smoke in the stairwell, but the air was getting more acrid as we got to the lower floors. I remember that my eyes were stinging a little, making me blink a lot. We were using our shirts to breathe through. Many people were pouring water on their shirts and blouses and breathing through that.

The second plane hit Tower 2 while I was in the stairwell. Talking with some of the guys after, most felt the second impact, but a few of us, including me, did not. I recall looking at my watch at 9:01 and the 2nd hit was only a few minutes later, but I don't remember feeling anything. We saw an officer directing people to keep moving. His voice was urgent, but calm as he was saying that there was water on the stairs lower down, but don't worry, it was safe and we would be able to get out. He told us to please keep moving. I saw him come up the stairs several times. He must have been circling down another stairwell, as I never saw him going down, only up. In the weeks following that day, I've thought a lot about those firemen. Many couldn't have been much older than 20. I'm sure we passed at least two-dozen men as they made their way up. I did get a moment of hope a week later. Monday, the 17th, the day the Stock Market re-opened, the news included a story about Officer Lim. He was a canine officer who lost his partner, a German Shepard, in the collapse of Tower 1. He was the last officer to be pulled out alive having been buried in the rubble for almost four hours. I recognized him as that calm policeman in the stairwell that had kept us moving toward safety.

When we got down to 5, water from broken sprinkler heads was coming out from the office spaces. By the time we reached the 2nd floor, it was cascading down like small waterfalls. We exited the stairs on the 2nd floor, which was on the plaza level, so you could see outside. Right outside the closest revolving door was a burning body and I could still see small pieces of debris falling all over the Plaza. One of the security guards was directing us to go down one more level to the concourse, where all the elevators are. The concourse had at least an inch of water on the floor. All

of the revolving doors that exit into the shopping mall were broken. I looked back at the elevators and most were blown out from the cars that had fallen. Two-inch thick marble was buckled like it was paper. I remember wondering if anyone was in the elevators because they couldn't possibly have survived. Information signs were dangling, most windows were broken, and there was glass everywhere. I couldn't believe that there was so much damage at that level, considering the relatively small amount that was on the 34th floor.

We entered the concourse shopping mall and dashed under broken sprinkler heads. We walked past the escalators for the PATH trains, past Godiva Chocolate and Sabaro's Pizza and headed for the escalators near the east side of building 5. As we walked up the escalator, we were relieved to find the two guys who had been working in the center corridor. One had a cut on his hand, but otherwise was okay. When we got to the doors, more security people were telling us to stay under the overhang. There was a lot of debris around but it was clear next to the building. Once outside, we started to cross Church Street and I looked back at the Towers. There was a hole on the north face of Tower 1, two or three stories high and a hundred feet wide. There were fires on a few floors and I saw some broken windows and a small fire in Tower 2. At that point, I didn't know that Tower 2 had also been struck. It looked like a wing of the airplane that hit Tower 1 had flown across making a large gash in Tower 2 and igniting a small fire. I never thought for a moment that the towers would come down.

We crossed Church Street and started up Fulton Street towards Broadway. We met up with the guys that were working at 195 Broadway. They had watched the second plane hit Tower 2. After hugs and "Glad to see-ya's", the police told us that we had to keep moving out of the area. Nothing was running downtown. No buses and all subways were stopped, so we just started walking up Broadway. For the first ten blocks or so, we were walking in the street. Almost all of us have cell phones and were trying to call home.

Around 10:15am, Eddie got through to his wife and she took the phone numbers of everyone in our group. She got a hold of Annette about 10 minutes before Tower #1 fell, so Annette knew I was out of the building, but she didn't know how far away I was.

About 15 blocks north, we saw the billowing clouds coming up Broadway. We thought that the terrorists had blown up the Stock Exchange because, from our vantage point, that's where the smoke seemed to be coming from. When we got to Houston Street, we split up. Most of the guys live over in Brooklyn or out on Long Island, so they were going to try to walk over the Brooklyn Bridge. Cops said all bridges and tunnels were closed, but thought that they were allowing pedestrians to cross.

I was trying to get to New Jersey, Charlie was heading up to his girlfriend's apartment in the 80's, Timmy was going to try to get to his brother's up in the 110's and Jerry wasn't quite sure where he was going to cross the East River, but decided to stay with us. As we continued north, fire trucks, police cars, EMS, ambulances and FBI zoomed passed us with sirens blaring and lights flashing.

About 20 blocks north, we saw a bar on a side street and decided to ask to use the bathroom. The bar was closed but the guy said that we could come in. He had the TV on and that's when we found out that both Towers had fallen and that the Pentagon had been hit and that there were still 8 airplanes unaccounted for. I saw a phone on the wall and asked if I could use the phone since our cell phones weren't working. He said that phone was dead. The bathrooms were downstairs and next to them was a pay phone. I picked it up and got a dial tone, so I tried calling home. It took about five minutes to get through but finally I was able to talk to Annette. Up to that point, I had been fine emotionally, but when I heard Annette's voice, I choked up and couldn't speak. I knew I had to say something so that Annette would know I was okay. It was only a few seconds, but it seemed like minutes before I could force myself to say, "I'm okay." I let her know that I was fine, many blocks away and in no danger. I told her to charge up her cell phone, as I might need her to come and get me if I could figure out how to get out of the city. If I could get to New Jersey, I would let her know where to pick me up.

As we were watching TV, a man came in and said we needed to leave the building. He was in charge of an office on the fifth floor of the building. He said he worked for the Israeli Intelligence and felt it would be wise to evacuate. After a few more minutes of watching TV, we thanked the bartender for the use of the bathrooms and phone. He locked the front doors after us as we left. As we weren't far from the Williamsburg Bridge, Jerry decided to try for that. We wished him luck and continued north.

100's of 1,000's of people were walking north out of lower Manhattan. Some buses were passing us, but they were so packed that we felt safer to just stay on foot. We kept shifting avenues to the east to get away from the crowd, but it didn't make much difference, every street was packed. As we got within sight of the Empire State Building, we went further east. We didn't want to be near any more landmarks.

Sometime after 11:00am, we had made it up to 38th and 3rd Avenue. Charlie and Timmy decided they really could use a beer so we stopped at another bar. We each had a couple of beers and watched the news with a few hundred people (the place was packed). While we were watching TV, an older gentleman with a cane came in to get a beer. As you might expect, the conversation came around to the fact that we were in the towers. Jim said he was on the 69th floor and saw the plane coming right at him. At the last moment it veered up and hit some 15 floors above him. Jim worked for the Port Authority and was there in 1993. He commented that the building shook much worse than the bombing in 1993.

After about 45 minutes, I told Charlie and Timmy that I was going to go over to the Bus Terminal. Even though we had heard it was closed, I wanted to get whatever info I could on getting over the Hudson River. I was really hoping that I wouldn't have to walk all the way to the George Washington Bridge. Jim was also trying to get to New Jersey and I could tell that he really didn't want to be alone. Charlie offered a bed at his girlfriend's apartment if I couldn't get out of Manhattan, so I got all of Charlie's info (address, phone numbers, etc.) and Jim and I headed west and Timmy and Charlie continued north.

Jim and I made our way over to the Port Authority Bus Terminal at 40th and 8th Avenue. The Port was closed up tight. I told Jim to sit tight for a minute and I would go and ask the cops what was going on. The cop outside said that the Port would not be opening anytime soon. I don't think it opened for two days. The police did tell us that the ferries were operating, so we continued west. We walked past the entrance to the north tube of the Lincoln Tunnel. Two city buses had been parked in the entrance and a dozen cops were guarding it.

The NY Waterway Ferry dock is at 40th and 12th Ave., also known as the West side Highway. We were told that the end of the line was "That way" (south). We walked down to 36th before we found the end of the line and joined it. We continued south to 31st before the line turned north. We could see the ruins of the towers burning as we were waiting. Pairs of F-18's flew over us all afternoon. The FBI was guarding the 30th Street heliport in full battle gear (helmets, vests and machineguns). The line went north to 42nd Street, turned south to 38th, back north to 42nd, then finally to the dock at 40th. I was on line 2 1/2 hours. On line we met a few of Jim's friends and co-workers, and made a few new friends. Several times employees of the ferry company approached us. They were taking pregnant women and people with disabilities right up to the ferry. Since Jim was walking with a cane, they offered to take him to the front. Jim refused to cut the line. "I've been with these people all afternoon, and I'm staying with them!" One man in our group said, "If I'm pregnant, can I go?" The response: "If you're pregnant, I'll take you to Ripley's!"

On the ferry, I got separated from Jim. I went to the upper deck and Jim stayed downstairs. The sun was still shining bright and I ended up with sunburn. The ferry headed south down the Hudson to Hoboken. As we neared the ferry dock, the boat engines stopped with a loud cluck. A woman next to me glanced around nervously. When she looked at me, she seemed a little embarrassed. She said, "I guess I'm just a bit jumpy". I could see that all of the slips were full with boats, so I told her we would just have to wait our turn. As we bobbed around in the river, we were only a mile or so from ground zero and just about everyone on the boat couldn't take their eyes off of it. The smoke just

kept billowing up, covering most of lower Manhattan. After 10 minutes or so, we approached the dock and the captain announced over the public address that the police requested anyone that was within 10 blocks of the Trade Center should disembark first, and everyone else please stay on board.

The ferry probably had 1000 people on it and about 50 of us got off first. We were led through the ferry terminal to a garage area where the local fire department had set up a decontamination area. There was a concern of asbestos contamination and they wanted to hose off all the dust. I met up with Jim again as we were walking. We were allowed to put our cell phones and other electronics into plastic bags, and then walked between two firemen with hoses to hose off our shoes. I still had on my work boots and they were covered with sheetrock dust, so I knew they would want to really soak them. Next we went through a tent that had two more firemen with water wands and they sprayed us from head to toe. Jim went through first, held his arms straight out, leaned his head back and slowly turned around. "Ahhh, How refreshing!!" The firemen laughed, "Another satisfied customer!" The next woman through was complaining that she had a designer dress on. When they sprayed her, she started swearing like a sailor on a Saturday night. Then I went through. It was cold!

Luckily it was quite warm outside. They had towels for us to dry off with and cups of water to drink. We were moved along to another open area where doctors did a quick checkup. I was asked where I had been, did I have any trouble breathing and did I have any injuries? He had a stethoscope and listened as I took some deep breaths. I was cleared in a few minutes and headed off to find a train to Dover. My brother-in-law Paul lives right near Dover, so I knew he could pick me up.

The train pulled out of Hoboken about 20 minutes behind schedule at 4:15pm. I looked back at the Manhattan skyline and still couldn't believe the towers were gone. They must just be behind that plume of smoke. At some of the train stops, I saw EMS personnel and a few cops on the platform. I guessed they were there to help anyone that might need it. Some towns had no one, and some, like Summit, had dozens. I later heard on the news that Summit, a town of about 10,000, had lost at least 20 of its residents in the collapse. When we pulled into Morristown, I called Paul to let him know I would be arriving in Dover in 20 minutes or so.

When we pulled into Dover, the entire police department must have been there. 30 to 40 police, firemen and EMS were on the platform. As I walked down the platform, a police detective showed me his badge and asked if I was coming from New York. I said, "Yes, I was in the Towers." He seemed to be caught off guard. I think he'd been asking that question all afternoon and I was one of the few that answered yes. He asked if it would be all right to take some information from me. He took my name, address, phone number and social security number. He wanted to know where I was when it happened, if I had any injuries and if any other officials had talked to me. Finally he asked if there was anything he could do for me. I thanked him but said, "No, my brother-in-law is in the parking lot somewhere and would be taking me home."

Paul met me with a "Holy s---t! Some day, huh." Annette had left East Stroudsburg for Paul's an hour earlier but was delayed because of a bomb scare at the Delaware Water Gap Bridge. She was detoured through Portland and picked me up at his house 45 minutes later. I finally made it home around 8:00pm. When I walked in the house, my son, Daniel, greeted me with his usual, "So Dad, how was your day?"