

## Video Transcript

### Steve's Story

I am Steve. I hit 65 in August. I left school at 18. College was not an option.

I got a job in BP Oil and Stat Oil it merged into, I began as a training accountant. I went to night school in the College of Commerce in Rathmines. I gave up accountancy after three years. I got a job in DP in BP, which is the early IT department.

I rode that wave ever since until I had retired, early, albeit after 40 years at work. When I retired early, it was like a tapping, being switched off. I was in bereavement, in effect, I was mourning a life lost. I was aware, even though I was in my, I was hitting 60, I was aware that through actuarial prudence, I could have a third of my life left. I wasn't prepared to, to spend that, spend all those years at home on the couch, just with the paper and the dog and the, and the snooker on the tv. I needed some stimulation, some, some life. So I once heard about the concept of a AFU and the practice of AFU was hooked immediately.

I love the fact that I could, I would go on, on a life long learning journey where I could learn about things that I loved. I was interested in. I did three modules in DCU proper. I did Jazz History, I did Emergence of America. I did memoir, it, its writing, its creative writing. Its memoir writing as part of AFU. But jazz history was something I loved because music was always a therapy to me, and jazz was a part of that. So I loved that. I was putting, I was able to go home a month later to organize all my music in order, in the right order of the emergence of jazz. I was fantastic.

I'll quote John B Keane here: All my gray hairs are like my sergeant stripes. I've been around the block. I've been through life. I've tales to tell, I've experience to pass on. I've wisdom to pass on.

I can mentor, uh, I'm respected if you embrace the campus experience and you're open to engagement and open to friendship, the doors of socialization and friendship open, and I have never found it awkward at all with, with, as I call 'em kids, but they're not kids. They're adults. But I call the 17/18 year-old kids. They're brilliant. They just energize me. But I'm also of interest to them too, a small example. I was in a politics class and they were talking, talking about the emergence of the modern Ireland, and it came up the year of Haughey and the 80's & 80's, and all the troubles. The majority of this class were only ideas in their parents' minds at this stage. But I had lived through it, so I was asked to speak on my experience of, of the era. People couldn't believe the tales I was telling them.

The campus experience has to be embraced. Like my, my day would include going to a module, going to a course, but also around that is the commute to DCU, is perhaps coffee on campus, perhaps a lunch on campus, and you meet people out on the campus ground, blah, blah, blah. You

meet and you engage with them. And if you're open to that engagement, it's empowering. It's enriching. It's great.