

Beating the odds is always a great feeling. At the age of 23, while she was sailing the South Pacific, Ashcraft was caught in a violent hurricane. Determined to survive, Ashcraft created a sail from scraps of material and charted a path to Hawaii, which was 1,500 miles (2,400 kilometers) away. Having lost 40 pounds (18 kilograms) during her ordeal, Ashcraft was thin and haggard when she arrived. Just ask anyone who has been accepted to a selective college, or unexpectedly won an athletic event. Tami Oldham Ashcraft knows this feeling. The 50-foot (15-meter) waves overturned her boat. When she awoke 27 hours later, the boat had turned right side up again, but the storm had been so violent that the sails were destroyed, the motor was dead, and the radio was lost. Only the rudder, which steers the ship, was intact. Ashcraft, who still sails, eventually told her tale of survival in a book called *Red Sky in Mourning*. Ashcraft was badly injured and disoriented. Traveling only two miles an hour, Ashcraft reached her destination 41 days later. But beating the odds is never quite as exhilarating an experience as when the odds are against your survival. Ashcraft, who was below deck, was knocked unconscious. However, she was happy and grateful to have beaten the odds. 9