



7 Steps to Surviving *and* Thriving

*How I
Overcame
Terror*

AGUSTINA THORGILSSON

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Free eBook

***7 Steps to Surviving and Thriving:
How I Overcame Terror***

**Adapted from Agustina Thorgilsson's book
The Power of Slow Living**

7 Steps to Surviving and Thriving

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Foreword

Women have always kept families and communities together. They have been the ones moving culture forward and instigating cultural change, for example from hunter gatherers to agricultural civilisation. They are the ones that keep communities functioning in wartime, they are the shapers of civilizations.

But all this quietly and unobtrusively. Now is the time for women to step up to the plate and become as influential and visible as men. Women have always had the influence, now is the time to become accepted.

This means empowering women worldwide, facilitating gender equality and stopping suppression of women. By doing this we allow for the equality of all people that are oppressed in our society worldwide.

In my work I follow my heart. I believe in the lessons as I have learned them through my own personal experience. I'm happy if some people like them, but also accept that some do not. I'm not promising a rose garden. This is how I managed to go through a particular life lesson and what I learned from it, and maybe you can too. There are no quick fixes and it is a process to move through. To find peace in life takes hard work and time.

7 Steps to Surviving and Thriving

Introduction

The reason I wrote this book is to show you how easy it is to reconnect with your strength and overcome the trials and tribulations that life sometimes seems to have in abundance. My own life experience has shown me that whatever life throws at me is something to be cherished and be grateful for because it shapes and polishes the diamond within. You will realise how the strength of your diamond will increase and you will enjoy your life even more due to the experiences it offers.

Think of it like this: Every trial is a gift and an opportunity to excel and exceed beyond what you thought you could ever become! When you have reached that place there is nothing that can make you so fearful that you stop in your life process, but instead you will be confident and know that you get to your destination.

There's one thing we all need to remember and that is what we were born with. We were born with the right to be ourselves and with a free will. Both are easy to give up if we are convinced to do so, both are impossible to take away from us when we realise how important they are to our life and how both help us to become who we really are. What I'm going to share with you is a small glimpse into my own life at a time when I was threatened with being killed by the love of my life.

We had been married for almost a decade and had been in a relationship for several years prior to that. He was a very intelligent and fun person to be with and we had a good life. But there were shadows in this beautiful life that I did not notice, or chose not to. He enjoyed his drink and through his work he got a lot of medication for his patients and frequently tried it on himself. In reality he was addicted to prescription drugs and was an alcoholic as well.

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Not being one to give up I tried to make things as pleasant as possible in spite of the incidents that frequently occurred after his bouts of drinking. This could be an embarrassing situation in a restaurant or when invited to friends. I also made the mistake of calling his employer to report him ill when in fact he was witless with alcohol. So I lied for him and excused him a lot. He also blamed me for his drinking and unfortunately I did not protest much as I lost most arguments.

In the end I just gave up after an emotional and physical collapse as I realised that this would never change. I filed for a divorce and with a broken heart I left our home and found another place to live. That was when the nightmare started for real.

Please bear in mind when you read this, that legal and cultural norms can be very varied in different countries and what works in one country does not necessarily do so in another. Therefore it is vital to always bear in mind what is legally allowed, so you do not create even worse problems for yourself when breaking the chains. Think of it this way; like water, you can always find ways around the situation. Remember to focus and calmly take one step at a time, but prepare for each step. If you are in a situation of fighting for your life, switch on the autopilot, if you have prepared yourself. If you have not had an opportunity to prepare, do not focus on your fear, but focus on getting out of the danger. Imagine that you have a child by your side who is dependent on you for its survival. By focusing on the child, the fear has a lesser chance to overwhelm you.

1. Step into victory:

Don't allow yourself to be terrorised

He tried as much as he could to stay in touch by visiting me, calling me, hanging around my workplace and the places I frequented. This freaked out my colleagues, friends and neighbours. It would freak me out as well if I had not learned to adapt to a tough situation by constantly listening to my own thoughts with a positive attitude. That way I could hear when they started to lean towards negativity or fear and I could change them or stop them when they started to get out of control.

By understanding the landscape of my mind and when my thoughts were moving towards an unwanted mindset I started to guide my mind toward positive and empowering thoughts. 'It's not up to him to affect my life or steer it'; 'my life is in my hands'; 'no one can dictate how I live my life'; 'I'm a free human being and no one can take that freedom away from me'; 'a sick person has his demons to deal with, but they are not my problem'; 'it's sad to see him destroying his life, but it is not my problem'.

I was not terrorized as I stayed neutral as an onlooker on my own life. I stayed calm and composed and used repeatedly the same replies to his advances like a record stuck in a groove.

The above description is about my experience of being terrorised and how I got through it. Following are the steps and the mind-set I used to overcome this situation. These are the steps that you can apply in your life right now:

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1. Listen to your thoughts constantly and you will soon notice when they start to lean into negativity and fear (more on walking with yourself in my book “The Power of Slow Living”).
 - a. Stop the negative thoughts by putting them into neutrality (more on that in mybook “The Power of Slow Living”).
 - b. Start the positive self-talk: ‘the more effort he puts into making me scared, the stronger I get as this is an indication of his imbalance and that will topple him’.
 - c. Make a list of the resources you have to help you. Phone numbers for the police, friends, neighbours, the media, anything that can distract him and make him vulnerable.
2. Keep a calm mind-set and stay serene by
 - a. Staying in neutrality (see my book “The Power of Slow Living”).
 - b. Look at the situation from afar, a bit like looking at a movie.
 - c. Repeat a simple sentence; when he tried to speak to me and get me back, my answers were always the same like a record stuck in a groove.
 - d. Just think about a simple sentence and keep repeating it over and over again; like “I have no opinion on that”, “I’m moving on”, “I have a future” and “I’m at peace”.

2. Step into victory

Keep your wits about you

When none of his efforts paid off his intent just grew stronger and he was determined to get me back into his life and “stop this nonsense”. At first the talk was about how much he missed me; then how could I do this to him; then about how I was ruining his life and then how he could not go on living because of me. And as he saw no point of living then I had no right to have a life if he could not have a life. So he said he wanted to die and that he would make sure that I would too.

This got me seriously upset and I went to the police to ask for help. They said they could not help me as there was no proof of his intent. When I pointed out that I had several witnesses, the police told me that they were useless as they were either close family members, friends or close colleagues. Their testimony could not be used in court. To give in at this point was no option. What could I do to give them the proof they wanted? Once, when he called, I turned my answering machine on, recording just on an impulse, and that was the proof the police accepted.

I kept my wits about me and came across a solution that worked. And again I kept my cool and allowed him to say his piece, so that I had all the evidence the police needed.

In this description I show how staying cool helped me to keep my wits about me. Immediately I realised that I had to stay on top of the situation and not allow his terrorising tactics to shake me. This is what I learnt from my experience and what you could apply to your situation:

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1. Make sure that you always stay in control of the situation.
 - a. Look at it as a chess board. A good chess player is several moves ahead in his mind.
 - b. This is not a game, but the opponent is making it one, so use to your advantage the game he thinks he is playing with your life.
 - c. Make sure that he cannot foresee your move, knock the strength out of his plans by your moves.
 - d. Do not allow your emotions get in the way - you will be less likely to stand your ground.
 - e. Remember that an opponent that feels he needs physical strength is lacking in intelligence and emotional strength, so use to your advantage.
2. Keep reminding yourself of your free will and your right to be who you are.
 - a. No one can take away from you your birth right of being a free individual.
 - b. When people around you are not in on what is happening, update them and preferably listen to what they need exactly in order to be able to help you.
 - c. If he succeeds in getting in touch with you remember:
 - i. Do not be dragged into his arguments (however hurtful they may be).
 - ii. Do not react to his degrading remarks. He is showing his true nature and you do not need to go down to the same level.
 - iii. Do not fall (again) for the sweet talk or promises. You have been there and done that.

3. Step into victory

Stay vigilant

What he did next I have no knowledge about, until I heard that he had disappeared and that Interpol was looking for him. At that moment the police gave me protection and had me move over to a friend's house. For three weeks they drove me to and from work in disguise and then I was not allowed to leave my friend's house. In a sense I was the one in prison, but I understood it was for my own protection and accepted the help with gratitude.

During this period it would have been so easy to allow fear to take over and to give up, but my mantra was that "I'm protected in the light and that I will get through this unharmed". I reminded myself of how ill he was and of all the protection I felt I had. But all protection depends on how vigilant I was and that I stayed "street wise" in all situations and never accepted anyone else's word for what was safe and what was not. This had to do with me not answering the phone at work; avoiding my co-workers' visitors in the office; not going anywhere inside the building where I could be seen from outside.

What kept me going was to focus on each place I was in and try to "outsmart" any potential threat, and plan what to do in the worst scenario. This practice empowered me and suddenly I no longer felt a victim, but a person who could take her life into her own hands and lift it out of the trap of the victim mindset.

Next I will describe how I stayed in my own mindset and did not allow the sick person to drag me into his. The steps below show how I went through this, what I learnt from it, and what you might be able to apply to your situation:

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1. Help those that are helping you as much as you can by
 - a. Staying street wise, by becoming their eyes and ears and guiding them if you notice something out of order.
 - b. Assessing every space you are in like an airplane where you need to help in an emergency situation.
 - c. Being as cooperative as you possibly can, making yourself someone easy and pleasant to help in the sense that you are not creating more problems for them.
 - d. Making sure that you do not lash out at them if you feel they are not taking you point seriously.
2. Stay calm by
 - a. Meditating.
 - b. Keep saying your mantra of protection, like seeing a ray of light wrapping itself around you and protecting you.
 - c. Reminding yourself of the empowerment of actually taking your life into your own hands and not being dragged down to a sick person's level.

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4. Step into victory

Do not give up

Then the worst nightmare became a reality. He had been stopped at Heathrow Airport in London with a skull in his bag and was detained for a couple of days while the police found out whose skull it was. Apparently it was a skull from the 17th century he had taken from an eroded churchyard and had used it in his medical studies. He was released and a couple of days later he was sighted in Copenhagen Airport in Denmark, just a few hour's drive from my workplace.

The policeman informing me of this on the phone said that he was a long way away and that there was nothing to fear. He believed I hung up on him in anger, but my ex-husband came up on me from behind and broke the line. My colleagues called the police and they sent a special "Viking Force" with guns and rifles. The offices were surrounded and all the people in the building were herded out. I had to lie on the floor under the desk, as the police thought that a gun had been seen. My ex-husband had locked himself in my own office. Fortunately he gave up without anyone getting hurt and was taken away.

When all of this happened my thinking stopped and I went on an "autopilot" and just did what I had planned in such an event. It was not until afterwards that I realised the enormous energy with which I had been bestowed to be able to wrestle him off me.

This next section describes the actual "face down" of the whole ordeal. Due to my mental preparation and me staying on the alert I did cope in the face of danger. What I learnt that afternoon is in the points below. Maybe you could use some of it in your situation.

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1. Remember to work with those that are helping you by
 - a. Not getting upset if they are not on the same page, i.e. the policeman telling me to relax when danger was imminent.
 - b. Doing the difficult thing, like hiding under a desk in an office after wrestling him off me instead of running out of the building.
2. Staying alert and not losing your mind to emotions by
 - a. Keeping your cool, reminding yourself of your steps you had planned.
 - b. Not allowing fear to take over, reminding yourself that your wellbeing depends on your intellectual presence.

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5. Step into victory

Do not accept blame

The outpouring of compassion and support was what kept me going for some time after that. For me the best thing to do was to immerse myself in my work and try to think as little as possible about what had happened. In a sense I gave it all a rest and put it on ice. Then I started to hear some comments here or there, about how pitiful he was and how his life was ruined and how the incident at the office was my fault as I was “guilty by association”. Most of those comments came from people that had been mutual friends and felt obviously compelled to take sides. Some were also his colleagues that would not accept his alcoholism and felt I surely was the one to blame.

The only thing I could do was to tell myself that I could not be held responsible for another person and what he had done was not of my making. Fortunately I also had a good friend who knew about the whole affair since we had moved there some eight years previously. As to me being “guilty”, it was such an outlandish notion to me, that it was almost laughable. It helped me to shrug off all those comments.

Neutrality was what kept me going and the fact that I knew I was not responsible for another person's actions. It kept me strong and determined not to allow this to break me after everything I had already gone through. It just made me even stronger! The blame was not mine to accept.

This is a description of how all kinds of people come out of the woodwork after something bad has come to light, and how they are full of opinions about things of which they do not have a clue. Do not allow this to take you by surprise as it is the human way, having opinions about everything and anything.

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1. Remember to be grateful for the support and help you are offered
 - a. By showing gratitude you will receive more help.
 - b. Those that are voicing opinions are therefore thinking about your situation and might also become great supporters if you take the time to talk to them.
2. The blame game is one of the easiest in the world and helps people to avoid responsibility, even when speaking on subjects about which they don't have a clue.
 - a. Stay neutral.
 - b. Count up all the things you have overcome in this ordeal.
 - c. Remind yourself how strong you are.
 - d. Stay your own best friend by not blaming yourself.
 - e. Do not echo other people's blame towards you in your head.

6. Step into victory

Keep mindful

When rising like a Phoenix from the ashes of the old life, you need to be aware of occasional flashbacks affecting the new one. Just stay open to whatever might happen there were situation where it affected my job applications, where old friends spread the rumor that I had caused the demise of my ex-husband and so on. One day, several years later, one of our mutual friends came to me to apologize for spreading misinformation. She said she and her husband had seen for themselves how he was and they felt embarrassed because of that, and even more so for believing the misinformation he told them.

I realised that the tide had turned and there were fewer awkward situations resulting from the untruths that had been circulated. But in this situation as in so many others, it never really goes away as there are always people that just can't believe the truth or feel obliged to choose a side. My choice was to move on and be open to the future to which I had been so lucky to get another chance. To get a second chance is like winning the lottery, you cannot take it for granted!

Please remember one thing, if you are not given the opportunity to prove yourself and show the person you are in any situation, then that group of people or company is not the place for you. Why waste time on places and individuals that do not welcome you? In æsense this is one of the signs in life to show you what direction to take and allow life-navigation to show you the way. Be grateful for the signs and the sooner they appear, the better!

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The above description is about the first small and shaky steps into a new life. I had many lessons to learn and not much time to do so. Below are the steps that came out of that learning; you might be able to apply them to your situation:

1. Be prepared to change your plans many times as
 - a. You do not have an overview of everything.
 - b. You need to give yourself time for trial and error periods.
 - c. You need time for your emotions to calm down as they could otherwise blind you.
2. Stay open to all opportunities and then use life-navigation to guide you and use your intuition about what you really want to do with this second chance.
 - a. Be ready to work hard to get there.
 - b. See the opportunities for what they are, not a glossy quick fix.
 - c. Be ready to give it up quickly if it does not work out as you expected (it's better to cut your losses right away and free your resources of time and money).
 - d. Enjoy the journey and enjoy your life!
 - e. See yourself as a serial life artist, the moment you have reached one goal, the next comes into view.

7. Step into victory

Forgive and move on

One of the things that is vital in order to be able to move on is to forgive. Forgive and cut the chains to the situation or person that is holding you back. For most humans it is difficult to forgive as it often feels as if the forgiveness is somehow an acknowledgement that what was done was all right. Believe me, it is not! It's a way for you to free yourself from the dark clouds over that person's head that have nothing to do with you. Try to see that person as a troubled person that you can only feel sorry for. That is one of the easiest ways to forgive and you are taking away from that person the power of hurting you. The same goes for the people that continue the oppression misinformation rather than having a better judgement. They are not worth a second thought or you even noticing them.

In your new life it is very valuable to use the lessons learned from the ordeal and see them as the road signs to a new destination. In the new life it is also valuable to remember what you did not dare to do before and use this opportunity to go for your dreams. Also keep in mind to not allow fear to take over and instead to go for the things you always wanted. Remember that you were protected at that moment and you always are. You only need to ask out loud for our creator to guide you, and follow the road signs.

A life lesson like this does not happen too often and therefore it is important to use the learning experience for the future. By surviving and making the most of your new life you have earned the highest degree in the University of Life. Always be grateful for the help you receive in life, the more thanks you give for the help, the more you will receive.

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This next section is about the release of forgiveness and making yourself free. It's not about taking responsibility for another person's actions in life, but rather about you being the caterpillar that is turning into a butterfly. Take life into your own hands and make it yours! Maybe you could use some of the lessons I learned in doing this:

1. See the aggressor as he really is, a troubled individual for whom you feel only sorrow.
 - a. Avoid the guilt trip.
 - b. Avoid the "what if" game.
 - c. Never accept blame.
2. See yourself as the strong survivor who can move her life into any direction she pleases. Ask yourself:
 - a. How you can learn from your own ordeal.
 - b. How can this new self-knowledge redefine you as a person?
 - c. How can you learn to turn bad experiences into beautiful transforming lessons?

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Benefits

1. Stay strong in the face of adversity (Don't allow yourself to be terrorised)
2. Keep your rational thinking in dangerous moments (Keep your wits about you)
3. Stay streetwise (Stay vigilant)
4. Do bend, but don't break (Do not give up)
5. Never allow others to make you responsible for another person's actions (Do not accept blame)
6. Stop echoes from the past from hindering you (Keep mindful)
7. How to free yourself for good (Forgive and move on)

About the author



Agustina Thorgilsson, an expert in industrial psychology, began her career in 1979 as a consultant for internal affairs, communication and human resources development (HRD) with AB Volvo in Sweden. In 1988 she became the director of the Institute of Management Training, a division set up by the Ministry of Finance servicing all of Iceland's public sector. She later founded a management training company that advised both public and private sectors on strategy, management and HRD issues, before completing a Master's degree in clinical psychology which led to the founding of Life- Navigation in 2005. Agustina's vision is to help make the world a better place by showing people how to transcend even the most difficult life-experiences individuals can possibly encounter and move towards peace as a race. Having herself survived several excruciating life lessons she realised that she had come out on top in spite of all the odds. She had learned to use her intuition, insights, and little used old knowledge known to man. By tapping into this endless reservoir of information, and understanding clinical psychology, the evolution of the Life-Navigation System began. Agustina's successes have shown that Life-Navigation makes an enormous difference.

Contact information: info@life-navigation.com

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About Life-Navigation

Life-Navigation puts participants in touch with their inner self and their purpose in life. It helps people towards a focused life with less stress and increased wellbeing by teaching them how to harness their intuition. The vision is a world where people are in touch with their purpose in life.

More on methods of Life-Navigation is in my website www.lifenavigation.com; in my book “The Power of Slow Living”. Also in my two upcoming books, one on insights and the other on how to get Nature's help to recharge and find inner balance.

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get peace in your own life?**

I can guide you personally
through 1-on-1 Skype sessions

The gain is emotional freedom and
greater strength than ever before,
you learn to roar with pride like a lion

What you will learn is how to:

- stay calm and composed in the face of a threat
- stay on top of the situation and not allow terrorising tactics to shake you
- stay inside your own mind-set and not allow a sick person to drag you into theirs
- use your mental preparation by switching on the “autopilot” when coping in the face of danger
- get released and make yourself free

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**You saved my life and I would not have coped without
your help.**

**People around me notice it, they see it as
a miracle.**

—A former client

What you get at sign-in

Free 15 min. of trial private consulting
through 1-on-1 Skype session

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