

YOUR WORKBOOK

(DIRECTION)

Survive first and then thrive



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DISCLAIMER

"Your Workbook " (Direction) is based on my life journey and experiences and is not provided as a scientific text but as a storybook with lessons that can be very useful in anyone else's journey. It is intended to present ideas that excite and incite your imagination as a work of art that would allow anyone to develop their life skills.

My goal is to provide mentorship and this book is not a substitute for medical, psychological or psychiatric treatment or counselling.

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FOREWORD

If I had to fill a swimming pool with a bucket I could debate the fairness of it or realize my options:

- 1) Whine about it
- 2) Shut up and fill the swimming pool with a bucket
- 3) Fill the swimming pool with a bucket while I whine about it

My adaptation to Canadian life involved choosing option 3. Although it is important to fight unfair situations, it is more important for me to do so in a manner that allows me to survive and then thrive.

Many times, I found myself unable to fully grasp or understand what was going on in my new environment, I remember sometimes feeling completely overwhelmed, angry, frustrated or just giving up. What I discuss in "My Handbook" influenced my life. Looking back I can see that I did not lack desire, drive or ability but the right tactics.

I adapted because I had to and not always because I wanted to. It was necessary to do this if I wanted to **survive first and then thrive**. I learned that what I had to do always took precedence over what I wanted to do and I became skilled at understanding what was relevant and what was important.

I grew up in an African culture that exposed me to the art of story telling as a form of therapy and the use of proverbs and analogies to illustrate and stimulate the imagination. I have used this as an effective tactic in my medical practice. I was often surprised by how unfamiliar my "North American" patients were with this method, but very gratified by how quickly they responded to it. The feedback from these many patients, friends and strangers whom I have shared these experiences with convinced me that a book like this is worth writing.

PROLOGUE

WINNERS & LOSERS

I am told that there are about forty million to one billion sperm cells in every ejaculation, each one of those guys hoping to be the one that wins the favour of a little egg, sitting at the end of what can only be described as a precarious journey, through a very hostile birth canal, designed to separate the strong sperm from the weak. Only less than a hundred make it to the end and then the timing had to be just perfect because fertilization is never guaranteed.

You have been taking care of yourself since you were a 2 celled organism, something told you to leave the fallopian tube and start to implant in the uterus, the same mechanism had you start to replicate cells and create the complex structure you now inhabit. Your very ability to survive and make survival decisions definitely pre-dated your brain.

Possibly 50% of pregnancies are lost with the mother never knowing she was pregnant. The trimesters (every 3 months of pregnancy) all present their unique challenges, each of which you manage to scale some before you even had a brain. With every breath, with every metabolism cycle, you fought to be here realizing that the only thing guaranteed without much effort is death.

Everywhere you turned there was always something trying to kill, you even your mother's immune system could turn against you if you made the mistake of getting close and yet like a cellular ninja you negotiated your way through this battle of survival.

You spent nine months in an aquatic environment, instinctively drawing food from your maternal source before you even had awareness of self. You accomplished one of many critical events by successfully transitioning from an aquatic environment and taking

your first breath at birth. All these amazing things, accomplished without your awareness of any thoughts or conscious sense of your existence.

You negotiate your way through the early hours, mostly blind and deaf and yet you instinctively know to reach for the nourishment of your mother's milk. While in the womb, you have developed unique systems designed to help you survive the rocky road on the outside.

There are so many things out of your control, like what environment you end up in, whether you are surrounded by factors that will enhance your survival and yet you do not focus on this, but simply focus on surviving the next sixty seconds to the next minute, the next sixty minutes to the next hour, the next twenty four hours to the next day, the next seven days to the next week and the next fifty two weeks to the next year and as you maintain your focus you continue to grow, you continue to adapt and you continue to learn. You continue to live and to survive.

You had survived some of the biggest threats to your very existence long before you even knew you were here, all around you, at every stage, countless perils on your way. The lottery of life is the biggest lottery you ever played, with the odds constantly stacked against you and your unique abilities constantly making lemonade out of lemons and finding a way to hang around.

You stand before me now, you have a brain and conscious awareness of what you have always been unconsciously aware of, that nothing was ever guaranteed but death, you call yourself a loser and tell me that you are helpless. Look around you my friend for in this moment and every moment that exists for you, does so because you won.

So my winning loser who continues to win even though you perceive you lose, continue to enjoy the gifts you are giving to yourself, because your sense of losing, is your fruit of winning, but remember all the eggs and sperm cells that didn't make it here.

DIRECTION

You are more likely to get to where you want to go when you are constantly headed in that direction and although that does not guarantee that you would get there it makes it more likely to occur.

Where you are coming from is always relevant but never as important as where you are going. No matter how good or bad things may be always ask yourself the question " where do I go from here?"

In order to get the result you want it is essential for you to perform the actions that are consistent with that result. It would be frustrating if you were trying to go up north but kept taking steps that took you down south however the lack of success in reaching your destination would be both expected and anticipated.

Survive first and then thrive for we aspire through desire but succeed through actions, our desires are the stimulus for action but our actions are the architects of our success.

Most dictionaries define survival as the state of continuing to live or exist, in spite of difficult circumstances. To survive you need to have the ability to identify your needs and develop an appropriate decision to action interval. In other words identify the essential thing or action required, make a decision quickly and act accordingly. The desired outcome from surviving is an opportunity to continue to exist and then thrive.

The same dictionaries define thrive as to grow or develop well, to prosper, and to flourish. To thrive you must have the ability to identify and achieve your wants. The desired outcome of thriving is "self actualization" i.e. the realization or fulfillment of my talents and potentialities.

You can survive without thriving but you cannot thrive without surviving. Developing a balance between the surviving and thriving mindset is a key to optimal function. Thriving is the reward of surviving and can only occur after survival goals have been met.

Survival mode: Plan for the worst

Thrive mode: Plan for the best

Survive & Thrive mode: Plan for the worst and hope for the best

Survival mode: What are your needs?

Thrive mode: What are your wants?

Survive & Thrive mode: What is the balance between your needs & wants?

When your direction is unclear despite your best efforts simplify it by remembering to survive first and then thrive

Setting direction involves aligning:

1) Thoughts: Form a realistic mental image of the results that you want and use your imagination to develop this image until it is tangible enough that you could literally touch it, You can see it clearly and know precisely what it is anytime you think about it.

2) Words: Say things in a manner that is consistent with the results that you want. Put it out there, express what you want to take place. Rather than say you don't want to fail, say that you want to succeed, rather than say you are afraid, say that you want to be more confident.

3) Deeds: Perform actions intentionally and consciously consistent with the results that you want.

"If you wake up in a burning building does it matter how you got there?" Although how you got there is relevant, if you want to survive, it is only important if it will show me the way out. Otherwise what is most important to your survival is, "where do you go from there?"

Points to remember:

Survive first and then thrive

Make sure that your thoughts, words and actions are always in the direction of the results that you want.

DAILY EXERCISE

EVERYDAY

IN EVERY WAY

GETTING BETTER

AND BETTER

MORE CAPABLE

MORE ABLE

Repeat the above phrase aloud (quietly) 10 (ten) times (one after the other) = 1 (one) set

Do 1 (one) set every hour for 10 (ten) hours - 10 (ten) sets a day

Record the time whenever you do a set

Keep a daily journal of anything you consider important that happened on that day.

PROBLEM LIST

Write a list of all the things that you consider problems making it difficult for you to get the results that you want.

1

2

3

4

5

6

7

8

9

10

RESOURCE LIST

To each one of the problems that you have listed previously add the phrase "Where do I go from here" and now write down the ideas that occur to you when you asked this question.

1

2

3

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