



More than a Survivor

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I had survived horrible things for much of my life. I was always waiting for the other shoe to drop. I called it the "sense of impending doom." Too many of my days were spent anxiously looking forward, wondering what other traumas were headed my way. When I wasn't doing that, I was looking backward, fixating on all that I'd done wrong, all that had gone wrong.

I was living in fear. I was paralyzed. I was exhausted.

People often applauded all I had lived through. But that was all I had done. I had physically survived. There was no power or healing in just having my heartbeat. There was no hope in just breathing in and out. Perhaps it was a big deal initially, but I wanted more than to walk around as a living organism. I wanted to be more than a survivor. I wanted to make a difference. I wanted hope to come alive in me. As a survivor, I still felt like a victim. I didn't want to be a victim anymore. I didn't want to just survive. I wanted to *thrive*.

At first, it was clumsy and awkward. I was trying to limp forward through the pain. My body was still keeping score of all the physical side effects – depression, anxiety, and CPTSD. But I was determined to walk on a victor, not a victim. I was determined to keep putting one foot in front of the other, I was determined to not let my circumstances, the predators, or poor habits win. I promised myself that no matter what, I would continually dust myself off and get up to walk again. I would not be silent, back down, or give up.

**Listen to the Music for the Soul Song
"More Than a Survivor" [LISTEN HERE](#)**

LYRICS:

You have lived through something
That no one should have to face
You have shown the kind of courage
That defies the commonplace
Now a future lies before you
So keep holding on to hope
Walking in the light
It's gonna be alright

*You are brave
You are strong
Hold your head up higher
Lift your voice
Sing your song
You are a survivor*

You are making a beginning
Where there might have been an end
You have been to hell and back
and learned to trust again
They call you a survivor
But somehow you know there's more
Hang on to that truth
Your sky is turning blue

Not just a survivor, but a champion
Not just a survivor, but free
Not just a survivor, but thriving
Ready for tomorrow
and whatever will be

Words & Music by Steve Siler
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I had to find hope and a purpose. I would no longer let my old thinking patterns define me. I would no longer let what others thought control me.

As I began speaking out, sharing my story and seeking help, I saw that my honesty helped others to tell their stories. I noticed I was not alone in my pain and the horrors I had endured. I wasn't the only one who wanted to be done with life and end it. I suddenly had a community of people who understood what I felt. It was not a community I would have ever desired to find, but it was exactly the community and support I needed.

I am nothing special. I have no superpowers on my own. You can do this too. I believe in the One who can give you all the strength you need to get up and walk again. It may feel like you are crawling at first. It may feel like you can barely lift your head or reach for the phone. But you can do it. You are worth the fight. You are worth the hard work of moving forward to the place where you can thrive.

Remember, He loves you, and so do I.

What could give your pain a purpose?

Name 3 positive things you can see in the world around you right now.
One gratitude at a time, my friend. Start small if you need to.

How could you use your journey to help someone else?

How will you determine yourself to get up? Who can you ask for help?