

The Least of These Things ~ Surviving vs Thriving

by SLY on January 24th, 2011

I was recently reading a post on another's blog and came across an interesting article titled "[What Makes Someone a Survivor](http://karinhiebert.blogspot.com/2011/01/what-makes-someone-survivor-definition.html)." Karin outlines the definition of "survivor" and goes on to give her take of it. <http://karinhiebert.blogspot.com/2011/01/what-makes-someone-survivor-definition.html>

While normally this word conveys a positive outcome to a tragedy, upon reading the definitions I realized I wasn't satisfied and I received further affirmation that my insistence on being a "Thrivers" is far better for me.

SURVIVOR

1. To remain alive or in existence

2. To carry on despite hardships or trauma; persevere: families that were surviving in tents after the flood.

3. To remain functional or usable: I dropped the radio, but it survived.

1. To live longer than; outlive: She survived her husband by five years.

2. To live, persist, or remain usable through: plants that can survive frosts; a clock that survived a fall.

3. To cope with (a trauma or setback); persevere after: survived child abuse.

THRIVER

1. To prosper; be fortunate or successful

2. To grow or develop vigorously; flourish

3. To grow strong

4. To make steady progress

I survived childhood sexual abuse. I endured it for seven years at the hands of a dictatorial patriarch and the disregard of a defunct cult "church". Despite the many issues that resulted from the abuse, **I remained alive. I kept breathing even on the days I did not want to.** I functioned. I got up. I showered. I brushed my teeth and I ate food I could barely taste. I moved from one day to the next. Despite the careless way the court case was handled, **despite it all, I survived.**

Yes, that in and of itself, is a mighty feat. Some do not make it that far. [Bill Zeller](#) did not survive. So many did not survive but I did and I give myself credit for that. Some of you have survived. Despite your losses, tragedies and illnesses, you have survived. I commend you.

But at some point years ago, I realized merely existing and functioning in a usable way wasn't enough for me. Just coping enough to muster the strength to breathe wasn't enough for me. It hurts. I know. The memories are so painful. The anger is so tangible that you can hold it. The guilt weighs you down. The injustice is unfair. And to remember the touches.... my god, it hurts your soul sometimes. I know. And there is something so comforting about the darkness. There's something so good sometimes about being sad and depressed and just saying, "Hey, at least I'm breathing. Fuck the rest."

But I just couldn't stay there. Honestly, I am just too proud to give my ex step father that much credit. **He already hurt so many areas of my life and I just don't want to give him my future. I don't want to give him my today.** He doesn't deserve any of my tears.

So I moved passed surviving. I moved through the pain of healing and moved towards thriving. I mean, even my ex step father is thriving. He now volunteers with children. (Their parents are a hot mess but perhaps they just don't know). He now volunteers at police departments. (Isn't that great? A man who molests children, who never had to serve time now helps out at their stations.) He's a minister at a church. (That's just wonderful that he's the spiritual advisor to many.) I mean he is doing his thing. He travels. He facebooks. He leads workshops teaching kids about sexuality. I wonder if he even tweets nice little christian scriptures about God's grace.

Dripping sarcasm Sheena. Watch it, girl.

Point is, I do myself an injustice by not being whole. I can be angry, sad and depressed while mounting a soapbox saying, "Hey at least I fucking survived. At least, I'm not pregnant, strung out on drugs, selling my body to the night and going literally insane. At least, I'm breathing."

BUT

I don't want to live my life "at the least" of these things.

I want my life to be uplifting, full of purpose, I want to live with a passionate force. I want to thrive, prosper, develop, grow and evolve. I want to be at my highest. I am whole, complete and as I should be.

I will not give my molester any more credit than he deserves. I deserve to live past surviving.

So these are the things I think as I read Karin's blog, as I write my story...hard as it may be and as I live my life. It doesn't mean that there won't be dark moments or angry moments. It doesn't mean I can't speak up and speak out and find justice.

It just means, I want to do more than breathe. I want to actually LIVE.

There is a different. People in a coma are breathing. People in vegetated states, are by definition, alive. But me, I have to do more than that.

I HAVE TO THRIVE.

<http://sheenalashay.com/2011/01/the-least-of-these-things-surviving-vs-thriving/>

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