



Nancy Hightshoe Seminars

LifeSkills

By Nancy Hightshoe

The First Secret of Resilient Individuals and Organizations

Resilience is an essential life skill for dealing with the business environment of the 21st century. RESILIENCE CAN BE LEARNED.

*In this issue of LifeSkills, I'm sharing the
first secret for surviving and thriving.*

All of us face reversals in fortune. What are the secrets for getting back in the game as quickly as possible? How does one “hang on” until either the situation changes or a solution has time to take effect?

Resilient individuals and organizations spend as little time as possible in chaos, worry and upset. After a loss or missed opportunity, they quickly move into the problem-solving mode. Since challenges seem to arrive on our doorsteps not singly, but in groups, bouncing back quickly is both more difficult – and more important.

What follows is the first secret in a series of tips to help you quickly regain that equilibrium in your life and your organization – whether the challenge comes to a business, school, house of worship or, on a more personal level, a friendship or within your family. Once you’ve regained your balanced outlook, you can successfully search for and evaluate solutions.

Most Important Secret
to fight that overwhelming sense of panic:
You're okay right this minute.

Page 1 of 6



“The Lady Was A Cop”
www.NancyHightshoe.com
[Newsletter Archives](#)
[Seminar Brochure](#)

Nancy Hightshoe is an accomplished speaker, coach and consultant. She is an expert in:

- Professional and Personal Effectiveness
- Safety, Security and Survival.

Nancy's Background:

- Business and Life Strategies Coach
- Police Officer, Detective and Entrepreneur



During World War II, my Dad was captured on Bataan and survived the Bataan Death March in April 1942. (If you don't know the story of the Death March, you might be interested in the fascinating best seller, *The Ghost Soldiers* by Hampton Sides.)

Dad survived more than three years as a POW. He was transported to Japan and, because of his background at KMOX radio, he was assigned to the same radio station as the infamous Tokyo Rose. Dad was given reports of the war activities and told to rewrite them so that the stories reflected American defeats and other information which would be demoralizing to the Allied troops.

He was then told to broadcast the propaganda to the Allies - which, of course, Dad did; and did with enthusiasm...much to the surprise and pleasure of the guards. After the most-valuable-to- the-Allies "doctored" information, Dad would interject his own comment: "Go tell THAT to the Marines!"

Dad's enthusiasm for his job persuaded the guards to give him even more freedom in the writing and broadcasting of his announcements.

What his captors failed to realize was "Go tell that to the Marines" was American slang for "That's a bunch of baloney." By the enthusiastic and judicious use of the that phrase, Dad was able to slip a great deal of information to the Allies...until the day an America-educated Japanese officer figured it out – and the gig was up.

Dad was sentenced to be executed.

Remember the secret: Stay Calm!

You're okay right this moment...

The man responsible for the six American POW broadcasters was an Eagle Scout...as was my Dad. He interceded with an emissary of the emperor, and Dad's life was spared – but just barely. Dad was sent to a POW camp so well hidden that the war was over for four days before the camp was even located. In addition, Dad had dysentery and was sent to a camp of non-English speaking Allies. This was, in effect, a death sentence – just one that would be carried out more slowly.

Page 2 of 6

*Post Office Box 11846
Saint Louis, MO 63105
Nancy@NancyHightshoe.com*

 *Nancy Hightshoe Seminars*

*(314) 865-2944
Country Code: +1
www.NancyHightshoe.com*

- Has spoken throughout the United States and in 17 foreign countries

- On-camera expert for St. Louis NBC affiliate

- Represented a Fortune 100 corporation as their media spokesperson

- Master's Degree in Human Relations and in The Administration of Justice; Bachelor's Degree in Psychology

- Designed one of the first Personal Assault Investigative Units in the country

- Cleared 85% of her felony assault crimes cases (national average is 49%)

- Recognized POST-certified continuing education instructor (Police Officers Standards and Training)

- Named to the *World Who's Who of Women*

Nancy's Commitment and Philosophy

My background in personal courage

- both as a police detective and entrepreneur

- is reflected in all my presentations.

As Everyday Heroes are wont to do everywhere, the Afrikaners shared their meager rations with Dad and, though he wasn't the picture of health when he was shipped home in 1945, he did come home. He met my Mom, is the father of six children and contributed his wise, witty everyday heroism to those of us who knew and loved him.

Resilience has been woven into my psyche since I was a young child when Dad starting telling the stories of the heroes he had known.

One of the "gifts" of my 9 years as a police officer and detective was the opportunity to be placed in very real life-or-death situations. Law enforcement has been described as "hours and hours of boredom punctuated by moments of sheer, exhilarating terror."

In many ways, it's easier to face imminent and terrifying danger for moments, or even hours, than the wear-you-down-down grinding fears that accompany a tough economy, a health challenge or a family or personal crisis which can go on for months or even years.

Most of us will not face life-or-death situations but, in many ways, the day-to-day challenges are every bit as stressful and demand as much wisdom and courage as the choices men and women make in wartime.

So, if you're okay right now, you're ready for Secret Number Two which will be in our next newsletter.

Following is a piece of prose Dad wrote about his experience in the Camp O'Donnell prison "hospital". At one point, Dad, who is 5' 10", weighed 89 pounds. The prose will remind all of us of the courage and resilience each of us can tap into.

Easy To Die

(Editor's Note: The surrender of American forces on Bataan in April 1942, and the ensuing infamous "Death March" in the Philippine Islands merit only a few lines today in most history books. But to those few who still survive from this ordeal, certain episodes are as graphic as if they had happened yesterday. The following article recounts one such vivid and profound experience of a 24-year old American soldier.)

Page 3 of 6

*Post Office Box 11846
Saint Louis, MO 63105
Nancy@NancyHightshoe.com*

 *Nancy Hightshoe Seminars*

*(314) 865-2944
Country Code: +1
www.NancyHightshoe.com*

My philosophy of personal responsibility and purpose resonates throughout all of my programs.

Each seminar participant comes away with new skills and ideas on how to approach every challenge with creativity, resourcefulness and tenacity

- all qualities even more essential for success in today's world.

Future issues of *Life Skills* will include a wide range of topics from Nancy Hightshoe Seminars.

[Leadership / Motivation](#)

[Resilience](#)

[Change Management](#)

[Negotiation / Persuasion](#)

[Personal Safety](#)

[Seminar Brochure](#)

www.NancyHightshoe.com

[Newsletter Archives](#)

[Biography](#)

[Business Programs](#)

[Personal Safety Programs](#)

The “Death March of Bataan” and the fall of Corregidor were history. It was now the summer of 1942. Out of a molten sky, the sinking sun still sent slanting rays scorching their way through the tin roof and thatch-walled hut where I lay. An open window let in the blinding blue of the cloud-clear sky to sear the eyeballs. Occasionally, from outside the hut, the murmur of dismal conversation would penetrate the thin walls; the subdued, unintelligible murmur of men without hope. Inside the hut, the oppressive silence was broken only by an occasional half-stifled groan as some pain-racked human gave vent to the feelings he could no longer control. Silence hung like a pall in the oblong room, for in this room death was ever-present, striking -- as it often does -- swiftly and silently. One moment a pair of glassy eyes would be staring into space, a thin chest would shiver with the effort of maintaining a spark of life. The next instant -- those eyes were staring into eternity, and the spark was dead.

This was a “hospital” hut at Camp O’Donnell in the Philippine Islands. I lay in it, but not always of it. Occasionally, my attention would focus back upon this land of the living dead. A stretcher-team would remove a corpse, still warm and limp. A doctor would make his rounds and administer sympathy, for there was nothing else he could offer. Men fought doggedly to hold onto that spark of life the Japanese still allowed them. But in so many cases it was such a feeble spark, so softly extinguished between one breath and the next.

I lay there in this confused world of life and death. No longer did I feel any physical pain. The relentless gnawing that marked long weeks of insufficient food had become a dull ache. I felt myself slipping gradually out of this confused world of man into a dream world of images. My thoughts became increasingly removed from my surroundings. A curtain of haziness and uncertainty seemed to be dropping over my mind.

Out of the fog of unreal reality in which I lay, a single thought slowly emerged and began to dominate all others. Like an octopus, its tentacles stretched forth and drew into itself all other thoughts until only the one remained. “It would be so easy to die!”

Yes, it would be so easy to die. It would be like going to sleep -- close my eyes and drift off. There would be no more pain, no more suffering. No longer would my bleared eyes watch the seemingly endless procession of corpses to the burial field. No longer would my tongue thicken for lack of water. No longer would food be of primary concern. There would be nothing -- nothing except that which lies beyond the grave. It was so easy -- just to close my eyes and go to sleep.

My lids slowly dropped, screening out the last blazing rays of the setting sun. The brilliant sky dimmed as my eyes closed still more. A great sigh, as of intense relief, passed through my body as I slowly slipped away. My arms relaxed and my fingers spread in one last gesture. A voice drifted in across millions of miles: “He won’t last much longer.”

Page 4 of 6

*Post Office Box 11846
Saint Louis, MO 63105
Nancy@NancyHightshoe.com*

 *Nancy Hightshoe Seminars*

*(314) 865-2944
Country Code: +1
www.NancyHightshoe.com*

A shudder tore through my emaciated frame, and my hands tightened beside me. A sense of touch started the long painful journey from fingers to brain. The message it brought was simple: beads on a broken chain. For a long moment it meant nothing -- and then it meant everything. Clutched in my spidery fingers was a rosary. Unconsciously, years of habit played their part, and the prayers slowly formed on my lips, as the beads sluggishly tumbled one after another as from a great height. Gradually the height decreased and the fog began to dissipate. The darkness that surrounded me was now that of night. Through the window my eyes could focus upon a patch of obsidian sky, splashed with myriad points of brilliance. Another shudder, and the beads slipped through my fingers with ease and familiarity. Truly could I say, "Comfort of the Afflicted."

Out of the welter of confusion occasioned by this return to reality, a surge of long-buried ideas impressively marched across my mind. A parade of titles, it was, arching like processional banners -- Mother of God, Tower of Ivory, Immaculate Conception, Mother of Perpetual Help. And this majestic roll-call made clear to me as never before the ways in which Our Mother's help is particularly valuable. My thoughts played over other familiar lines from her litany -- Mystical Rose, Queen of Peace, Health of the Sick, Comfort of the Afflicted. These last words flamed in my weary brain, and I realized that only now, in the abyss of life, did the meaning of these few simple words become clear to me.

So strange, it seemed, that all my life these had been words mumbled in a ritual; they conveyed no special meaning. As I had grown into maturity, and gradually assumed the responsibilities of adulthood; as I had daily learned to face the problems which go to make up life, I had failed to understand the full meaning of these words. I had failed to realize that these particular words -- Comfort of the Afflicted -- were most appropriate to the Mother of God. For, if I had taken these words at their face value, I could have turned to the Blessed Mother and there found the comfort which was unattainable from those around me. Who could understand better than she who had suffered through the torture and death of her own Son; who could be better able to offer solace than she who suffered seven mortal sorrows during her own lifetime.

The cold light of the rising moon began to sift through the open window. Slowly its paleness spread, turning emaciated bodies into sharply-etched skeletons. The beads continued to slip through my fingers while thoughts continued to amble through my mind.

Easily I picked up the thread of my thoughts again. Yes, Mary was human just as we are. And as a fellow human being, she had known suffering and agony. I lay on the damp and dirty boards helpless to aid my friends in their last moments. She had stood helpless, unable to aid her own flesh and blood in His last moments. I suffered an internal agony of thirst and starvation; but she had suffered from a burning sword through her very heart. Mary was human just as I. She had the same feelings, the same emotions, the same capacity for love as I had. Suffering and understanding were as much a part of her make-up as they were of mine and of those who lay around me.

Page 5 of 6

*Post Office Box 11846
Saint Louis, MO 63105
Nancy@NancyHightshoe.com*

 *Nancy Hightshoe Seminars*

*(314) 865-2944
Country Code: +1
www.NancyHightshoe.com*

And yet, though Mary shared her human characteristics with us who lay in this man-made hell, she had these human qualities in much greater measure than any of us; for she was a woman. And as such, although she was the Mother of God Himself, she still retained those attributes which have been instilled in women from time immemorial. For though customs and habits of life may change as man over the centuries has turned the laws of God's nature to his own comfort and use, the basic emotional pattern of the human being is still as it was when Adam and Eve first gazed wide-eyed at the world which God had prepared for them.

A half-smile cracked the parched skin of my face. These were strange, almost alien thoughts, compared to those I had had but such a short time ago. Even in the new-found clarity of my mind, it seemed impossible that death had brushed so closely but a few moments before.

Peace of mind swept over me as I abandoned myself to the security and protection found in the arms of Mary our Mother. Slowly my lids began to droop again. Outside all was quiet; the soft moonlight blotted out the signs of suffering and cast a spell of peace over the camp. The beads slipped from my fingers as true sleep caressed my weary mind and body.

In retrospect, a truth came home to me as later I re-lived this moment of my life. So often, we who do not follow the religious life tend merely to accept many aspects of our faith without thought or deliberation. If we will only strive to think in terms of our comprehension, we can see that ample grace is available for any situation. However, we laymen often feel that we cannot benefit from the deeply spiritual facets of our faith; we plead lack of time, the press of earning a living, of caring for a family. We seem to ignore the treasury of faith which is waiting to be unlocked. And consequently, we forget that Mary, our Mother, holds the key which will unlock her Son's graces -- graces which are ingeniously designed to fit each personal need in day to day living. They are graces not intended only for crises, as I have learned since that moment when it would have been so easy to die.

###

Edwin Kalbfleish, Jr.
(Deceased September 6, 1990)
Nancy Hightshoe, Daughter

Approximately 1700 words
Submitted at regular rates
subject to any copyright held
by The Holy Name Journal and
the estate of Edwin Kalbfleish, Jr.

Page 6 of 6

*Post Office Box 11846
Saint Louis, MO 63105
Nancy@NancyHightshoe.com*

 *Nancy Hightshoe Seminars*

*(314) 865-2944
Country Code: +1
www.NancyHightshoe.com*