



*V*ICTORY BY DESIGN

*The Mid-Life Woman's Reinvention Guide
to Designing a Life You'll Love to Live*

ANNMARIE KELLY



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Victory By Design: The Mid-Life Woman's Reinvention Guide to Designing a Life You'll Love to Live
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The Five Year Marriage

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<http://www.VictoriousWoman.com>
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Victory by Design

*The honor of
your fully engaged presence
Is requested
And you are
cordially challenged
by Annmarie Kelly
and the Victorious Woman Project
to*

- ***BE MORE** of who you truly are*
- ***DO MORE** things that make you feel happy,
satisfied and fulfilled, and*
- ***HAVE MORE** of the life of your dreams.*

*You can stop hiding your beautiful bright light under
the proverbial bushel basket now. Instead, you can...*

LIVE YOUR BEST LIFE

OUT LOUD and

IN LIVING COLOR!

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Table of Contents

Table of Contents	3
Introduction	4
V – Values before Vision	5
I – Intention Leads the Way	7
C – Control: It’s about Your SELF	9
T – Taking Action	11
O – Overcoming Obstacles	12
R – Ramp Up Your Persistence	14
Y – Say YES to Victory	16
Summary	18
About the Author	19

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Introduction

Who's leading of your life...and in control of its direction? *Is it you?* Or, do you sometimes feel as though you've turned your life over to someone else, and you're on autopilot while living *their* life, accommodating *their* agenda – and wondering and hoping that everything turns out good for you?

In other words, are you living your life by your design...*or default?*

If you're like so many women – maybe most women – it's by default. You probably get so caught up in the lives of everyone else that you don't have time to think about yourself – *until there's a crisis*. Sure, you take care of your basic needs, and you get your hair and nails done and think about what you're going to wear, and how you'll look. But what else do you do *just for you?* We're not talking about what you do for the spouse, children, parents, friends, job, neighbors, and everyone else who needs and asks for your help. Do you think about the big picture of your life? Do you wonder about your purpose for being, where you're headed, or what's *really* important to you?

How often do you do something to stimulate your mind and nourish your soul?

If your answer is “not often” or “never”, then *this book is for you*. So...

Congratulations!

Today, you are embarking on your personal Victory Journey,

You are starting on a path of freedom that will

Let you breathe and finally be your real SELF

And...it will

Positively change your life!

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How to Use This Book

You'll get exactly what you need from this workbook *if* you use it. That's the key – *using it*. Because your life and your world are so busy, you'll be tempted to just read it through, maybe do an exercise or two and then move on to something else. If you do, you'll be cheating yourself.

DON'T NEGLECT YOUR SELF OR YOUR DREAMS!

Here's your plan:

1 – Make time to work on this book every day.

Before you start, think about how much time you can save each day just for you to use this book; plan some structured “think time” into your day. It could be ten minutes first thing in the morning or last thing at night. Or that twenty minutes on the train going to or from work or at the café in the food store while picking up something for dinner. If you can make the time, stop at a local coffee shop on your way home and enjoy your victory-designing solitude with a cup of tea.

Or, maybe you'll do what I did at the beginning and use your lunch hour. That's how I started turning my life around. I was working a job that I didn't like and really didn't do very well. I earned little more than my basic living expenses. I felt stuck, frustrated and depressed. Three or four days a week, I would leave my office for lunch, get in my car, and drive to the end of the parking lot behind the next building (so no one I knew would see me). After eating the sandwich I packed, and with the rhythmic sound of cars whirring past on the nearby interstate, I would get quiet. Sometimes I'd listen to the mix tape I made to help me shift my mind into my “real” self. I'd forget the job and allow myself to daydream about how I wanted my life to look in the future. I thought about health, happiness, relationships, work, my love life, finances, fun, hobbies and...*everything*. Today those quiet lunch hours stand out in my mind as “golden moments” because they ended my life of self-imposed oppression and were the beginning of my BEST life.

Once you commit to a time...

2 – There are seven chapters, each one a different step of V-I-C-T-O-R-Y. Read the section you are working on. Think about what you read and jot down ideas.

3 – Do the Action Step that follows. When that's finished, put it aside let yourself think about what you wrote for a two or three days. You'll find yourself getting unexpected inspirations in odd places – like in the shower, while driving to work, as you walk down a street or hallway, when you are washing dishes or putting away clothes. Sometimes, they'll be the most valuable insights – ones you might not have considered consciously! Make notes and adjust your original work until, “in your gut”, you feel what you've written is exactly right – that is, that it's *YOU*.

4 – When you finish a section, ***celebrate!!!*** Appreciate that you are taking steps forward and, one step at a time, turning your life around. Applaud yourself for a job well done!

5 – Take ***ACTION***. It's like the old adage says: if you always do what you've always done, you'll continue to get what you've already got. If you want something different, ***DO*** different!

Are

You

Ready

???

OK, then...

**Start
NOW!**

**Happiness is that state
of consciousness which
proceeds from the
achievement of one's
values.**

~ Ayn Rand

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- 1 -

VALUES BEFORE VISION

Have you ever set a goal and then not achieved it? If you have, you aren't alone. Lots of women have done the same. Do you know why you didn't reach your goal or realize your dreams? One reason is that your goal might have been in conflict with your values. Your life is a reflection of your values. Spoken or not, they guide your every decision. Whatever you envision for your future, it must wrap around your values. If it doesn't, you are likely to struggle, strain and feel frustrated and disappointed, instead of victorious.

It's like this:

- If family is your top value, then your partner and children are the centerpiece of your life. Every decision you make will revolve around how it affects your family.
- If you value privacy, your relationships will be very different than someone who doesn't care if her life is an open book.
- If you value security above all else, you are likely to work at a job with a steady salary and benefits instead of taking the risk of starting your own business. *On the other hand...*
- If you value freedom over security, you are most likely to always have a job where you aren't tied down to a desk.

Interestingly, what often happens is that a woman isn't clear about her values. She makes decisions based on a desire (maybe to make someone else happy) but not on a value. If you aren't clear about what is most important to you, "fuzzy values" will compete with each other.

Here's how it plays out in your life:

- You want to be thin but feel too deprived when you cut out favorite foods or change eating patterns. Your desire to be thin is competing with your desire for comfort and/or pleasure through food or alcohol. If you value comfort more than you value thin, you can go on diet after diet and even have some success. However, over time you won't sustain your thin body because you'll give into temptations to meet your pleasure/comfort value.
- You value financial security, but that stability is competing with a yearning you have to be an entrepreneur. You might try to start a business, but you'll be more focused on making money than providing a good product or great customer service. Buyers usually perceive that as being interested in making a sale, not serving your customers. Your buyers won't like it, they'll go away and you'll fail. In the end, you'll decide to go back to a job that gives you a steady paycheck because that value (security) is the stronger value.
- If you place more importance on being in an intimate relationship than having self-esteem or self-worth, you can easily choose the wrong mate – one who doesn't treat you with respect. You may feel conflicted, but even when staying with that person further lowers your self-esteem, you are likely to continue the relationship that isn't working.

Think about what's happening in your life right now. If you don't like something that's going on, check your values. Figure out what your situation says about what you value. And remember, your top value always wins.

- 9 -

Victory Venting: Your Values

As you read the next page, think about your life through the filter of your values. How are your values showing up in your life...or aren't they?

Brainstorm ideas below.

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Values - Action Steps

Step 1 – Before you can create a new vision for your life, *FIRST* think about what you value. Write down a dozen values - ones that are nearest and dearest to your heart. Here are *just a few* value ideas to get your thinking started: self-respect, helping others, integrity, meaningful work, financial security, personal safety, freedom, friends, fun, mutual respect, cooperation, responsibility, accountability (see list: <http://bit.ly/nu9aW2>).

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Step 2 – Now study them, pick your top five values. Then, ask yourself, “If my life had to stand for *just one* of these values, what would it be?” That’s #1. Then ask, “if I could only choose one other value that I would have to live by for the rest of my life, which one would I pick?” That’s #2. Finally, look at the remaining three and list them in the order of their importance to you. Look them over and ask, “Am I willing to live by these values?”

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

Great job! As you become consciously aware of your values, they will anchor you to a rock-solid foundation and become beacons of light that guide you to good choices and right decisions. And also, if you about to hit the rocks, they’ll set off an internal warning signal so you can steer yourself to safer ground. As you consistently make wiser and healthier choices and decisions, you’ll notice the positive chain reactions in your life. And you’ll discover how personal life leadership based on values changes *everything*.



What are you thinking about
your values right now??

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- 2 -

INTENTION LEADS THE WAY

Intention means knowing your purpose – for your life, a relationship, a project...anything and everything. Knowing your intention is crucial.

Eve Ensler, author of the provocative play, *The Vagina Monologues*, makes an intention-directed observation. She tells women, “You have to make a decision in your life. Do you want to be ‘good’ or do you want to have a life? ‘Good’ implies being approved of and towing the line. Living inside a box...you never live *your* life. You live *their* life.”

Intention is how you lead yourself toward the life you are born to live. Intention stands on your values and is the producer of the spectacular play you call “MY LIFE”.

Intention includes:

- the kind of energy that surrounds you and of which you want to be a part
- choosing the kind of people, places and things you want to attract into your life

Think of intention like apple seeds. They're the center, in the core and around which the apple-matter (the meaty, juicy stuff) grows. What the seed produces can't be different than what it is; only an apple can grow around the apple seed.

Similarly, what you intend is what grows around you. It cannot produce something different than what it is. If your intention is to have a satisfying life or a lucrative career, that's the direction your life will take. You cannot get something different.

At the same time, fixing your intention does not mean that everything will always flow smoothly (*it won't*) or that you won't have challenges (*you will*). But with clear intention you will always know your direction and, because of it, you'll find a way around life's bumps in the road.

If you set an intention for something and it doesn't play out in your life, it probably means that either you aren't clear) about your intention (*or maybe not fully honest* or your intention got hijacked by distractions – yours or someone else's. Think about it...if you set a goal to lose weight, is your intention to be healthier or to find a mate? If you tell people you are dieting to be healthier, but what you really want is to be thin and attract that guy at the office, you are confusing the universe with mixed intentions. So if you don't get the guy, you'll stop dieting because health wasn't your real intention.

It's the same thing if you say you want to get married. Is your intention to experience love or something else, like sex or companionship or security? You can say you yearn for your soul mate or a partner, but maybe what you really want is to be free from dating hassles or you want financial security or a lifestyle that you think you can only afford with a spouse/another income.

When you have mixed intentions, it's the same thing as planting a pear tree and expecting it to produce an apple. *It just can't happen...*

- 13 -



Use the questions & space below to help you brainstorm your intentions.
What ideas stand out? Consider them as clues to your innate intentions.

- What makes a day good? Is it how you feel, what you did/got done, who you saw?
- What's important...in your relationship...about your work...about being a parent?
- When you talk to someone, what part of the communication means the most?
- What's important about your reputation?
- How do you want people to think about you and remember you?
- What's important about love - with parents, children, partner, family, friends?

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Intention - Action Steps

Step 1 – While values are the foundation, intention is the hook on which everything else hangs. A good intention includes a clear decision, mental and emotional agreement and positive action. Some intentions, like intending to have a productive day or a fabulous vacation, are simpler than others, maybe because we have more control over them. Other intentions, like those around success or money, can be trickier. For example, you intend to make a lot of money but you have an emotional resentment for those who are rich or who have financial power. So your mind and heart are in conflict and your intention suffers from incongruence. The result? No matter what you do, you don't make much money.

Think about your past goals, both those you did and did not achieve. Did you think about an intention when you set those goals? It might be good to think about them now. On a sheet of paper, draw a column for goal and another for intention (see example below). Can you think of any intentions that were incongruent with the goal?

	<u>Intention</u>	<u>Goal</u>
Congruent:	To earn a good income with flexibility	Being successful in my own business
Incongruent:	Enjoying a peaceful Christmas dinner	I'm going to show everyone up

Step 2 – Your bigger intentions, like for your life, your job, a big project, etc. aren't always easy to figure out. Your life intention, for example, usually takes longer to figure out. That's what you are going to think about for the next few days:

- What do you intend your life to be?
- To what are you willing to commit your whole being?

To get an answer, tap your conscious and unconscious thoughts.

- During the day: think about what jazzes you, makes you feel most alive, or fills you with joy. Jot down your ideas.
- At night: before going to bed, ask your unconscious mind [or higher power] to tell you about your life's intention. When you wake up in the morning (or maybe in the middle of the night), jot down any dreams or thoughts you have. What do you learn?

You may want to follow this practice for a few days. Focus but don't push and pretty soon you'll get clarity about your life intention. If you feel figuring out a life intention is too daunting or overwhelming, then just think about a one year (or five or ten year) intention.

Here are some intentions that came up for some other women:

- My intention for my life is to be joyful; I'll look for it every day.
- I intend to live each day with passion
- I want balance in my life, relationships and work
- Authenticity in everything I do, to be who I really am, my authentic self
- Success. I intend to be at the top of my field in three years



What is your intention for your life? Write it here:

"The thing that is really hard and really amazing, is giving up on being perfect and beginning to work on becoming yourself."

-Anna Quindlen

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- 3 -

CONTROL: IT'S ALL ABOUT YOUR SELF

We hear a lot about self-control. And when most women think about self-control, it's about a food we try not to eat, the exercise that we have to do, or some angry thought or behavior we don't want to have. But there's another kind. **SELF**-control – control of your authentic SELF. That's what you'll be thinking about in this chapter, is, getting control of the **SELF** that is the deep, true, genuine person – the one that maybe only you know.

Once you have a handle on whom you really are at your core, you can more easily step into personal leadership in your life. Then no one else can say what you should or should not do...*you'll know*. You'll set your own agenda, one that expresses *your* values, honors *your* intentions and satisfies *your* soul. You'll ask for and receive advice, but realize that, if you are clear about and true to your **SELF**, no one knows more about what's good for you *than you*,

SELF control doesn't mean ignoring others' needs or being selfish. You can still help your spouse, partner, children, or parents. But at the same time, you keep your own goal, or several goals, in the forefront of your mind and you actively work toward them. In addition, as much as the people in your life count on you, you have an equal expectation that they will support you with words, behaviors and the help you need to fulfill your dreams. In other words, they help you as much as you help them. That's interdependence – **powerful** interdependence.

Why is **SELF** control important? Too often, when a woman gets out of school and “into the real world,” she seems to blend into it. Whether it's a job, marriage, motherhood, caregiving, friendship, etc., she gets comfortable with accommodating others, usually at the price of losing her SELF. Before she knows it, she's stuck in everyone else's agendas, chasing someone else's dream and fulfilling everyone else's desires. Before long, she's lost her **SELF** control.

In *Victorious Woman! Shaping Life's Challenges into Personal Victories*, a woman without **SELF** Control is called a “Surviving Woman” because she is surviving her life instead of living it. She settles for what she can get, instead of going after what she wants. She seldom, if ever, fulfills her own needs and desires. Then she can't figure out why she's unhappy or depressed or frustrated. Of course, it's because she's lost her Personal Positive Focus...her **SELF** control.

In *Victorious Woman!*, Toni Kershaw, Chapter Five, was struggling with a life-threatening weight problem. At the same time, she learned that her daughter was anorexic and bulimic. As her daughter's illness took over the family, everyone blamed Toni. She felt pressured to give up her SELF, in the form of her own self-care. But Toni decided she didn't want to just survive, she wanted to live. That's when she realized, simply, “I count too.”

So do you. This chapter's action steps focus on your **SELF** control.

***Once you are in Control of your SELF,
You'll find time, energy and support to
DO MORE that satisfies your soul!***

- 17 -

<http://www.VictoriousWoman.com>
<http://www.AnnmarieKelly.com>



Victory Venting: SELF-Control

Think into your soul.

Feel your deepest feelings.

What do you really, really want?

Victory Tip: Sometimes it helps to "back into" what you want by thinking about what you *don't* want first...write that down and then ask yourself "what's the opposite of that?"

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SELF - Control - Action Steps

Step 1 - Find a quiet time and answer these questions with your first thoughts. When you've answered all five, then go back and polish them up. The goal here is to make your answers crystal clear to you, so use extra paper so that you can jot down notes and write as much as you need to fully describe your BEST life and your goals.

In your dreams and imagination, what does your "BEST" life look like?

What's the difference between your "BEST" life and your life now? Be very specific.

What's in your BEST life that's missing now? Love, money, safety, satisfaction, or something else?

To fill in the gap, what would you have to do?

If you did that, what would have to change?

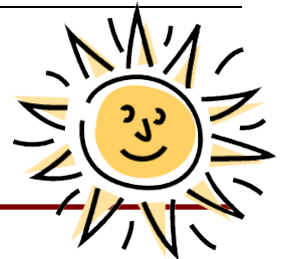
What is one goal that you can focus on now that will take you closer to you best life?

- ---

What three actions will take you closer to realizing that goal?

- ---
- ---
- ---

Be BOLD!
Let Your CREATIVITY Flow and Have FUN!



**VICTORY IS THE
STRETCH YOU
MAKE OUT OF
YOUR
COMFORT ZONE
AND INTO THE
GREATER,
FULLER, RICHER
EXPRESSION OF
WHO YOU
REALLY ARE.**

~annmarie kelly

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- 4 -

TAKE ACTION

In chapters one, two and three you've been framing your best life. But now it's time to start bringing those into a more tangible focus. Taking action is about how you build a bridge between your dreams and your reality.



Do you ever think that you have “dreams of gold and legs of lead?” Most people do. They think about what they want, but somehow don't think it's possible. Or, they get started and hit some obstacles, and give up. We'll talk more about motivation and obstacles in the next chapter, but in this chapter you're going to do three things to start bringing your dreams into your reality:

- 1 – Follow Up on what you've done so far
- 2 – Create a Victorious Vision Board/Book so you can visualize your BEST LIFE
- 3 – Develop an action plan

Taking Action – Part I

Step 1 – In the previous chapter, you wrote down a goal and three steps you can take to achieve your goal. Follow through on those three actions.

TIP: figure out which action is the first, and then break it into smaller steps, and then even smaller ones. The easier it is for you to TAKE ACTION, the more likely it is that you will get to your goal. It's just like the old story about the tortoise and hare. Slow and steady wins!

TIP: As you TAKE ACTION, keep a Victory Journal. Your journal doesn't have to be fancy, but make it a space where you enjoy writing down how you feel as you progress.

Taking Action – Part II

Step 1 – Gather as many magazines as you can. Go through them and find pictures and words that either look or feel like the “BEST” life you've been working on in previous chapters. When you find pictures you like, be sure they reflect both your values and intention(s). Then cut them out.

Step 2 – Using either a note book or poster board, put the pictures and words together as though you are telling a story. This will be a lot like making a photo album – except you are telling the story of your future instead of your past.

You can use a blank journal, a photo album, small wire bound notebook or even plain paper pages clipped into a binder. If you have scrapbooking talent, you can get even more creative. Or, if making a book isn't “you”, then use a single poster board and make a collage. Look for more instructions at www.VictoriousWoman.com.

- 21 -

Victory Venting: Vision Boards

What kinds of things will you put on *your* Vision Board?

Are there faraway places you want to see? A special place you want to live?

Is there some feeling that needs to be satisfied?

What fun things would help you “feel into” your Vision Board?

Would glitter, feathers or sequins add the sparkle and ignite your visioning emotion?

What kind of magazines/websites/advertisements are you likely to find those pictures?

Jot down your ideas here...

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Step 3 – Once you’ve made your Victorious Visioning Book/Board, *use it*. How? Look at it often, and at least each morning when you wake up and at night before falling asleep. Use at least five minutes to visualize yourself in the pictures. Use your victorious visioning book to help you strengthen your belief in your SELF, spark your creativity with ideas, and fuel your sense of expectation. Old pictures bring back past memories, emotions and connections, but your Victorious Visioning Book/Board ignites inspiration for “future memories” and emotion-filled daydreams.

Step 4 – Keep track of how you feel and what you think about. Notice if your victorious vision changes along the way

Taking Action – Part III

Step 1 – As you begin getting comfortable with the future you, and start believing that you *can* be that person, you’ll start thinking of other goals that you want to accomplish to make your BEST life come alive. You already wrote one down in the previous chapter. Now, based on your Victorious Visioning Book/Board, what are some others? Also, as you start getting ideas about how to achieve those goals (and they’ll come to you), write them down – all of them. It doesn’t matter if you have ten or a hundred. Use a notebook or yellow pad if you need more space. You’ll only be working with one goal at a time, but as you build your confidence muscle, you’ll have lots to look forward to when you have a list.

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Step 2 - When you’ve written all the goals you can think of, look them over. Make your own “top ten” list from those goals.

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Step 3 – Choose your goals and create a doable plan. Start with the goals you listed above. Which ONE of those goals would make the biggest difference in your life? Write it on the line below:

Now, what other ONE of those goals can you accomplish easily or quickly? Write it below:



I wonder...Does my goal pass the SMART test?
Ask yourself and a trusted friend or coach to evaluate if it's:

Specific...

I'm very clear about what I want.

Measurable...

How much, how many, how will I know when I get there?

Atttractive...

Do I feel *jazzed* every time I think about getting to this goal?

Realistic...

Based on where I am today, how relevant to my life and my timing is this goal?

Timed

What's the end date, that is, when can I expect to have this?

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Great! You've just selected your next two goals. Now look at them again. Are they SMART Goals? What that means is that each goal is **S**pecific – **M**easurable – **A**tttractive – **R**ealistic - **T**imed. For example:

Specific: you don't just want to say "more" money. Instead, be specific about exactly how much money, such as, \$1000 or a 5% raise.

Measurable: don't say you want to have "better" personal boundaries, but be specific about what kind of boundary will improve your life. Two good ones are: "I will not tolerate anyone shouting at me" and "I'll refuse all last minute requests from family without a 24-hour notice."

Attractive: Do you want this? If you're doing something for someone else, or because you have to or should, your goal won't be attractive to you (you might even resent the goal). If it isn't attractive to you, you won't be able to attract what you need into your life.

Realistic: Does it make sense? If it doesn't, you'll set yourself up for failure. One woman's goal went like this: "I lose fifty pounds by Christmas." What made it unrealistic was that she was saying it in the middle of October. No real diet, one that is a healthy and lasting weight loss program, will do that.

Timed: Give it an exact "end" date. Using the two examples in the previous paragraph, here is what a real goal would look like: (1) By [6 months from now], I will receive a 5% increase in my salary. Within [6 months from now], I will use the 24-hour rule 1-2 times each day and be comfortable with my new boundary.

When it comes to S-M-A-R-T-ening up your goals, it often pays to ask for help from a friend who cares about you and who will also be honest with you.

Work on the easier one first, so you can continue to build confidence and strengthen your victory muscle. Next, you'll work on the one that will make the greatest difference in your life.

Step 5 – Break your goals into three main sections:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Step 6 – Look at the first section and it into three action steps

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

If that first action step is small enough to do comfortably, *DO IT*. If not, keep breaking down each step into smaller steps that aren't big stretches. *Then, ACT!*

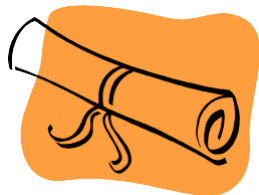


Have a bias toward
action - let's see
something happen
now.

You can break that
big plan into
small steps and
take the first step
right away.

Indira Gandhi

Victory by Design



For example, when I decided to return to college to get my degree, it seemed like an overwhelming project. I broke it into three steps:

1. Find out what I need to get started
2. Find the money
3. Keep going until I finish

The first step was to find out what I needed to do to get started. I divided Step 1 into four parts:

1. Learn about colleges in my area
 - What colleges and universities have non-traditional degree programs
 - How good is the credentialing for the school
 - How far will I have to travel for each
 - What's the tuition for each
2. Call admissions and get more information
 - How much time, per week, would each program require
 - How long would it take to finish
 - What paperwork/transcripts would I need
 - Does the staff think it's doable and are they helpful and easy to work with
3. How would I pay for it
 - What are the tuition payment options
 - If I need a loan, what's available
4. Register

I started looking around and did some research. That was pretty easy. I found a couple schools with programs that fit my needs and my budget. Then I narrowed it down to one, but I had to call and talk to someone who could assess my situation and find out where I stood. It seemed simple enough, but I was so filled with doubts (was I too old, not smart enough). Still, I kept telling myself it was just a simple call. But I was *really* nervous. I was so nervous, in fact, that when I finally reached the admissions counselor and began telling him why I was calling, I broke down and I cried. Actually, I cried through most of that phone call. But at the end of it, though I was a little embarrassed, I knew I'd taken a really big step – not just logistically, but emotionally.

That was in 1997. From that day, I took step after step. I finally earned my degree and graduated in May 2001, magna cum laude.

You see, though I'd put it off for years, and even almost talked myself out of it, I made a plan. I adjusted my plan as I went, but at every turn, I broke my plan into small, doable steps. My educational victory all started with a little research and that simple phone call.

That's the secret: keep breaking down your plan so that your steps are doable. That doesn't mean each tread is going to be easy (remember, I cried through almost that whole first phone call). And it's likely that you'll have to stretch to keep walking forward on your path. BUT, when you break the journey into small steps, it's not so challenging that you are overwhelmed. You may feel the pain of those victory stretches, but just you would with any exercise, when it's over you're really glad ***you did it.***

It's our challenges and obstacles
that give us layers of depth
and make us interesting.
Are they fun when they happen?
No.
But they are what make us
unique.

Ellen DeGeneres

Victory by Design

- 5 -

OBSTACLES AND HOW TO OVERCOME THEM

So far you have identified your top values, your intentions for your best life, and a couple of goals. Now you need to step back and look at something. Before you do anything else for your victory plan, you need to face something that most of us like to ignore: your personal obstacles to success and victory. What I often see happen to a woman is one of four things:

1. She doesn't know how to handle an obstacle and feels overwhelmed
2. She denies, ignores or avoids the obstacle and gets frustrated by the uphill battle
3. She makes poor choices that get her into a self-defeating victim loop
4. Somebody coddles her and convinces her that maybe the obstacle is too much for her (FYI: this advice is usually given by someone with some jealousy issues)

After a while, tired and emotionally beaten down, she might even decide the obstacle is a "sign" that she should quit. She may use words like, "if it was meant for me to have this, it would have been easier" and she justifies giving up. She feels cheated, dismissed and/or depressed that her dreams are crushed. She gives into feelings of defeat, and that weakens her victory-making muscle, thwarting future efforts.

Here's the "bad news" that is today's dose of reality: Whoever you are and whatever you do, you are bound to face obstacles on your path to victory. No one gets to become victorious without having to handle an obstacle or two...or more. ***You need to get it into your understanding now that you can – and must – overcome the obstacles to your success.***

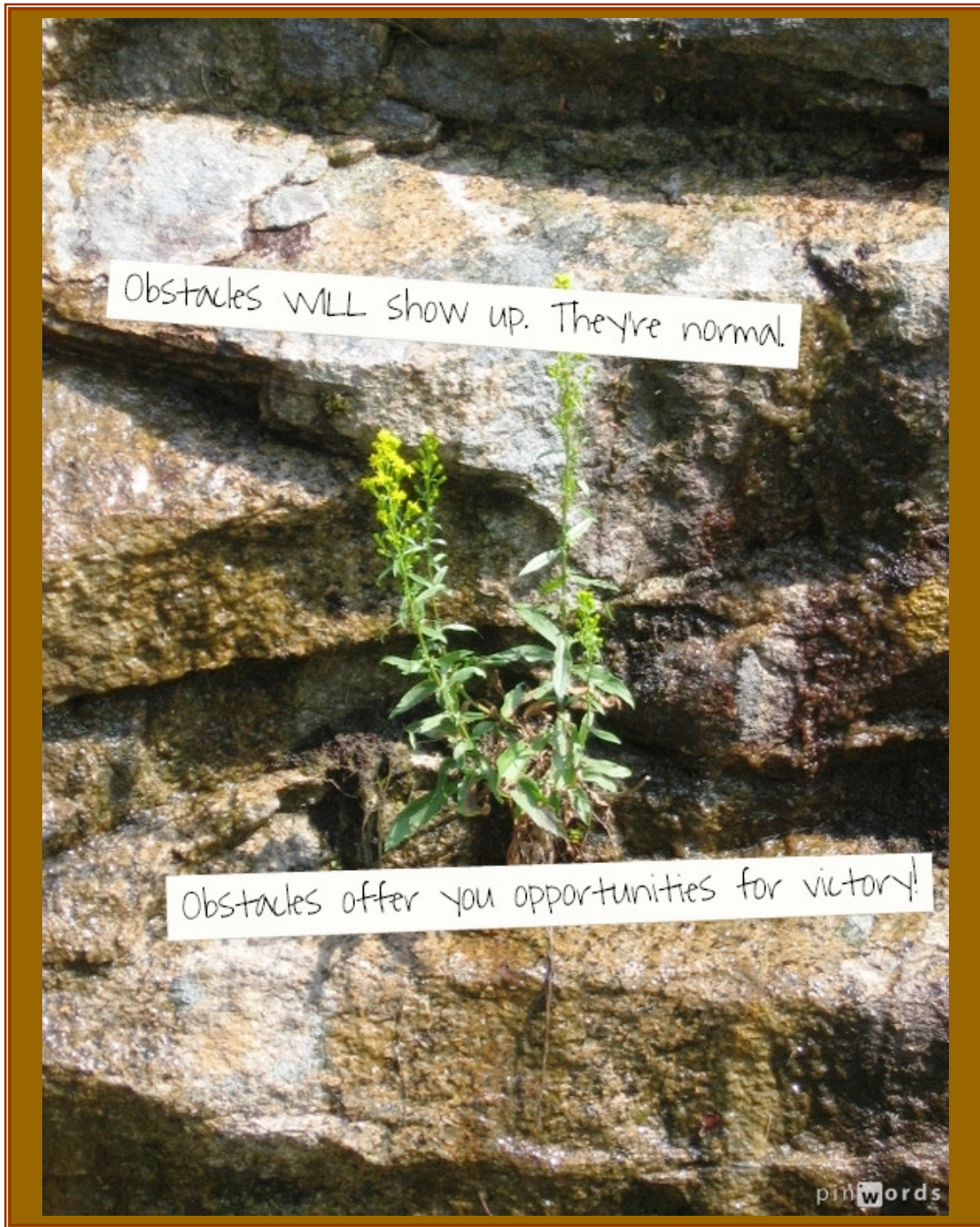
The good news: As a Victorious Woman, you can learn how to eliminate, minimize or handle the obstacles. You are allowed to – and will – find solutions to your obstacles. That's what Ginny did.

Ginny, a mid-level manager from North Carolina, said she always got stuck at the same place. She'd been trying for years to get to the next level at work, but all she got was frustrated...and angry. As I coached her, I encouraged her to find a mentor...someone who had already achieved the goal she was reaching for. She worked through some of her emotional obstacles (fear of failure, discomfort in asking for help). Using my "**SmartWomen@Work**" process for mentoring, she found another woman who helped Ginny see how she got in her own way. Hearing the "hard facts" from the mentor was uncomfortable for Ginny, but she paid attention and the mentor helped her get unstuck. The last time we talked, Ginny said her only regret was not asking for help sooner.

In the course of becoming victorious, you are likely to experience unknown or unexpected obstacles. They have to be dealt with as they happen. However, from the get go, you probably know some of the obstacles you'll have to face. Your best action is to get a jump on them. Be proactive. The "knowns" can be neutralized by listing them in advance and devising a plan for working with them. That's what you'll do now.

- 29 -

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Obstacles - Action Steps

Step 1 – To uncover your obstacles to victory, find a quiet place and clear your mind. Visualize a blackboard in front of you. At the top, notice the words: “I’ll never be able to achieve my goals or become victorious because...” When you read those words, what comes up inside of you? Visualize yourself writing down everything that you can think of on the blackboard. Take as much space as you need.

Step 2 – Make a list of all your known obstacles. Now that you “wrote” them in your mind, put the obstacles you visualized yourself writing on the blackboard down on paper.

TIP: In this step you need the courage to be honest with yourself. Is money or education an obstacle? Maybe you feel that you aren’t good enough. Maybe someone you know or care about won’t approve. Are you afraid of losing a relationship? Is it too scary to take the risk? These are just some fairly common obstacles...maybe some of them are yours. Be honest and fearless in facing your obstacles.

Step 3 – What is your biggest obstacle? Find (at least) three solutions for it. If you get stuck, ask friends to brainstorm solutions, or find a book that can help you.

Obstacle: _____

Solution1 _____

Solution 2 _____

Solution 3 _____

Step 4 – Repeat that for each obstacle on your list.

Something you are likely to discover in this process: solutions for one obstacle may eliminate another. For example, when I decided to go back and get my college degree. I didn’t know if I could do it. I didn’t know if I could compete with college kids...*I wasn’t eighteen anymore.* And I didn’t know if I could afford it. College costs a lot more now than when I was eighteen...*I had a long list of “yama-yama” stuff going on inside me.*

The program I finally chose solved several problems: (1) I would be in class with other people (mostly women) who had all the same nervousness, so I relaxed; (2) the program accepted all my previous courses, including ones I’d taken for job-related topics so I didn’t have to do as much as I thought; and (3) I found out that I could use CLEP tests and/or a portfolio to minimize my cost. Suddenly, my college degree was DO-able. I overcame all the obstacles that prevented me from getting started. You can do the same with whatever your goal is.

There are no
shortcuts to
anyplace worth
going.

Beverly Sills
Opera Soprano

Review and Ramp Up

First, *let's review*. Here's what you've learned:

1. **Values:** The rules by which you live
2. **Intentions:** How you want to live your life
3. **Control:** Ways to get control of your SELF
4. **Taking Action:** Goals that may have been alluding you, an agenda you created, your Victorious Visioning Book, a doable plan
5. **Obstacles:** Some of the challenges you already know you'll face and some ways to eliminate or get around the obstacles.

By now, your mental and emotional wheels should be turning. As you just learned in the last chapter, obstacles will happen. They'll come in the form of money, schedules, pressure, stress, toxic people and more. How do you keep going when you feel like you want to quit? Enjoying a peaceful Christmas dinner

What will keep you persisting when, as you crawl into bed at night, you feel like a dishrag that's been wrung out too many times - a failure, too beat to go on? Think it won't happen to you? Think again. That's when you need to really ramp it up.

Victorious Woman Maureen Ingelsby, Chapter Three, could easily have given up when her spouse walked out on her and left her with five children to raise – five under eight years old! Victorious Woman Alisa Lippincott Morkides, Chapter Nine, nearly lost her very successful business due to poor management. Kathy Zingaro Clark, Chapter Four, broke through one glass ceiling after the other only to marry a man who, two years into their marriage, left her broke and without a home or a job.

If you aren't crystal clear about what you want and why you want it, someone – anyone, including yourself – can easily talk you out of it. *Think about it*. Did you ever diet successfully to get into your wedding dress, a swimsuit or some special outfit? If you did it then, obviously you *can* do it. However, once the special event is over, did you ever slide back into old behaviors...and old sizes? Probably. Because the motivation wasn't there to persist through tight schedules, feelings of deprivation or tiredness.

Lack of persistence is the greatest threat to victory. In a recent interview, Donald Trump said he'd watch many would-be millionaires give up at a time when he could tell that they were just about to break through to success.

On the other hand, persistence is the fire that fuels your spirit into the victory stretch and all the way to the success you desire. Persistence comes with knowing that what's on the other side of the mountain that's in your way, it's going to be way better than where you are today.

Victory Venting: Persistence

What's so good about what you want?
The more good things you can think of, the
faster you will draw your new life to you.
Add more ideas here...

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Review and Ramp Up - Action Steps

Step 1 – Look at one of the goals you set. What’s so good about it? How does it support your values, fulfill your intentions, give you greater control of your SELF?

Think about all the reasons you have for reaching your goal. Think about how the victory stretch that you make to get there will bring you into the greater you. And consider what you are teaching your daughters, sons, nieces and nephews about what it means to be a Victorious Woman – what lessons will they take into their adult lives because of your victory stretches? How about all the ways that stretching your victory muscle will help you BE MORE of who you really are, DO MORE of the things that satisfy your soul, and HAVE MORE of the life of your dreams.

Now, write that list. I’ve only given you ten lines here, but the more reasons you can come up with, the more persistent you will be when the obstacle gets in your way – whether it’s someone saying ‘no’ or some unexpected event...whatever it is.

Persistence pays!

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____
9. _____
10. _____

Step 2 – Make a commitment

All the work you have been doing means nothing if you don’t commit to following through. Focus on your goal. Make the decision now to take one *small step* each day, no matter what. Every effort, no matter how small (even just a phone call) will take you one step closer than you were the day before.

OK...now you’re really making some strides. As you take the steps I’ve outlined, let me know how you are doing. If you have any questions, send them to me via an email at info@victoriouswoman.com. I’ll post the answer (anonymously) on my website and social media. I look forward to hearing from you.

Annmarie



If you aren't saying 'yes' to
victory, you're choosing 'no'

Annmarie Kelly

Victory by Design

- 7 -

Say YES TO VICTORY

In *Victorious Woman!* you'll learn about the Stepping Stones: Victim, Surviving, Advancing, and Victorious - the four lifestyles that either support your victory or sabotage it. Most women spend most of their life – and sometimes all of it – on Surviving because **they settle for what they can get instead of going after what they want**. The reality is that when you settle for Surviving instead of saying “yes” to victory, in the long run you are usually more miserable and insecure than if you stepped out on a new path and failed. And here's the *real* truth, as affirmed by woman after woman: when you say “yes” to victory, most of the time, *you win*. And in the times you don't, you learn so much about yourself and develop more and more confidence to try again, that it's nearly as good as a win.

Ask yourself these questions, and jot down the answers in your notebook.

While working through this workbook,

- Here's what I've learned about myself that I didn't know...
- What's new or different about me as a result?
- What parts were most challenging for me? How were they challenging?

Here are some examples from other learners:

VALUES: Some women said they never thought much about their values and some never even considered them. Women who believed they had them, admitted that they never seriously focused on their importance. As a result, they sometimes got talked into things that they didn't really want or that didn't make them feel good...but didn't always know how it happened.

INTENTION: Other women found intention to be the greatest challenge because they got really nervous about doing it the “right” way. Also, when one woman realized that her intentions didn't match her values, she got scared because it made her feel as though she had been living a lie. *Do you ever feel like that?*

CONTROL: How did you feel about getting your own agenda? A lot of women conceded that they seldom, if ever, focus on themselves and what they really want in life. It's as though they feel that for them to have what they want was a display of selfishness. Putting their needs into focus was challenging and intimidating.

OBSTACLES: I asked you to look at the obstacles you expected to face and brainstorm solutions. Many women said guilt was their biggest obstacles because having personal goals means saying ‘no’ to someone or something else. Also, lack of support is another one. So many women say they regularly accommodate others, but when they need to be accommodated, everyone else is too busy.

PERSISTENCE: The most common feedback I've gotten on this step is that some women admitted that they weren't really committed until this step. It was easier to do the values, intentions, make plans, etc. but this step made them face themselves because it meant really “doing” it...really testing their commitment to their greater self.

- 37 -

**“Our deepest fear is *not*
that we are inadequate.
Our deepest fear is that we are powerful
beyond measure. It is our light, not our
darkness that most frightens us. We ask
ourselves, ‘Who am I to be brilliant,
gorgeous, talented, fabulous?’
Actually, who are you *not* to be?
You are a child of God.
Your playing small does not serve the world.
There is nothing enlightened about
shrinking so that other people
won’t feel insecure around you.
We are all meant to shine, as children do.
We were born to make manifest the
glory of God that is within us.
It’s not just in some of us; it’s in everyone.
And as we let our own light shine,
we unconsciously give other people
permission to do the same.
As we are liberated from our own fear, our
presence automatically liberates others.”**
– Marianne Williamson

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Say “YES” to Victory - Action Steps

Step 1 – The GOODIE List. This time I want you to think of every good thing that will happen when you achieve your goals. Daydream all you can about how your life will be different. What will your days be like? How much better will you feel? Do you have greater self-esteem...and how does *that* feel? What about the people around you...your children, partner, friends? Are you an inspiration for others in your family or your group?

Step 2 – Get SUPPORT. When you finish making your Goodie List, talk to 3-4 other people who you can trust enough to share your focus and commitment and who will give you moral support along the way. Ask them to help you come up with even more items for your Goodie List. The longer you make this list, the stronger your desire will be and there's a greater likelihood that you will follow through with your commitment.

Step 3 – Keep MOTIVATED. Every day, at least once a day, look over your Victorious Visioning Book with your goals and dates, add to your Persistence List, and read your Goodie List at least once a day (when you first wake up/noon/before bed is even better). Also, make sure you do one thing each day that takes you closer to your goals. Some days that action will be something big, but most days it will be something more mundane...maybe even something boring that you don't feel like doing. Still take that action and the days will become weeks, and the little steps will accumulate into leaps. And when you look back, you'll be *amazed* at the results!

Now it's time for...

Congratulations!

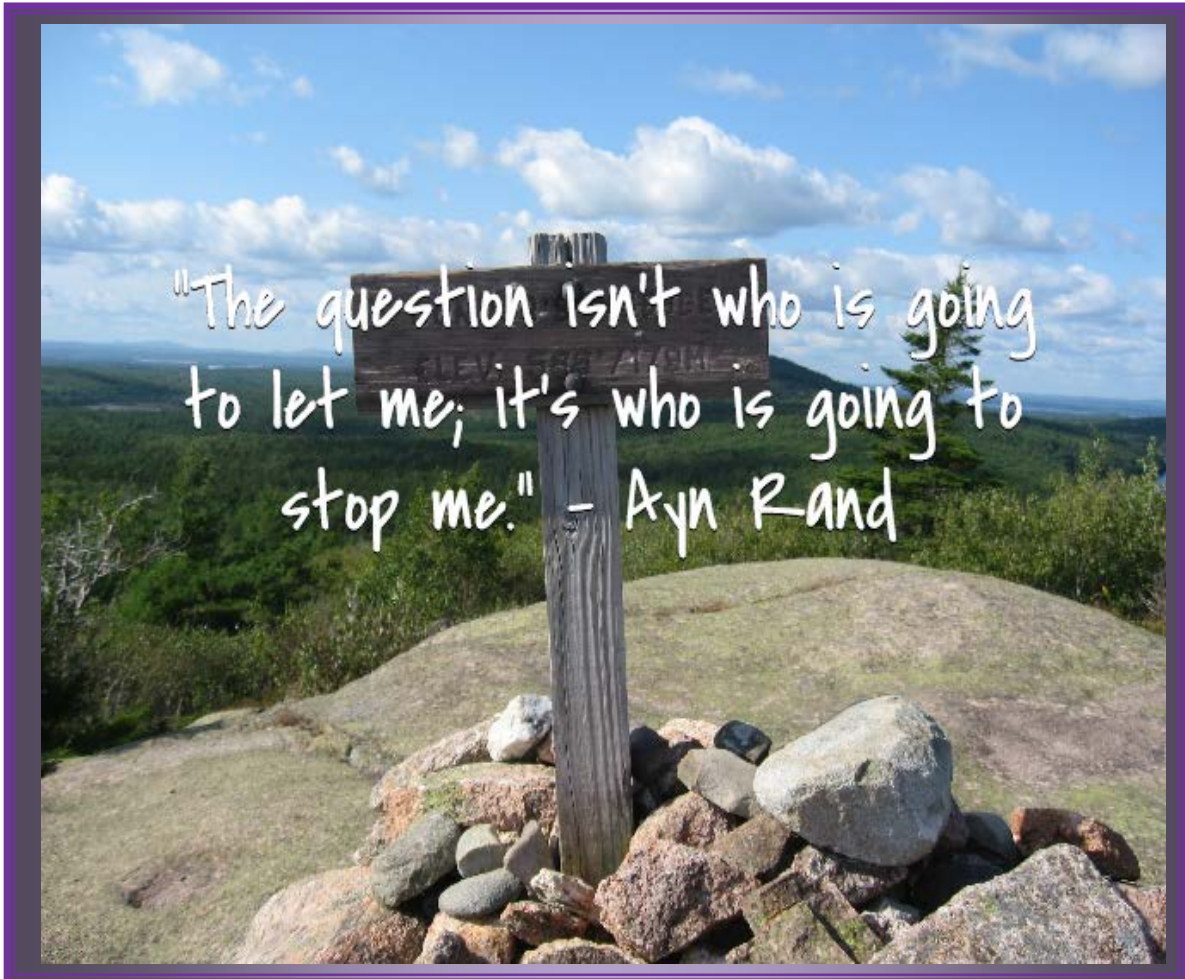


By finishing this workbook, you've taken your first steps to becoming a Victorious Woman. Some parts of this workbook surely challenged you. But, hey, that's what victories are made of...the persistence, courage and determination to keep going when you want to stop. In order to keep going, you have to s-t-r-e-t-c-h past your comfort level, either mentally, emotionally, physically or spiritually. That stretch is called *growth* and it's one of the healthiest gifts you can give yourself. Achieving goals is great, and learning to overcome obstacles is critically important for everything, but it's the growing that goes on inside you that is the real stuff victory is made of.

Don't put this workbook away... keep using it for your current goal(s) and revisit it when you choose new ones. Each time you do...

Let yourself notice that now you HAVE MORE of the life that used to be only in your dreams!

Victory by Design



Victory by Design

What's Next?

Well, my cordial challenge to you back on Page Three can now be your affirmation:

*I promise myself that everyday I will choose to
BE MORE of who I truly am,
DO MORE things that make me feel happy, satisfied and
fulfilled, so that I can
HAVE MORE of the life of my dreams.
Today I stop hiding my bright light
under some proverbial bushel basket.
Instead, I choose to be a Victorious Woman and
LIVE - Out Loud and In Living Color*

For when you need inspiration on your journey... you'll get it from the stories in my book, **Victorious Woman! Shaping Life's Challenges into Personal Victories**. Each woman I talk about faced seemingly overwhelming challenges - divorce, abuse, abandonment, illness, glass ceilings, and more. I tell their stories from start to finish - the good, the bad and the ugly. The stories will energize, inspire & help you keep going when you feel tired or overwhelmed or ready to quit. Order your copy today at VictoriousWoman.com or amazon.com.

Also... I have MORE FOR YOU. An e-newsletter, webinars, teleseminars, Kelly's Café Coaching calls, membership in the Victorious Woman Community, and help from the experts who join me on my radio show.

if you would like to discuss program needs for your company or association, please call me or my staff at 610.738.8225, or e-mail any questions you might have to info@victoriouswoman.com

Finally...

*May the Spirit of Victory lift you up
to live a powerfully interdependent life
that sustains your happiness and prosperity.*

Victory by Design



About the Author

Whether she's working with corporations, women's leadership groups, professional women's associations, small businesses, government agencies, or individuals, Annmarie Kelly encourages women to *LIVE VICTORIOUSLY - out loud and in living color*. She works primarily with women who are late Boomers and GenXers who are starting over after a life transition OR who are looking for a second chance for a successful career and a happy and satisfying life. Annmarie helps them develop victory strategies that transform adversity from challenges into opportunities. She encourages every woman to embrace the powerful "feminine victory" within by stretching out of their comfort zones and into authentic, personal leadership.

Ms. Kelly is a professional speaker, teacher and victory strategist. She is the author of *Victorious Woman! Shaping Life's Challenges into Personal Victories*, *Victory by Design: The Victorious Woman's Guide to Her Best Life and The Five Year Marriage* (2012). In 2008, she founded The Victorious Woman Project, which focuses on inspiration, education and encouragement by providing resources for "starting over" women and leadership skills for women in the workplace. She is the author of many articles on a variety of topics for women, including emotional intelligence, goal achievement, behavior-focused performance improvement, mentoring and life balance. Her articles have appeared in numerous publications. She is an active, professional member of National Speakers Association, American Society for Training and Development and Toastmasters International. She is on the Board of Directors of the Mid-Atlantic Independent Publishers Association and the National Massage Therapy Institute.

Annmarie Kelly's most popular programs:

- *Victorious Woman!*
- *Victory by Design: How to Reinvent Your Life*
- *The Power in You*
- *Somebody's in MY Corner: A Woman's Guide to Profitable Mentoring*
- *How To Talk So People Will Listen*
- *Breaking Though Your Personal Glass Ceiling*

Call to discuss programs or to schedule a free consultation for your organization, women in leadership group or association.

Need CEU's? Ask about our accredited courses.



YES, YOU CAN! REINVENT YOUR LIFE, START OVER,
OR GIVE YOURSELF A DO-OVER SO YOU CAN ...

- ✓ **BE MORE** of who you really are
 - ✓ **DO MORE** that satisfies your soul
 - ✓ **HAVE MORE** of the life you'll love to live
- START TODAY!**

WHAT OTHERS ARE SAYING ABOUT VICTORY BY DESIGN:

"I loved the chapter on values. The examples are wonderful—really makes this real to me and explains what you mean. It's short, which makes it doable, but full of content, which makes it valuable."

DONNA BEASLEY, THE ROMANCE LADY
WWW.ROMANCETRAVELMAGAZINE.COM

"I really like the steps. They're doable and, as a busy woman, that makes the designing feel accessible to me."

JANICE LINDSTROM, MUSIC THERAPIST
WWW.HEARTBEATMUSIC THERAPY.NET

"I loved the entire thing. I really got a lot out of it and I especially like the list of values."

DAWN DANIELS
SMALL BUSINESS OWNER



ANNMARIE KELLY helps women – like you – get inspired, empowered and build the power skills you need for success! She knows that with determination, motivation and persistence every woman has the power to reinvent her life and make it not just better but great! Annmarie can help you find inspiration and direction and build the skills to shape your challenges into new beginnings...and fabulous victories.

Annmarie Kelly is the author of three books: *Victorious Woman! Shaping Life's Challenges into Personal Victories*, *Victory by Design* and *The Five Year Marriage*.

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WOMAN PROJECT**
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