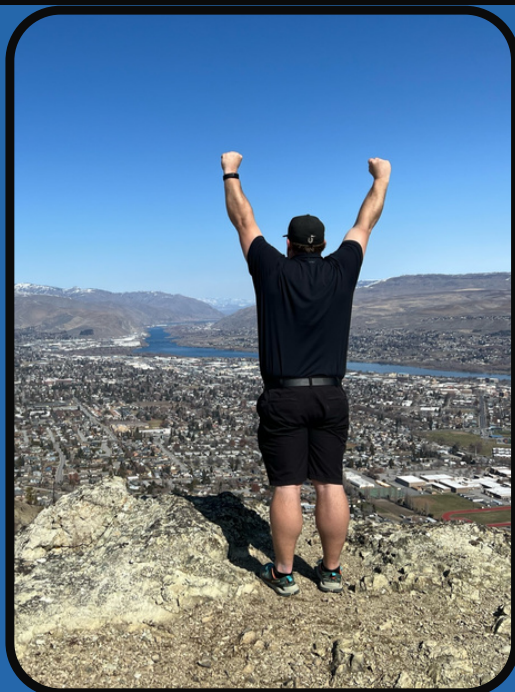


# ACTION IS POWER'S



## STRENGTH THROUGH DIVORCE

7 STEPS TO TAKE OWNERSHIP, MOVE  
FOWARD, AND HEAL

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ANDY HARRIS



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**FORWARD:**

**TYLER TODT**

**@TYROMPER  
TWITTER**

I want to first say I am honored & a better man to know Andy. We share a common bond of going through challenging divorces & coming out the other side stronger & better.

I know Andy & I know the pain, struggle & difficult days that come through divorce. You saw this life ahead of you all planned out & now it feels broken, and perhaps so do you. What I love about Andy's story & this book is that it doesn't shy away from the pain & struggle, but teaches you to lean in & GROW through it!

Andy & I are both living testaments that you can be as low as one can imagine in life after a divorce, but by applying these principles he's laid out, you can not only survive it, but come out better & thriving!

I am honored to write a small intro to this book.

My best advice is: get out a pen, take notes & apply the wisdom you're about take in.

Remember one thing my friend,

"Your best days are ahead of you as soon as YOU DECIDE they are."

-Tyler Todt

God bless & here's to growing stronger each day.



# INTRODUCTION

I don't know where you're at. You may have just been asked to leave your house. You may be 10 months into a separation, but at your breaking point. You may already be taking steps to take back control and started the healing process. No matter where you might be, here's what I hope: This book will help you grow in strength through one of the toughest experiences any man has to face.

As men, we hate to need help. we want to have all the answers. we want to feel strong and be able to be a solid rock for those around us. When we feel weak and when we are hurting, we have a much more difficult time reaching out compared to women. However, we need it just as much. You even choosing to buy this Ebook and take the time to go through each chapter shows the strength you already have. Have faith brother, it's going to get better.

The old adage that: 'time heals all wounds' sadly is incorrect, but what time does is give us space to process and work through the wounds that we have. I have a new saying for you to embrace: 'God, Time, and Work Heals all wounds'. Two of those are up to us. You may be asking: 'two of those?' The answer is yes. In order for God to heal us we have to want to be healed. We have to choose it, and sometimes He heals us in the moment, but others (i'd say most of the time) He chooses to walk with us through the process.

Another question you may have is: 'What if I don't believe in God?'

That's ok brother, I'm glad you are here and choosing to do the work. I'm not going to beat around the bush with what I know He can do, but I'm also not going to force you to believe and neither is He. The 6 other chapters in this book will give you practical steps to grow through this process, but I would ask one thing, its your choice obviously, but I'd ask that you be open to trying one strategy from each chapter, including the one about time with God, what do you have to lose?

My recommendation is to read through the whole book in one sitting and pick one strategy you're going to implement this week. All of them are beneficial as I've personally done each one, and continually practice each one. So any you choose to do will be helpful. Some may be harder to implement at the beginning than others, so keep it simple.

After you've done the above, go through a new chapter each day of the upcoming week and plan out how you're going to implement these new strategies.

Do you need to do them all? No.  
Do you need to start doing something? Yes.

These 7 have worked best for me and I believe they are tools that we all need, but you need to find what will help you heal, and this book is only a tool in that process.

I am grateful for you brother and am excited for your journey to grow stronger through your divorce. I am proud of you and be proud of yourself too. You may not be able to see it now, but this storm will make you stronger. You're making the choice to grow. Well done, now on to chapter one!



**1**

# **THE 2% PRINCIPLE**

Have you ever heard the saying: 'Get 1% better?' It sounds great, but what does it mean?

The premise behind it is we take small steps every single day that add up to big changes. There's a ton of truth in that.

So if 1% is great, 2 % is better. Right?

Before you begin to think that I'm making a small step a big step, let me explain:

1% of 24 hours is 14 minute, 24 seconds, but we're asleep for approximately 8 hours every night.

So, 1% of 16 hours is 9 min. 36 secs.

And if you double it:

2% of our waking hours is 19 min. 12 secs

So for 20 minutes per day, you can get 2% better

20 mins. a day x 365 days = 121.6 hours

Why does this matter in divorce? Especially when we're just trying to survive? Well here's my question:

What could you do for 20 minutes a day for 1 year that would help clear your head, let you think, and help you heal?

I have a suggestion and it's what helped me gain clarity.

Go for a 20 minute walk every single day

Here's why.

When we first go through divorce, or are still dealing with it, we have a ton of thoughts in our head. I remember being angry, confused, hurt, and not knowing what to do. These feelings won't magically go away, and that's ok.

However, we need to give our head space to process everything we're feeling and thinking. This won't get accomplished at home, scrolling through her facebook feed, and zoning out to our favorite show.

You need time to just feel and think. not for 4 hours a day, not to try and fix everything that's going on, just 20 minutes, to walk, think, process, and feel

The extra benefit from walking, rather than just sitting in your thoughts is three-fold:

1. Helps with insomnia
2. Gives your body endorphins (alters mood)
3. Creates a healthy habit

Lastly, and the hardest step, leave your phone at home.

20 minutes is not a long time, even if it feels like it at first.

Look at your schedule, carve out a space where you can take 20 minutes each day, put your phone in your room and walk. Your head will start to clear.

**2**

**POWER IN THE PAUSE**

Think about this scenario for a moment:

You receive a text from your ex, telling you how awful you are and how everything is your fault. If only you had done this or that, you could have stayed together.

This may be true, it may be false

But how would you respond?

I can tell you how I did initially. I would fight back and fight dirty. I'd share all the things that she did, and justify the things that I did. I would escalate the argument and I always needed the last word.

You know what? Nothing was solved, we were both angry and frustrated, and we both dug in deeper into what we believed. Anger is where we both stayed with each other.

Look Divorce is hard and one of the hardest parts about it is we don't want it to be our fault. Even if we should take ownership, its hard when the person we are angry and frustrated with says it's our fault.

Here's the thing: It could be 100% her fault (it's not) and you still don't need to tell her that or justify yourself in the moment.

It will not help. and

It will only hurt your opportunity to heal.

Your healing doesn't depend on her or what she does. She could say and do incredibly hurtful things, and while that would hurt, you can still heal.

So what do we do in the moment?

Breathe  
Put your phone down  
Breathe

Why?

Focused breathing reduces stress and anxiety, it allows us to pause and reflect. It gives us the ability to choose our response.

There is Power in the Pause.  
There is Power in the Breath.

When we get divorced, we need to give ourselves permission to feel frustrated, angry, and ticked off, but we also need to make a commitment to ourselves that we won't respond out of any of these emotions to our ex.

Do we need to get our feelings out? Yes. Are they valid? Yes. Is it important to share them with her? Maybe, but not in these moments.

I also want to emphasize this,

**YOU NEVER HAVE TO RESPOND.**

You can just leave a text without responding. Wait 24 hours and respond then. If you're still not ready, you don't have to.

Here are 3 breathing techniques that I use and worked for me. These are proven to help calm us down

1. Focused deep breathing

- a. Breath in through your nose for 4 seconds
- b. Breath out through your mouth for 6 seconds
- c. Repeat for 1 minute
- d. Focus your mind on the breath, if it wanders that's ok. Notice it, and bring your focus back to the breath

1. Box breathing w/ longer exhale

- a. Breath in for 4 seconds
- b. Hold for 4 seconds
- c. Breath out for 6 seconds
- d. Hold for 4 seconds
- e. Repeat for 1 minute

1. Wim Hoff Breathing

- a. I do not do this technique in the moment, but doing it consistently in the evenings has helped me to be more conscious of my breath in the moment and let go of anxiety
- b. Do 35 quick breaths in and out
- c. On the 35th breath out, hold your breath
- d. When you can't hold anymore, do one deep breath in through your nose and hold for 15 seconds, breath out
- e. Repeat for 3-6 rounds
- f. There is a great app for this technique to help guide you through it, called the Wim Hoff App

Choose one of the above techniques to practice. You do not need to do them all, I don't do them all daily, but I do work to breathe daily (not perfect, but consistent).

Then, the next time you want to react, take a breath and pause, put your phone down and walk away. You have control over how you respond. It takes practice, and trust me, if I can learn to do it (the guy who always wanted to be right and justify everything and throw arrows at her), so can you. It's a choice.



**3**

**FIND HEALTHY  
COMMUNITY**

We all have a community, or atleast most of us do, but we seldom ask this question: Is it helping you grow?

Are the people you surround yourself with helping you move forward? Or, are they pulling you towards bitterness/anger?

Toward laziness/defeat? Towards unhealthy/coping behaviors?

These are questions that you need to answer. your community is helping you move in a direction, every community does, but is it the direction that will help you grow in strength, heal, and move forward in this difficult season of your life? That is what you have to figure out.

One of the toughest decisions I made in the healing process was letting go of a group of friends that I love. They were there for me in my difficulties, especially at the beginning of my separation and even called me out on stupid decisions I was making.

They are good, caring men, but there was a reason I knew I had to find a different community.

My weaknesses.

The behaviors and mindsets that I wanted to change, could not with this group as my main source of brotherhood. I needed space from alcohol, bitterness/anger toward my ex, and my past mistakes. That was not going to happen in this community. I needed to find people who could not only see where I was, but see the path forward and help me get there.

I had to get space and surround myself with a different group of men, again, not because of them, but because of what I needed. I needed a group of men that would love me, but also challenge me. A group that would call me out and hold me accountable. I needed to find a group and community that would help me heal. I needed to take ownership of my garbage, and I needed to find guys who were pushing forward with their health mentally, physically, and spiritually.

So I began to seek this out.

My 1st step was to reach out for my physical and mindset changes. I worked with Default Kings and Gabe Pluguez for 12 weeks. I listened and learned, but honestly did very little work.

I did not realize it at the time, but even just reaching out and learning started the healing process.

After this time ended (Gabe is legit btw), I found Tyler Todt and Mike Schiff. They were starting a 16 week men's group online. This community would be about growth physically, mentally, and spiritually.

Helping all of us to become better men in our marriages, as dads, and personally for ourselves.

This group would be monumental in my healing. Without this group of men, I don't know where I would be today. They showed me that we all struggle, but they also showed me that I'm still loved and I still have people in my corner. That growth and change could happen.

It finally did.

Here is exactly what I did to find a community that gave me the strength to heal through the divorce process and into a healthy, new identity:

### 1.) I audited my circle

I looked at where I was, I looked at where I wanted to go, and then I looked at the advice I was getting and the help I received. Nearly everyone in my circle of people I leaned on were unhealthy physically, drank a lot, and they all blamed my ex for what was going on. I love these men, but this group was not going to help me get healthy physically, take ownership of my mistakes, and stop coping with alcohol instead of healing. I knew I needed a different community to accomplish this and step one was looking at the community I had.

### 2.) I prayed for help

One thing God loves to do is give us community, and a healthy one. We are built for it, we are made for it. Trying to do it alone will only make our situations more difficult.

I can guarantee that changes will take longer and be much more difficult to sustain. We need each other, especially as men, where we are taught to just suck it up and keep moving. That is a lie straight from satan and a bunch of BS. We need to lean on each other.

I asked God to give me the men in my life that I needed to learn from. To give me a community that would help me grow and change. To give me a community that would support me when it was difficult.

He provided, and He will do this for you as well. Just ask Him.

3.) I searched online to find one

To be honest, I didn't know where else to look. I wasn't going back to church yet, I wasn't going to step in a gym yet, and the only other place I knew to meet people was at the bar and I was working to get away from there.

The easiest place I thought to look was on social media. This is where I found Gabe, which led me to find Ty and Mike, which led me to going back to church in my home town, which led me to a retreat, which gave me a huge community of men in person.

You get the picture. We don't have to take every step today for our life to change and for community to be created. Just go search for it, choose to pursue it, and your new community will present itself.

Since I've been through what you're going through I'd love to help you and become part of your community as well, so if you don't want to search or do any of the 3 step process, just message me, I'm here for you.

Lastly, not all community around you is one you need to leave, you may already have a great community and if you do utilize them. Don't be afraid to reach out to them, they may not know what to say with the divorce, so just reach out and ask for help. Most people want to be there for you and help. If they aren't, that's on them, not you.

Find the people you need.

**4**

**ASK GOD FOR HELP**

Let's be real here. This may be the hardest step you take, but I believe it is the most important.

I put it as chapter 4 because I wanted you to keep reading. However, this chapter, if you're willing to try it out, has the power to change your identity and how you respond/heal through this divorce more than any other chapter that is written in this Ebook.

You may think I'm full of crap, Good! I'm ok with that, but here's where I'm going to challenge you. I am going to ask you to do 3 things for the next 30 days.

1. Read the Bible Everyday

- a. Download the Uversion Bible App

- b. Read the Verse of the Day Each Day

1. Ask God for Help and to Reveal Himself

1. In the 20 minute no phone walks...Listen

That's it. No hidden agenda. No making you believe something you don't want to. I firmly believe if you do those 3 steps, He will show up and will help you through this difficult season.

What do you have to lose?

He completely changed my identity. He completely changed how I viewed myself. He took all the dumb crap I did, forgave me, and took away the guilt and shame. He made me a new creation. Without Him, I'd still be stuck in the process of forgiving myself. I would not have hope.



Let me share with you a piece of my story:

When I was asked to leave my house I went straight to the bar. It's where I lived. I coped through alcohol. I spent all my savings. I made horrible decisions with my business, I quit my teaching job because I wanted to be at the bar. I could not take another step forward. I was killing myself slowly.

My identity was that I was a screw up, that I'm never coming back from this. My new reality was living unfulfilled, fearful, and ignoring every problem that I had. I was an alcoholic, selfish, and sad person. But you know what, God always saw me as more, and He protected me through it all and kept knocking at the door. When I opened it, it changed everything, absolutely everything.

I don't know where you are with God, but I can tell you this, He just wants to hear from you. He cares about you. He can handle you hating Him, cussing at Him, yelling at Him (I did and felt all of these). He just wants the authentic you, and to have a conversation. You don't have to clean anything up to talk to Him. He already knows everything you've done anyway, and you know what, He loves you the same, nothing you do can make Him love you any less.

know this chapter may have made you angry. You may be cursing me or saying: 'There's no God' or 'I already have certain beliefs'. That's all good, I'm not offended or upset by that and neither is He. I just ask that you'd accept the challenge and do the 3 steps on the previous page for 30 days. You can quit after that.

On day 30 send me a DM at @abharris03 on twitter and let me know what happens. I believe He will reveal himself to you, look for Him in your life. I'm excited to see how He moves.

Again, what do you have to lose?

**5**

**STOP COPING, START  
WORKING**

Let me dispel a lie for you. We all look at coping as bad. It's not, it's how we cope that becomes the problem. So when I say: 'Stop Coping, Start Working', I actually mean: 'Learn to cope in healthy ways, so you can start working '.

Here's a few questions to ponder:

What do you run to when everything hits the fan?

Do you choose something helpful, that you may not feel like doing, but know will feel good afterwards?

Or

Do you choose momentary relaxation, that does not help later and leaves you with the same anxiousness/frustrations and insecurities afterwards?

These are important questions to answer, because it will tell you how you're coping.

My guess is, the answer is yes to the last question. Why do I make this guess?

Because we all choose momentary fixes. It's human nature! We want the easy and comfortable, especially when stress is high. You are normal!

However, what we need to do is learn how to choose the better, even when we don't want to, because it will serve us later.

I did this for so long with alcohol, that my mind craved it. Even if you aren't coping with an addictive poison. Whatever you're choosing: Netflix shows, sex, or food, all create addictive hardwiring in our brains.

Even though we may set out with good intentions in the morning, when push comes to shove, and stress hits, we go back to what our brain wants: COMFORT.

So how do we change this hardwiring?  
How do we learn to choose what's best for us?

Especially when it will be difficult?

We shift our identity

Here's how I changed mine:

I found my identity in Jesus

He says: 'You are a new creation, the old is gone, the new has come'.

I no longer had to hold onto and live in guilt and shame.

I wrote out who I am (even though I had no evidence of this yet)

- I am forgiven and follow Jesus
- I am a loving father to my son
- I am active and healthy
- I am disciplined
- I do hard things

I created a plan and lived into my new identity daily (with community support)

For each of my identity statements, I created plans that when I did them it proved to myself that I am that man. I started small, but through daily consistency (not perfection), I lived, and do live, into this new identity.

You can change. Scratch that! I know, you will change. You may not believe it, but I believe in you. You will become the true you. Find your new identity and choose to walk in it daily.

6

**YOUR KIDS NEED  
BOTH OF YOU**

I went on a men's retreat to Arizona led by Tyler Todt and Zach Homol. It was life-changing. I learned a ton about myself, about God, about hard work and breathing, and about being present. However, my biggest lesson came to how I interacted with my son when it came to talking about his mom.

On the first day of the retreat, I met my brother Phil Hines. We were having a 'get to know you' conversation and our divorces came up. Phil was much further along with his healing from his and his interactions with his ex, and we were chatting about that and I was asking questions.

I don't remember what my question was, but Phil said: 'My ex and I made a choice to not talk bad about each other in front of our kids. It's not easy at times, but it's important.'

I responded and said: 'Yeah my ex and I have done the same, but I will say that I do one thing. If my son says: 'Daddy come home, why are you not coming home?' I'll say to him: 'I would if I could buddy, I wish I could'.

Phil looked directly at me and said: 'You need to stop doing that, it's telling your son that it's her fault, even if you're not saying it'.

I paused. He was right.



I didn't realize, with that statement, I was saying it was her fault I couldn't come back. I had to change my language. I needed to let go of blaming her, which God helped me do later in the retreat.

I share this story to share this: No matter what bitterness, anger, or frustrations you have toward your ex. Your kids never need to be in the middle of it.

Let me repeat that: NEVER!

It's going to be difficult and you can't control the other person, but make it a non-negotiable today that you won't pit them against each other.

I know I'm being very forward here, but it needs to be very clear: No kid should have to pick between their parents. They need both of you. Again you can't control what the other side does, but you can control what you do and you can talk about their mom respectfully.

As our kids get older and discussions are had about what happened, you can tell the truth without blaming them, regardless of how the marriage ended. You can take ownership of your side and let them ask their mom about hers. You don't need to speculate or share her side. Again, clean your side of the street, be honest, and love your kid the best that you can. If they get that from you and from her, even if you hate how she acts towards you, that's great for your kid.

Get outside yourself, put them first, and give them the love they need from you.

It's hard, but it's parenting. You aren't the only one going through this.

Lastly, if it has gotten ugly and you've shared information you wish you hadn't.

Don't beat yourself up for it. You can't change that, but you can take ownership of it. Let go of your pride, go to your kid, apologize, ask for forgiveness and move forward. We don't have to be perfect parents, but we do need to admit when we mess up and ask for forgiveness from our kids.

If we expect that of them, why should they not expect that of us?

The process won't be perfect, but if your kids know you love them (and hopefully both of you are showing them that), you walk with them through it, moving forward and healing will happen a lot simpler. They are now your number one priority and responsibility in life. Take action from that posture daily.

**7**

**TAKE OWNERSHIP**

You may have looked at the title to this chapter and thought: 'I'm not the one who needs to take ownership, she does.' Which I would respond with: 'You're right, she does...but so do you.'

In a divorce both sides need to take ownership. However, you only control one side of taking ownership. You cannot, and will not, fully heal, without taking full ownership. You can't (and should not try) make her take ownership of her part. You can't force her to clean her side of the street, you can only choose to clean yours. It does not matter if you think it's a cleaner side than hers, your side needs cleaning.

So Step One:

Only look at your side. Sit down, take a deep breath and look at your marriage. Look at what happened. Look at the mistakes that were made. and ask yourself this question:

What part did I play?

Not what part did she play. What part did I play?

Then write down any answers that come to mind. Every single person on this planet has flaws. **EVERY SINGLE ONE!** So take 10 minutes and write down what issues you caused.

## Step Two:

What could you have done differently?

Is there anything in your marriage that if you had chosen to do differently it could have affected the outcome?

Even if you think the outcome would have been the same, Did you contribute to what was happening? Did you give up?

Taking ownership doesn't mean beating yourself up and placing shame on yourself. It just means that we own the mistakes that we made. We own any flaws that we have and we work to correct them. Without ownership, we don't even believe we messed up. We must look honestly at ourselves and our actions.

## Step Three:

The hardest one: Apologize for your mistakes, without bringing up hers. This process may take time. It's not easy at all, but freedom, often times, is on the other side of hard. When you take ownership and then choose to apologize to her, you are setting yourself free, you're giving yourself the freedom to fully heal, you're controlling what you can and no longer blaming her for anything.

Own it, apologize, and move forward.

Many times, we feel, with ownership and apologies it means we're taking responsibility for everything that happened.

You're not.

You are taking ownership of your mistakes, how little or big they may be. It doesn't take hers away, it just gives you the opportunity to be in control of what you can change and allows you to heal regardless of what she chooses to do. If she never chooses to clean her side of the street, you can still move forward because you've cleaned yours.

But a careful reminder: Just cause you apologize, doesn't mean she will apologize to you, and she doesn't need to for you to take ownership.

Reconciliation takes both sides, healing and ownership do not. So do what you need to do. Take a true look at where you were and where you are now. Take a true look at how you act towards her and how you acted in your marriage. Take Ownership, apologize, and move forward in a path of healing.

Lastly, in the healing process, you will need to forgive her. Ownership is the start of that. As we take ownership of our own side and focus on that, we no longer need to keep looking at her side and being angry about what's going on over there. It softens our hearts to forgive and when that happens, healing and freedom come.

Take Ownership. Forgive, and Start Walking Forward One Step at a Time.



**BONUS**

Give yourself a break! Take a breath and relax. If you read through this whole book in one sitting, you may be overwhelmed.

That's normal, but healing is a day by day process. Don't put pressure on yourself to have it all figured out or try to do everything I've laid out tomorrow. That's too much!

Take it one step at a time, one day at a time. That's exactly how I moved forward and it's the way healing will occur. You don't have to have everything figured out or the perfect plan to move forward. You need a simple plan that you can execute daily.

Do I think every chapter in this book is helpful and needed? Yes.

Did I and do I do all of these steps? Yes.

Did I do all of them on day one? That answer is no.

So pick one and start (I would say do the walk, but any one is great!). Time does not heal all wounds, but time gives us the distance and space to heal, so just take one step towards an action that will help you move forward and see what happens in the next 30 days, 3 months, and a year.

You will grow, you will change, you will gain strength and come out better, if you choose to. It all starts with one step. So pick one and take one step today. You will heal. You will recover.

As God said in Psalm 30:5: 'Weeping may last for the night, but joy comes in the morning.'



# ABOUT THE AUTHOR



My God given purpose is to help you find your true identity and grow stronger through divorce. Shame and guilt wreak havoc on men, especially when we we have failed.

You are not your shame and guilt!

You are who God says you are, and your life is not over, even if your marriage is.

For over a year I thought my life was done, my divorce wrecked me, and then i chose to make matters worse by coping instead of healing. My heart is to help you find the community I needed sooner. Avoid the mistakes I made, and choose to do the hard work and heal. This is why I wrote this book.

I am here to walk this journey with you. We can't do this alone, and i'd be honored to walk alongside you, as you heal. I've been there, I understand, but i've walked this process of healing ahead of you and know the struggles that come.

Email me at [abharris03@gmail.com](mailto:abharris03@gmail.com)  
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I would love to walk w/you through this process of healing and give you a plan specifically for you, while providing daily encouragement and accountability. Thank you for reading! Reach out anytime.