

Inspirational Story or Book Based on My Own Experience

Jennifer Marcenelle, MBA, BSN, RN

International Best Selling Author, World-Renowned Speaker, Performance Coach

“SuperHealer! Move from BurnOut to BurnBright”

Have you ever felt like you're trapped inside of a storm of anxiety, worry and frustration? Have you ever said to yourself "I'm doing everything right, so why isn't this working?" Have you ever felt that the harder you try the worse things seems to get?

I have been there! I've been where you may be right now.

At the age of forty-four I nearly killed myself. Not in the traditional sense. Nothing to do with drugs, alcohol, sharp or projectile weapons. For me, it was something much more insidious and just as dangerous: BurnOut.

As a young girl, I'd survived my share of catastrophes. I fell out of the car on the highway, our house burned and the fire started right outside my bedroom door while I slept, and I was home alone when a tornado jumped over our house.

Not long afterwards our family was ravaged by drugs, alcohol, and domestic violence. The nightmare continued when my parents divorced, and we moved across the country, four moves in five years. About the time I was adjusting to the many shocks, my beloved dog Bullet, who had gotten me through it all, was killed by our neighbors for barking at night.

These experiences, had a definite impact on who I became as an adult. Surviving household violence helped me develop an uncanny sense of when things are about to escalate into danger. Emotional abandonment forged in me a deep sense of empathy for others. Mother Nature's uncontrollable acts taught me to have a calm, steady hand in the heat of a crisis. Little wonder that as an adult I went to work in the emergency room and became a nurse.

In the coming years my abilities became superpowers and I became – Wonder Woman! I could tell when a patient was turning south, rush in to render aid, turn them around and save the day. Not only could I save the patient, but I could save families, too.

I loved critical care nursing, I loved the rush of being in a crisis and knowing just what to do. Especially cardiac patients. I loved the deep sense of connection that comes with nursing the family members as well as the patient.

I once cared for a man who had become critically ill and unstable after suffering a brain injury during emergency surgery for a serious and unexpected heart issue. Brain injury patients are very different from heart surgery patients and this man had both. It took all I had to stabilize his vital signs and keep him alive. At the end of my three-day, sixteen-hour shift rotation, his wife asked me to be there the next day when they discontinued life support. I never thought twice. I cancelled my weekend holiday trip to be there with her. She stood right up next to me, my arm around her shoulders, as my colleagues

turned off the equipment one by one, and she said goodbye to her husband and life partner of forty-one years.

I cherished this deep connection with people.

Although I loved being a nurse, I became restless. There was more to do, more people in need, and I felt compelled to take care of more patients than just one or two at a time. Wonder Woman needed more super powers! So I decided to go to graduate school and pursue a career change.

I finished my MBA at the top of my class and was moved into healthcare equipment sales – who ever would have thought? Somehow I backed into the process and became an overnight success – I had found my niche. As a nurse, I understood how the science and technology impacted patient care, and I had the business acumen to make it all work. Successful in sales, I was now helping patients by the hundreds at a time nationwide.

Life was sweet. I threw myself into my endeavors, loved what I did, was highly-paid, and well-respected. Wonder Woman was flying her jet at mach two, right into rapid promotion into leadership and management where I was all too happy to take on more responsibility.

I was movin', groovin', slammin', jammin'. When someone asked how I was I'd answer "living the dream!" That was until we had an unexpected change in corporate culture. Tasked with driving innovative change, I was determined to be successful no matter what. The rising tension and anxiety in my work environment fueled my drive. Unfortunately, things had changed so much I hardly recognized my company any more. I longed for the good old days. To survive in this new environment I had to become an expert at avoiding lightning strikes. Where trouble was brewing I could side step it. I did whatever it took to figure things out ahead and be successful. All of this worked really well for me – until one day it didn't.

More than a decade of long hours, extensive travel, and dealing with day to day high stress began to exact its heavy toll. I was so busy trying to survive, hold on to my success, and move up that I had lost myself in my work. I was so wrapped up in all that I ignored the early warning signs. Headaches, running thoughts, difficulty sleeping, and fatigue later gave way to both acute and chronic pain. I was so frustrated that things weren't going the way they were supposed to that I was short with everyone, especially myself.

I had been working as lead for months on a special project, and had spent weeks working closely with others, gathering data, putting it all together, updating senior leadership every step of the way. The time had come to formally present the solution. Every I was dotted, every T was crossed, all of the pre-meetings were successful.

All that was left to do was host the virtual meeting with all of the stakeholders and walk the key decision maker through the steps. The whole team was excited. We were expecting full endorsement and accolades. I was long-overdue for anatta girl – I could hardly wait.

Just minutes into the presentation, slide four to be exact, everything came to a screeching halt. Senior leadership cut in harshly and took over. His words were angry and hostile. He hated the idea and let us all know that under no certain circumstances would we ever move forward with this. He berated the idea, and as if that wasn't enough, found it necessary to discredit it and me.

I don't remember how I managed to end the call. I was just sitting there, way back in my chair, stunned. Staring at slide four of my masterpiece. I worried for my colleagues. They were all tenured, professional men and women, and I could feel their shock and their humiliation. I don't know how long I sat there. I began pacing in circles, my hands shaking and I was crying uncontrollably. All of my anger and frustration came rushing forth – I was fuming.

How could this happen? Where did I go wrong? Thoughts of suicide filtered through – I wanted this to stop – all of it. There I was walking around the couch trying to figure out how I'd do it when she came.

The nurse in me spoke up, quietly and gently let me know I was in trouble. I followed that gentle voice through the bedroom to the bathroom mirror. What I saw there was shocking – I didn't recognize the woman staring back at me. I looked like a ghost. I saw that my pupils were two different sizes and the nurse in me took over. I didn't want to die; I was dying. I had become my own critical care patient.

So what happened next might seem a little odd to some of you. Someone here is going to think “yep, I know just what you are talking about.” Someone else here might say “What a nut!”

Which is true, but hey, it's my story and I get to tell it! You've been warned - what happened next is for mature audiences only.

My “nurse” is highly spiritual and she knew just what to do. In the midst of the crisis she soothed me. She sat me down and helped me get into contemplation – a form of meditation or prayer. I settled myself down and asked God for help. There on the couch, in contemplation, my spiritual guide, who is always with me, stepped forward. All I had to do was ask.

With tremendous compassion and understanding I was taken out of my body to a small adobe-like, round room. We hovered above and I looked down to see myself – there on a cot- surrounded with a handful of spiritual beings working diligently. They were saving my life. I was shown the damage I had incurred. Without judgement, shock, or regret, I realized that my injuries were incompatible with life. My team of spiritual beings worked carefully and with great focus to treat the damage and make me whole.

Gently, I was taken up through the roof to a mountaintop where my spiritual guide continued to provide continuous waves of love, compassion, and understanding. I walked barefoot through the lush, green grass, inhaling the deeply invigorating air. I began dancing around, young, healthy, and carefree. I stood on the promontory of the great mountain, balanced like an Olympic balance beam gymnast.

What seemed to be moments later, I returned to my body, back on the couch in my living room. The gravity of the situation descended upon me – I knew exactly what I had to do. It was at that moment that I decided to change my life dramatically.

I took full responsibility and set out to make a major course correction on my journey. That near-death experience and that life-changing decision have led me in an entirely new direction. It was then that I took those first halting steps on a challenging, joyful, and adventurous journey of awakening to my full potential as a nurse, business woman and most importantly, divine being. I've become the SuperHealer of my own life. I'm now dedicated to helping other nurses heal themselves and become the SuperHealers they always wanted to be. As an author, speaker, and performance coach, I share my experiences and the lessons learned from them to encourage and inspire others.

At the age of forty-four I nearly killed myself. I never would have thought that such a traumatic event could be such a tremendous blessing. One that led me out of the terrible tornado of exhaustion into the bright light of clearer skies. Wonder Woman had to be struck down and burned to a crisp, so she could rise from the ashes – a SuperHealer with new tools and on an entirely new adventure dedicated to healing the world one nurse at a time.

STOP HERE

Bullet Point Break Down

1. What Happened?

- a. Story as above, near-death experience from burnout.**
- b. Years of trying to survive.**
 - i. Financial security**
 - 1. Hold over from childhood**
 - 2. On my own**
 - 3. Started work at age 15**
 - 4. Put myself through college**
 - 5. Built my future**
 - a. Max out 401K**
 - b. Live on 75% of my income**
 - c. Save 10%**
 - d. Financial planner**
 - 6. Over-Achiever to earn variable compensation to protect my future. Milestones:**
 - a. Make >\$100K a year**
 - b. Make \$250 a year**
 - c. Make \$1M a year**
 - 7. Earn every incentive trip**
 - ii. This changed**
 - iii. I was financially secure before I realized I was**
- c. Perfectionist Why?**
 - i. Grew up in overly harsh parenting environment**
 - ii. Had to be perfect**
 - iii. Overly harsh punishment for minor infractions**
 - iv. Mom removed her love – story of tax mailing**
 - v. The youngest among older, more experienced nurses, sales reps, etc.**
 - vi. The shift – b/c the sage at age 47**
 - vii. Spouse very hard on me. No cup allowed in the dishwasher, dishwasher had to be loaded a specific way**
 - viii. When dating knew I was going to nursing school. ½ way through told me to quit to spend more time with him.**
 - ix. Harsh treatment**

- x. **Betrayal – infidelity**
 - xi. **Prided myself only B I made in nursing school.**
- d. **Rapid Growth**
 - i. **Graduate School – 4.0**
 - ii. **Sales – instant success**
 - iii. **Harsh treatment by manager. Ruled by intimidation**
- e. **Helpers**
 - i. **Colleagues**
 - ii. **Friends**
 - iii. **Spiritual Guide**
- f. **Need for Acceptance**
 - i. **Early home life**
 - ii. **Domestic violence**
 - iii. **Sibling rivalry**
 - iv. **Nuclear family**
 - 1. **Forced to be in an unsafe and unhealthy environment**
 - 2. **ETOH**
 - 3. **Drugs**
 - 4. **Violent behavior**
 - 5. **Holidays ruined**
 - 6. **Major falling out years of no communication with everyone except my Dad. Falsely accused. (Abandonment)**
- g. **Need for Love and Acceptance**
 - i. **Married at 19 to have a family and safe harbor**
 - ii. **Moved out of town to build a married identity – failed marriage drugs, family disowned me**
- h. **Call to Adventure**
 - i. **Moved out of the country Trinidad and Tobago**
 - ii. **Worked as a court reporter**
 - iii. **Boss hit on me as soon as his wife left on business**
 - iv. **Learned about being young and older men preying on you.**
- i. **Nursing**
 - i. **Why I went into nursing**
 - 1. **Family tradition**
 - 2. **Keen crisis manager**
 - 3. **Drawn to critical care**
- j. **Sales Executive**
 - i. **Call to serving larger patient population**
 - ii. **Financial security**
 - iii. **Worked well then failed**
 - iv. **Rapidly promoted**
- k. **Harsh Management**
 - i. **The #1 stressor**

- ii. Tipped me over the edge to complete burnout
 - iii. Need for acceptance, recognition, love, etc.
- l. Course Correction
 - i. Decided to dramatically change my life – set things in motion
 - ii. New job
 - 1. Bait and switch
 - 2. Back in exhaustion
 - iii. Defined my core values
 - 1. Forgiveness
 - 2. Discrimination
 - 3. Contentment
 - 4. Humility
 - 5. Tolerance
 - iv. Alignment with my core values
 - 1. All 5 bodies
 - 2. Everything I think, do, and say
 - 3. Talk gently to myself
 - 4. Change focus from perfectionist to quality and value!
- m. Steps to recuperate – every step I took led me to the next one
 - i. Traditional medicine
 - 1. Hormones
 - 2. Micronutrient deficiency
 - 3. Pain management
 - ii. Chinese medicine
 - 1. Dr. You – You’re a trainwreck!
 - 2. Accupuncture
 - 3. Herbs
 - iii. Energy Medicine
 - 1. Gemstones
 - 2. Energy healer
 - iv. Sleep
 - 1. Need for 9 hours
 - 2. Invested in new bed
- 2. How it affected me:
 - a. Story as above, near-death experience from burnout.
 - b. Physical symptoms
 - i. From P90X to injuries
 - ii. Chronic and acute pain
 - iii. Heart pounding
 - iv. Disturbed sleep
 - v. Teeth clenching
 - vi. Shoulders crunched in my ears
 - c. Mental symptoms

- i. **Running thoughts**
 - ii. **Gun to my head – by my own hand**
 - iii. **Short tempered**
 - iv.
 - v. **Speech was short and clipped**
 - vi. **Absolute exhaustion**
 - 1. **Thoughts of going on out on medical leave**
 - 2. **10 mins of suicidal thoughts.**
 - d. **Emotional Symptoms**
 - i. **#1 Anger**
 - ii. **Anger comes from FEAR**
 - iii. **Crying**
 - iv. **Rant**
 - e. **Causal – memory**
 - i. **Over reaction**
 - 1. **Pinged by issues from childhood**
 - 2. **Pinged by past life issues**
 - ii. **Old wounds needed to be healed**
 - f. **Spiritual**
 - i. **Outgrew Christianity in high school**
 - ii. **Spent years searching tried out different things**
 - iii. **Found my home**
 - iv. **1:1 relationship with my spiritual guide**
 - v. **Learned to work with Holy Spirit**
 - vi. **Importance of finding a religion/spiritual path that raises your consciousness and brings you closer to God.**
 - 1. **Whatever that is for you**
 - 2. **Find it and practice it**
 - 3. **Facing fear of changing your religion**
 - a. **Social pressures**
 - b. **Fear of retribution**
 - c. **Eclectic family**
 - d. **Interfaith marriage**
 - g. **Mentors and Helpers**
 - i. **Spiritual Guide**
 - ii. **Colleagues**
- 3. What did I learn?**
- i. **Spiritual Guide**
 - ii. **Importance of understanding past lives**
 - iii. **Dream state**
 - iv. **Contemplation**
 - v. **Ask for next step, then the next step**
 - vi. **Learned to work with Holy Spirit**

- vii. View from Highest Self
- viii. Fully-developed spiritual being
- ix. Became the SuperHealer of my own life
- x. Work in progress
- xi. Balanced
 - 1. I'm wired to go full tilt
 - 2. I have a tendency to overdo every aspect of my life
 - a. Fitness
 - b. Spiritual practice
 - c. Church volunteering
- xii. Work/life/hobby
- xiii. Taking care of myself
- xiv. From self to service

4. What would I like to teach others?

- i. Near death experience – doesn't have to be this way!
- ii. Became the SuperHealer of my own life
- iii. Understand the process
 - 1. Embrace the hardship
 - 2. Its normal
 - 3. It isn't punishment
 - 4. A blessing to help us grow
 - 5. Awaken to our highest self
- iv. Share my personal experiences – vulnerability
- v. Help other nurses heal themselves
- vi. Awaken others to their full potential as nurses
- vii. Create a vanguard of torchbearers – SUPERHEALERS!
- viii. Heal the world one nurse at a time.
- ix. Top 3 Gifts:
 - 1. Overcome FEAR
 - a. Financial
 - b. Abandonment
 - c. Harsh treatment
 - d. Over-developed sense of responsibility
 - e. Fear of impending doom
 - 2. Love myself
 - a. Spark of God, I exist because God loves me
 - i. I am loved
 - ii. I am cherished
 - b. Unconditional love for others –
 - i. We are all sparks of God
 - ii. God loves each of us equally
 - iii. As soul – our highest self we are perfect
 - c. Not gushy love

- d. Discrimination
- e. Self care
 - i. Care plan
 - ii. Isolation – healing, R+R, Regroup
 - iii. Know when to take a time out
 - iv. Vacation
 - v. Positive affirmation book
 - vi. I feel...
 - vii. I am successful at...
 - viii. Contemplation
 - ix. RLG 20 mins of cardio
 - x. Mental Fast
 - a. Caffeine
 - b. Sugar

3. TRUST myself!