

Dedication

To all the “You-Know-Whos” I’ve encountered on my journey of self-discovery: I learned much from your efforts to destroy my happiness and dreams. I’ve learned to transform your negative energy into inspiration for developing understanding, forgiveness, and love. Thank you for the survival skills I’ve learned to use to create the life I want.

**A Survival Guide for When
You-Know-Who Hates Your Guts**

by

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INTRODUCTION: WHO IS YOUR YOU-KNOW-WHO?

The term *you-know-who* is used as a pronoun in this book. It describes a person whose name one doesn't want to mention but who is known to the person to whom one is speaking. It also refers to a known and unmentioned person.

Most everyone has a you-know-who. The 1835 Gilbert and Sullivan play, *The Mikado*, mentions a you-know-who in the line of script that goes, “St-st-st and what's his name, and also you know who / the task of filling in the blanks I'd rather leave to you.” Even Harry Potter had a you-know-who. In fact, perhaps the most recent modern-day reference to *you-know-who* is the known and unmentioned Lord Voldemort. J. K. Rowling, who created this

character, said, “Almost no witch or wizard dares to speak his name, instead referring to him by epithets such as ‘you-know-who,’ ‘he who must not be named,’ or ‘the Dark Lord.’” In 2000, Rowling described this world leader of the evil wizards as a self-hating bully, void of the normal human responses to other people’s suffering.

Do these two references conjure up an adequate description of your you-know-who?

The beauty of *A Survival Guide for when You-Know-Who Hates Your Guts* is that it will empower you with awareness and techniques to use while you deal with difficult individuals and situations where you choose not to remove yourself.

Perhaps you’re part of a family, a relationship made up of people you love that includes one terribly inconsiderate you-know-who who seems to want to make life miserable for others. Your choice is to stay in this family and deal with the wrath of this person. Perhaps you have a job you choose not to quit. Or,

you might feel stuck in another situation where you must deal with a difficult-to-deal-with person.

Instead of feeling stuck or imprisoned in any of these situations, consider the ideas in this book, which are offered to help you find ways to manage your feelings, emotions, thinking, and behavior to create the best reactions and results possible. Here you'll discover practical ideas, to implement immediately, but also to help you become more skillful in your interactions with others.

The purpose of *A Survival Guide* is to fortify you with strategies to choose appropriate responses that you can apply to your you-know-who. These new strategies will help you lessen your stress, gain self-confidence, and understand the power you have over your feelings, while at the same time help eliminate the stress and discomfort of those around you. You can learn to be comfortable around *him*, regain your balance, and make his bad behavior make you look good.

(Please note, I'm using the male pronoun "he" in most instances, to simplify the read, but be assured, there are also many female you-know-whos.)

I'm writing this book based on my personal experience from my own list of you-know-whos. For obvious reasons, I'm not naming any names. My experience with these individuals usually involved long-term relationships or are lifelong commitments. Looking back, I realize I owe a lot to those "who are not to be named." Each one helped shape my personality, deepen my compassion, and develop my survival skills. They helped me become an expert in getting along with others. From my experiences with them, I also heightened my appreciation for the people in my life whose constant support and belief in me helped me succeed and be a better person. With your diligent application of these strategies I'll teach you, I believe you can accomplish these things too, so turn the page and let's get started!

KEY POINTS ...

- Though only a beginning, what you've just read holds perhaps this book's most reassuring lesson: You're not the only one who's had to deal with a you-know-who. Nearly all of us do at some point in life.
- Your situation isn't impossible. Have faith that you can do something about *your* you-know-who.

CHAPTER 1: WHAT TO DO WHEN YOU HAVE PROBLEMS WITH ANOTHER PERSON

As the old saying goes, it takes two—two to fall in love or form a friendship, and two to start a fight. In this chapter I'll give the basic knowledge and steps to help you increase the chance that your twosomes are (or can become) the harmonious kind.

Everyone who lasts for any length of time in a relationship, whether career, family, or romantic relationship, is going to experience problems from time to time. It's unrealistic to imagine that you'll find or experience a relationship where you'll always see eye to eye with the other person in the relationship. In a healthy relationship people don't

avoid problems; they think of them as lessons and they learn from them.

To begin with, it's critical to understand that some difficulties are best worked out within our own minds, and that the other person in the relationship—the you-know-who in this case—might not even be aware of the problem. Many problems can be negotiated, reaching a compromise, but it takes insight and understanding of the other person and the circumstances to know which approach to take for a given issue. To simplify a complicated process, consider this: According to Dr. Virginia Foster in her book, *Dr. Foster's Guide to Health, Wealth, and the Pursuit of Happiness*, when you have difficulty with another person, you have four choices.

1. Be assertive and negotiate for change.
2. Change your thinking, so you don't upset yourself over conditions that aren't going to change.

3. Eliminate the other person from your life.
4. Suffer silently and be miserable.

Choose Option Number 1, to be assertive and negotiate for change, when you have a real issue requiring an active solution and you determine the other person is able and willing to cooperate.

Choose Option Number 2 to change *your* thinking, so you don't upset yourself over conditions that aren't going to change. Option Number 3 is for extreme cases, such as child or spousal abuse or other dangerously destructive behaviors.

Of course, Option 4, to suffer and be miserable, is what will happen if you don't decide between Options 1, 2, or 3.

Let's take a closer look at Option 2. Option 2 is what this book is about. This is when you use the ideas in this book to restructure your thinking with insight. You can use these ideas to create the results and sanity you want for yourself, and for those in a relationship or work environment with you.

Sometimes our feelings are best processed in our own minds. Changing your thinking, so you can be more flexible, loving, and forgiving, is a step toward ensuring that your relationships are healthy and enduring.

Let's apply Option 2 to a you-know-who in your life. To expand on my earlier definition, the term "you-know-who" in this book refers to anyone you decide to keep in your life but you want to learn how to avoid upsetting yourself over his or her behavior. Perhaps you have a you-know-who in your life right now, and you believe he hates your guts. You believe he doesn't like you, or believe in you.

You believe he thinks you're a bad person and that his opinion of you will probably never change. This person might be a boss, a neighbor, a relative, an in-law, or a coworker. Because of his position in your life you might never be free from him, or from the hate you believe he has for you. You know who he is because of the way he treats you, the way he looks at you, the terrible things he says about you, and the way he constantly puts you down. You feel

uncomfortable and awkward whenever you're in his presence. Inevitably, whenever you're around him you believe he has an intense dislike for you. This belief causes you to become uncomfortable and feel off-balance while interacting with him. You might react awkwardly, and come up with responses that don't represent the person you really are.

Your goals are to develop ways to change your thinking so you don't upset yourself over conditions that probably aren't going to change, and come up with ways to be assertive and negotiate for change. These goals might seem so different it might appear impossible to do both, but trust me, it's not. With those two goals in mind, let's move on to the next chapter.

KEY POINTS ...

- You have four choices in the way you can deal with your you-know-who.
- Option 2, to change your thinking so you can better cope with conditions that aren't

going to change, offers you skills you can apply to other challenges in life.

- Your changed thinking makes it easier to take effective actions to deal with your you-know-who, which you'll learn about later in the book.