



## **Interview with Lynn Forney, Author of *Choosing Survival*:**

*How I Endured a Brutal Attack and a Lifetime of Trauma Through the Power of Action, Choice and Self-Expression*

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### **Q: What made you feel the most vulnerable about sharing your story?**

The idea of being exposed, especially with my history of depression. I struggled with the idea that I would seem less reliable, less trustworthy somehow. Would people question me, doubt me, like they did when I was attacked? That experience was incredibly painful, and I was worried I was setting myself up to experience that all over again.

### **Q: Was there a particular moment you knew you wanted to share this story publicly, especially given what you shared above?**

When I would start to share details of the attack with people, I would soon find myself saying, "This story is so crazy/inconceivable/wild, I should just write a book." I've had that idea floating around in my head for many many years. Like most people, finding the time, energy, or focus proved difficult. But in some ways, I'm grateful for that. I think this book would have been extremely different if I had tried to write it before now. During Covid, I was forced to slow down and find other ways for my creativity to express itself besides the performing arts. I enrolled in a small coaching group. Having that support proved to be imperative to begin the writing process and gave me the push I needed.

### **Q: Who do you hope reads this book?**

Anyone who feels alone. Who doesn't feel seen. Who needs support to find healing. And certainly anyone trying to understand other victims/survivors of trauma. At the end of the day, anyone who feels called to read it and connect with it.

### **Q: If you could tell your younger self anything, what would it be?**

This is kind of interesting, because my first inclination is something uplifting or inspirational. But then that feels kind of superficial. Everything I've experienced, both the beautiful and the ugly, has led me to the person I am now. The choices I make. The triumphs and failures. And it's still a process. As heartbreaking as some of it has been, I've always known deep down that I am a fighter. And always will be. So perhaps, to my younger self, I would simply say, "I believe in you. No matter what, you've got this."

### **Q: How have you continued to choose survival over the years?**

When I have a rough day (or time period), it always helps to come back to the idea that "I chose this." Meaning, I chose to live, so what am I going to do about it? That feels incredibly empowering, and even writing that here serves as a good reminder. Certainly being more curious and asking myself questions helps, too. Like: "Why do I feel this way?" "Why was this my initial reaction?" "What if I stay open to this, even if it feels weird or uncomfortable?" "What can I learn here?" Those observations keep me growing, evolving, expanding. Which, I believe, is the joy of life.

### **Q: How did the writing process affect your healing journey?**

I'm not going to lie, this process was *tough!!* But it allowed me to have more compassion for myself and everything I've been through. I think it definitely healed some shame that was still lingering deep below the surface. And after this process, I second-guess myself less. Ultimately if it helps others to be seen, and encourages them to share their stories, there is tremendous healing in that. Which, I believe, will continue to do the same for me. And that, in itself, is incredibly powerful.