

**MY**

**Richard Maun**

**BOSS** IS  
A

**B@\$\$T@\*D**

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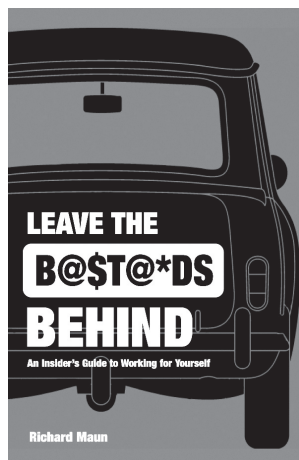
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# **My Boss is a B@\$t@\*d**

**Surviving turmoil at work**

**Richard Maun**

**Tick here if you agree**

**CYAN**



**Marshall Cavendish  
Business**

*For FMM Intake 52, who helped me to wake up  
and for Beck, who is just great.*

**Disclaimer**

Please note: Any resemblance to any person or business contained within this book is purely coincidental. If you think you know someone in any of the examples, you are mistaken. I was writing about someone else.

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# Preface

This book has been written to help people reflect on their own stressful situations and to help them think about what they can do to move forwards. Whether you have lost your job, or are stuck in a miserable position with a boss who treats you like the living dead, this book is here to help.

We spend our working lives under the harsh glare of a corporate sun that defies the laws of space and time and often makes up its own rules, so it's crucial to keep our water bottles of learning topped up and to take regular swigs to prevent dehydration. However, because some management books are as appetizing as stale bread, this one has been written to make your taste buds sit up and samba. It's a delicious savoury morsel, designed to make your tongue lick your lips and make your mouth beg for seconds.

The tips, comments, ideas and questions contained within *My Boss is a Bastard* have been based on real experiences. They are designed to encourage people to think about where they are, where they would like to be and what practical steps they can take to remedy their situation.

If you read *My Boss is a Bastard* and smile, that's great. If you read it and remember one thing, that's fantastic. However, if you read it and take one genuine step to increase your inner health then treat yourself to a lap of honour around your local supermarket, because you win the gold medal. Well done.

However, as most people have had to cope with a bum job or a boss with questionable parentage, we may as well have some fun along the way. Therefore, this book is full of naughty words and cheeky illustrations of our spiky world of work. You have been warned.

Before we start on the journey towards increasing our inner happiness it's worth noting that I am in a happy place. A life spent in work is always going to be a mixture of good times and

good bosses and stressful times with stressed bosses. I've had an interesting mixture of both and all of them have helped me to go forwards in some way. So, thanks go to them for their support and we all know that no one is really a bastard. That is just a handy nail to hang our hat on when our emotions are raging like a river in flood.

However, tough decisions do have to be made sometimes and collateral damage is unavoidable, so the purpose of this book is to focus people on what they can do for themselves. Spare a thought for the manager who has to let you go. He (or she) has probably sweated their way through breakfast and journeyed to work with ice in their stomach, wishing the day away before it has even started.

When people have a tough job to do they are under pressure and the stress can make them act out of awareness. They can forget the pleasantries that make us human and go about their task in a methodical and dispassionate manner. There is a job to do and the doing of it does not make them someone to pillory in later life. They would tend to do it differently if they had another chance, so don't be too judgemental. All managers, of all types, have to earn a living and everyone deserves a chance to get it wrong from time to time.

As you read this book, use it as an opportunity to get in touch with your anger. Instead of using it to castigate someone who was doing the best job they could at the time, use it to focus your boiling energy on yourself. Everyone is entitled to a life and you may not like what other people say, or what they do, but that is no reason to let it deprive you of the chance of doing something more rewarding. Invest your energy in you.

Anger is a useful emotion and it's okay to feel angry. It's also important to find safe ways of expressing our anger. A great way is for people to use it to generate a head of steam, to create the momentum required to invest time and energy in their own future. Please don't simply rage at those who had a job to do, as that would be to miss the point. Instead read this book and think of yourself and where you want to be.

Finally, before we rush off into the World of Bastard there are a few people who need to be thanked. Nothing is ever produced in splendid isolation and without the help and support of the generous few this book would be just an idea, floating round the ether.

First up, take a bow Steve Tracey for your solid support and useful insights. Next up is Alan Robertson, who gets a big cheer for laughing out loud and being generous with his time. Frances Donnelly gets a well-earned round of applause for her advice and thoughtfulness, as does Martin Liu for his encouragement. Thank you to all my family and friends who took the time to read the manuscript (you know who you are) and finally a large bouquet of fresh flowers goes to my wife Beck, who supported me through all the dark days and out into the light again and who is always loving, tolerant and supportive.

Read, enjoy, think and make progress: it's not about them – it's about you.

Richard Maun

# **Come in out of the Rain**

## **Getting started**

**1**

Please give me your attention for a moment. There is something we need to get clear before reading on. This book contains strong language, scenes of a violent nature and some sexy bits. Later there is a reference to a heaving bosom and, to ensure an even balance between the sexes, a large and excited bulge in the trouser department.

What? Why? Well, because life is like that. So, if these things are likely to offend your delicate sensibilities then pop this book back on the shelf and walk on by. You are not going to like it.

And because this book contains stories and anecdotes collected from many sources, you need to know that they have all been dressed up in false noses and scruffy wigs. The job of the book is not to identify the guilty, the stupid or the just plain incompetent. Any resemblance to someone you think you know, or a business which sounds familiar is purely coincidental.

One more thing, whilst we are in the disclaiming zone.

The author assumes that you are of sound mind and are able to make your own decisions, because you shall remain responsible for all of your actions or inactions that you take as a result of reading this book. If you don't like the sound of these two disclaimers then there's another reason to stick the book back on the shelf and let someone else buy it.

You would like to read on? You understand that you are your own person? Your expensive legal eagle is back in his eyrie? Okay then, let's do it and remember:

Read, enjoy, think and make progress: it's not about them – it's about you.

Have you ever come home from work, shut the door behind you and screamed out:

“I hate my job!” Or,

“I'm so stressed!” Or,

“My boss is a COMPLETE BASTARD!”

Or variations on the above that describe in minute detail just what your boss can do with his executive palmtop that will make it very awkward for the computer department to install new software without the aid of rubber gloves, lubricating jelly and a tyre lever. You have?

Then you are not alone. This book is for people who are fed up with a dull job, or with being taken advantage of at work. Fed up with working for a boss who has their best interests firmly placed at the bottom of his (or her) to-do list, after “order new flipchart” and “empty the waste basket”.

And fed up with creaking management books that contain 10,000 top tips to stay in tip-top condition. Some have merit, others less so, but in a crisis the vast majority are about as useful as a hot air balloon in an aerial dogfight. Rat-tat-tat-tat and down you go, sinking towards the enemy lines with only a silk scarf and a pair of goggles for company. And no parachute, because you thought it was too nerdy to carry one.

During an ass-kicking session, no one is going to hold up their hand and say:

“Excuse me old chap, I’m feeling a touch stressed and need to come up with some positive actions to counteract your vicious onslaught. Do you mind if I pop out to consult the library?”

This book is here to help us through these situations and to smooth the brow of the worried person.

In times of crisis we do not have six months to speed read the syllabus of a business course, or have access to a top-flight psychologist, who can sit in his comfy leather swivel chair, stroke his carefully manicured goatee beard and say:

“Now zen my leetle koala-bear, take me back to your childhood and together ve can unravel ze enigma zat is your current predicament.”

No. Not in a million years. However, we probably have a network of worried family and friends who can mop our beading foreheads and give us a few handy hints. We also have our single greatest asset. Ourselves.

You are smart. We are all smart. We choose to do different things with our intellect. Some “clever” people let theirs rot, whilst other “stupid” people seem to climb effortlessly to greatness. Your first smart move is to do something for yourself, namely, to read on.

This book is here to give people some basic kit to survive when everything is shooting up in flames. Basic kit, mind you. Nobody ever ran out of a burning building, carrying their treasured grand piano. And basic is plenty in a world that wants the decision and wants it NOW.

In a crisis we experience a sort of inner weightlessness, when our stomach drops through our butt-hole and our brain does a gold medal winning series of back-flips, with half pike and twist. When this happens bulky equipment is not going to be of much use to us.

Think of this book as the equivalent of a good set of instructions tucked into a box of flat-pack furniture. At some point during the assembly of your deluxe mahogany shower cubicle you are going to get really cross with the effing effort of screwing Panel F to Upright G and insist that some sod in the factory has left out the special joining tool. This, of course, is the tool which you carelessly slung out with the packaging. In terms of a flat pack stress-out, simple guidelines are needed. Not simple because you are stupid. No, simple because your emotions are running high and your brain is likely to struggle with complex instructions written in techno-babble.

The next time you're out for a Saturday afternoon stroll, slip into your local camping shop and ask for a survival kit. Serious money suggests you'll only be able to buy a basic one, so don't bother asking the spotty counter-jockey for a complex kit in a gold posing pouch.

So, in the spirit of practicality, this book will concentrate on simple and straightforward principles and here is the key one: travel light.

Travelling light means you can run fast. Go for a small amount of portable learning instead of a large ball and chain that will slow you down and spoil the cut of your designer business uniform.

It's a safe bet that none of us can remember what we had for dinner a week last Thursday.

Pasta?

Pork chops?

Honey roast ham?

It might as well have been Peacock pie with a Humming bird sauce for all the difference it makes. It's hardly surprising that when we're under real pressure our carefully learned models evaporate between our sizzling ears, leaving behind only the imprint of some dusty old knowledge.

Maslow may have had a hierarchy of needs, but is this going to stop you from getting shafted by some sweating Suit with a corporate leer? No, of course it's not. When the chips go down and the balloon goes up there is no time for in-depth research, or prolonged packing. You have to fight, jump, leap, swim or run.

You have no choice.

And when you have no choice and have to run for it, it helps to have some basic kit, a rough plan and a handful of options. To be of real value they need to be easily remembered, so here's a useful nugget to keep in your jacket pocket, or in a secret compartment in one of your shoes: Your **PERSONAL SURVIVAL KIT**. Where is yours? Do you even have one?

Well you do now.

Your Personal Survival Kit is the one item that will help you to stay in control of yourself and support you when navigating through the stinging hailstorm of a tough time. You don't need to have a leather-bound ermine-trimmed 64-meg Personal Survival Kit either, because a scruffy, dog-eared one will do just fine. When a poor unfortunate pilot is shot-down and captured, his treatment is not based on the quality of the stuff he carries.

“Ah, look here Ivan, this pilot has a monogrammed survival kit. You sir can check into the local five star hotel. Enjoy your stay for the rest of the war and help yourself to the mini bar. No Ivan, the co-pilot has a cheap plastic kit with a crack in the lid. For you my friend it’s off to the back of the bike sheds for some interrogation by big Sven.”

So in the back of this book there is a Personal Survival Kit (PSK) for you to complete. In a time of crisis it may be your best friend. It may even be your only friend. It will become one of your key sources of handy information and guiding principles. But please don’t turn to it and scribble in stuff now, because you need to think carefully about what to write.

To help the process of compilation there are regular prompts throughout the book. When you reach one it will invite you to complete a particular section of your PSK, so that when you reach the end of the book you will have completed the whole kit. Simple. We like simple.

The word Survival is intentional. This is because you have to survive first in order to make your escape. If your current situation is rotten then you may need to sneak your way to freedom, slipping with a smile past the noses of the guards, who are trained to shout:

“Stop! You can’t do that!”

Yes you can.

You can do what you like, if you really want to.

Your Personal Survival Kit should be available to support you in an emergency situation and it’s important to play fair and complete all the sections. Otherwise you could find yourself with some crucial bits missing at the wrong time.

This would be the survival equivalent of forgetting your compass, or your box of matches. You could try and start a fire by rubbing two boy scouts together, but getting a spark out of them will take until well past teatime and the authorities generally frown on this technique. When you’re stuck in the wilderness, no amount of imagination is going to turn a broken twig into

a magnetic needle, or into a fishhook, so please remember that a complete kit is essential.

Think of an emergency situation at work as if you had an exam suddenly sprung on you. Remember the last exam you sat and recall the rising panic and racing pulse that you experienced? If you don't go to work and are living in a tropical rain forest, remember the time you sweated when shooting your first arrow through a rare bird of paradise. Watch out, if you were raised in a forest and have never heard of management theory, because a brace of missionary consultants will be flying in to convert you any moment now.

Make use of them.

A pot roast for two is the most popular choice. They'll probably both fit into a decent sized pot.

However, whether you live in the jungle, in the city, or in some sleepy garden suburb, you should be aware of an English chap by the name of Thomas Hobbes (1588–1679). By day he was an ace political thinker and by night he was the homebrew king of Malmesbury. A fact which seems to have slipped out of the history books. Unhindered by the frailties of the modern PC, Tom thought and wrote and thought and wrote, buoyed up by the occasional yard of ale and foot of snuff. Despite never having heard the words “fat cat salaries” he would have well understood the current nature of our working world when he wrote in his 1651 masterpiece *Leviathan*:

“The goals we have are the satisfaction of our desires ... of which the most fundamental are the desires to stay alive and avoid pain.”

That's very true Tom, but what do you think about the life of man?

“The life of man is solitary, poor, nasty, brutish and short.”

Thank you.

Good old Thomas Hobbes. Dead, but still useful. “Nasty, brutish and short” is a great summary of our world of work and can often be applied to fast food hotdogs.

Pull on a glittery shirt and waltz down to your local night club. Once inside, throw a stick and watch it bounce off someone who would cheerily agree that working for Super-Duper-Mega Inc was indeed nasty, brutish and short. They will have been stressed by Nasty, tripped up by Brutish and stabbed in the back by Short. Ouch.

Some people moan that life is dull. Dull? Really? Life is never dull. We live a life that is full of pace and passion and change. We live in a world that is being torn apart and stitched back together on a daily basis. People change their clothes, their hair colour and even the number of wrinkles on their face. Nothing can be taken for granted and nothing is above our meddling.

Famously though, leopards do not change their spots and look how badly they're doing!

Talking of change, the years 1831 to 1836 were vintage ones, when a ship called the HMS Beagle sailed round the world. Nothing remarkable in that you may think, although it was a very long way to go without bumping into anything sharp, armed or terminal. However, this sturdy vessel carried an inquisitive fellow by the name of Charles Robert Darwin. A capital chap, who was just itching to get cracking with new research and new learning.

Eventually after many months of ship biscuits, weevils and avoiding the unwanted attentions of lonely sailors he fetched up on the Galapagos Islands. Just short of the bit on the map marked "here be dragons". On the warm sands of his new home he passed the time trimming his beard, chasing finches and using the giant tortoises as slow moving coffee tables. Eventually, with his beard in a capital condition, he dug out his writing kit and knuckled down to some seriously hard work.

Days, weeks and tortoises all passed by and eventually his discount jotters were bursting with interesting observations and blots of inky inspiration. Finally, he had collected enough material to write a book and so he retreated back to his study in England, with sand in his socks and a suspiciously slow moving toast rack for company.

His weighty masterpiece called *On the Origin of Species by means of Natural Selection* was published in 1859 and at a stroke it introduced our forefathers and our foremothers to the word. And the word was EVOLUTION.

The world as viewed through our corporate binoculars evolves at a frightening speed and only those who evolve with it will survive and prosper. Those who do not wish to evolve are still worthy of our respect, but ultimately are not racehorses worth betting on. Someone, who should have known better, once commented:

“Evolution is all very well, but it’s in the past. Nothing for *me* to worry about.”

Of course, this person lived on their own personal desert island, where luxury hampers were airlifted in each week and all they did from dawn to dusk was sunbathe, snorkel and make sweet love to the sound of the whispering ocean.

If only life was that simple.

Here’s a quick exercise to prove the point. What can you see that did not exist when you were a child? Put this book down and look around you.

Take a long look.

It’s a long list, far longer than you might realize. Dust off the bookshelves in your mind and flick through what you know about medicine, electronics, communications, textiles and food.

There are many items in everyday use that we did not have as children and in some cases there are things that didn't even exist as recently as last year. To really make the point take a walk round your house and put a sticky label on everything you didn't have as a child. You will use up a frightening number of labels.

By the time you have read this book someone somewhere will have invented a radical new gizmo that you didn't know you needed. However you'll still shell out hard earned cash for one next Christmas, because it is just *so* indispensable. Of course, not all new inventions and gadgets are useful, but we buy them all the same. We don't mind really, we just want them because they are new and new means good and good means progress.

This book is about making progress. Making progress with your asshole of a boss and making progress with yourself. So, go on, treat yourself to a large slice of progress, with extra mozzarella and garlic bread.

Come in out of the rain. It's cold and wet outside. It's snug and warm inside. And full of strong language and spiky stories.

Why?

Because life is like that.

# **Your Personal Survival Kit**

**Cut out and keep safe**

The end of the book has arrived. The only thing left to do is read through your Personal Survival Kit and make any changes or additions.

Then cut it out and keep it somewhere safe and accessible. Type it into your PDA if you want to be flash, but always keep a hard copy in case of unexpected battery failure, or sudden contact with a concrete floor.

Keep it locked away from the prying eyes of your boss and your colleagues.

Trust nobody in the office, because you really don't know who is licking the earlobe of your boss behind closed doors. And given that he's a stinking animal, whose idea of a bath is to roll in the dust, they're welcome to lick away.

They may even chance an intimate nibble from time to time and if they know about your Personal Survival Kit, then it's sure to creep into the conversation.

As it's *your* kit, keep it to yourself at work.

Invite your partner and your trusted supporters to have a look, even to celebrate your strengths and your new found sense of purpose.

Crack open a bottle of bubbly and wallow in the feeling that, whatever is around the corner, you are prepared and have therefore, already improved your situation.

Thank you for reading this.

You have reached the end of the book. You are your own person and your life is out there waiting for you!

Your boss is a bastard and despite this you have started to focus your anger and frustration on generating positive outcomes for yourself. Congratulations on making such a healthy and *powerful* move.

Good for you!

Everyone is entitled to do work they enjoy, to work for reasonable people and to have a fulfilling life.

Let your boss rot.

Use your Personal Survival Kit to move yourself forwards.

You can do it!

Let's go....



# Personal Survival Kit

**Belonging to**

---

**Date compiled**                    /                    /

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## **Touchstones**

Say these out loud either in the car on the way to work, or when looking in the mirror first thing in the morning.

**I am not an antelope**

**I am smart**

**I have talents**

**I have a right to be me**

**My talents have not evaporated over night**

**I am learning**

**I will be fulfilled**

**I can change my life**

**I am prepared for the future**

To download a copy of your Personal Survival Kit, please visit: **[www.richardmaun.com](http://www.richardmaun.com)**



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**2 Harvest my Strengths** (Page 32)

What strengths are contained within my Diamond Days?  
What skills, aptitudes, abilities do I feel I have?

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I am really good at ...

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**3 My Support Group** (Page 43)

Write down the names, e-mail addresses and mobile telephone numbers of four people who are my core support group. What can they do to help me?

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**1**

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**2**

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**3**

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**4**

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**4 Keeping my Ego in Sight** (Page 64)

**A** My ego would like me to take the following baggage, which I can really do without.

**List**

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**B** In order to make some progress I am prepared to do things differently. These include:

**List**

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**5 Threat and Hunger Inputs** (Page 90)

**A** Threat inputs make him feel unsafe. I need to avoid doing the following things to him.

**List**

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**B** Hunger inputs are about an absence of something. I need to start doing the following things to avoid trouble.

**List**

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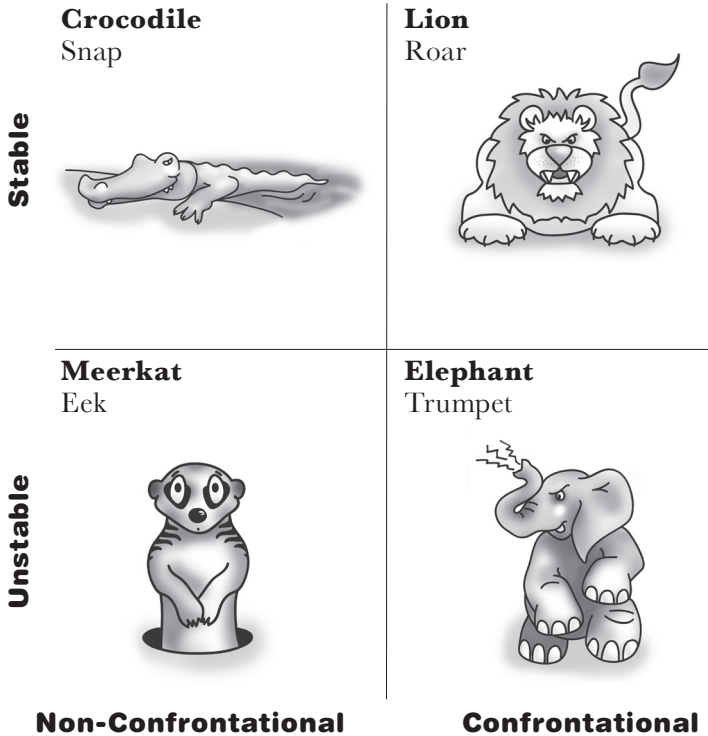
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6 **The Serengeti Boss Type Model** (Page 96)

Circle one:









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**10 Grounding Techniques** (Page 134)

I will practise the following things to help me remain calm when faced with a wild animal and a dangerous situation.

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**1**

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**2**

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**3**

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**12 My Desired Outcomes** (Page 152)

I will work towards the following happy outcomes in order to increase my inner health:

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**Fulfilling Job Tasks**

---

Tomorrow

---

Next Month

---

After 6 Months

---

After 2 Years

---

---

**Training and Development**

---

Tomorrow

---

Next Month

---

After 6 Months

---

After 2 Years

---

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**Home Life and Leisure Activities**

---

Tomorrow

---

Next Month

---

After 6 Months

---

After 2 Years

---

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**Salary**

---

Tomorrow

---

Next Month

---

After 6 Months

---

After 2 Years

---





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**15 My CV** (Page 158)

I have updated my CV and it is now:

---

**Current**

Yes

No

---

**One brilliant single page**

Yes

No

---

**Smart**

Yes

No

---

**Accurate**

Yes

No

---

**Relevant**

Yes

No

---

**Superb**

Yes

No

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**16 Honesty Check** (Page 158)

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**I have completed all parts of my Personal Survival Kit.**

Yes

No

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**I have been really honest and not lied to myself.**

Yes

No

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**I have decided to laugh and learn.**

Yes

No

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**I have made a commitment to myself to have a fulfilling life.**

Yes

No

---

**I have a plastic bag available for emergency packing.**

Yes

No

**17 Celebration** (Page 158)

I am now prepared.

**MY BOSS IS A BASTARD!**

- Always
- Frequently
- Often
- Sometimes

However, I am not so scared and fed up because I am ready for the future. I have my Personal Survival Kit and I'm not afraid to use it. I can increase my fulfilment and inner health.



Tick here upon completion of my Personal Survival Kit.

**Well done me!** 😊

## **About the Author**

**Richard Maun** is a professional business manager, who has worked in industry for many years. He now enjoys life as a freelance business writer, as a director of his own company and as a visiting lecturer to a leading UK university. Richard facilitates personal and business development through coaching, management consultancy and interactive workshops and he specializes in personal communication skills. He has worked with a wide variety of people to help them act in awareness, develop new thinking, turn conflict into collaboration and learn about themselves in a safe and supportive way.

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