

A WOMAN MAKES A PLAN

ADVICE FOR A LIFETIME OF
ADVENTURE, BEAUTY, AND SUCCESS



MAYE MUSK

متن نمونه بوکزی فا

A WOMAN MAKES A PLAN

*Advice for a Lifetime of
Adventure, Beauty, and Success*

MAYE MUSK

VIKING LIFE

VIKING
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A Viking Life Book

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I would like to dedicate this book to the people who have influenced my life the most:

My late mother, Wyn Haldeman, who gave me, my sisters, and every woman she met the confidence to do well.

My late sister, Lynne Haldeman, who listened to my struggles every night for five years and encouraged me through my co-op court case to repair my building's chimney.

My twin sister, Kaye, who has protected me all my life, and who keeps me down-to-earth.

Tosca, my lovely daughter, and Elon and Kimbal, my two sons, who have respected and supported me in everything I do.

My eleven grandchildren, who keep me learning and bring me so much joy with all their questions.

My extended family, friends, and team, who have supported me throughout my hard, good, and new times.

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INTRODUCTION

Live Dangerously—Carefully

Make a plan, and take a chance

I grew up in a family that had an airplane and a fascination for exploration. My parents flew across Canada, America, Africa, Europe, Asia, and Australia in a small, canvas-covered propeller plane with no GPS or radio. When we were children, they took us on trips to the Kalahari Desert every winter to search for the lost city. Looking back, I realize it was dangerous to go across the desert with a compass and three weeks' supply of water and food with five kids. But my father and mother planned our trips to the last detail. Our family motto was "live dangerously—carefully." My father sought adventure, but he knew to be ready for the unexpected. Because of that, I'm always curious and willing to explore. And I know that I can take a risk as long as I'm prepared.

There is an Afrikaans saying that I grew up with: "*'n Boer maak 'n plan.*" It literally translates to "a farmer makes a plan," and it's something people said all the time in South Africa. It could be small, or it could be huge, but we used it any time we needed to change direction and fix a problem. Whatever obstacle is in front of you, you have to address it and find another way to sort it out.

At first I wanted this book to be called *Struggling and Surviving*, but that didn't sound very compelling to anyone. I hope when you read this book that you will struggle less and survive more than I did. In my life, things have gone wrong way too often, and each time I have had to make a plan. You can plan things as a woman, but then

you get sideswiped, and you have to make another plan. (By the way, this happens to men, too.)

I have started my life over many times, and as an adult I've lived in nine cities across three countries. I don't recommend starting over again and again like I did, but if you have to, you must plan ahead. You can live a more exciting and happier life if you take chances. I took a lot of chances and struggled in the beginning, but I persisted until I found success in my personal and business lives. You don't have to plan every detail of the changes in your life; you can sort out your problems as they come along. And there will be different problems, of course. But you just have to plan that first step.

There are surprises around every corner in life. From taking care of yourself and your family and friends, to looking and feeling fantastic, to having a successful career and living an adventurous life—it's a lot to think about all at once. But if you start with your first step, and then the next step after that, you can keep on moving ahead.

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When I was in bad situations, I read many romance or self-help books. They gave me hope. Perhaps sharing my experiences with you will give you hope, too.

Being my age is fantastic. I have lived for seven decades, enjoyed two successful careers, and raised three children. I'm a grandmother to eleven. And now, I'm more in demand than ever as a wellness speaker and model. I was even asked to write this book! That's why I say that it's great to be seventy-one! I wake up excited for each day.

If you have a good attitude and you make a plan and take a chance, even Mars is possible.

ONE

SILVER IS THE NEW BLOND

Life keeps getting better



At fifty-nine years old, I let my hair go silver. Two years later, I was pregnant on the cover of *New York* magazine. (Well, I wasn't really pregnant, but it looked pretty convincing.) At sixty-seven, I walked in my first runway show at New York Fashion Week with women who were a third of my age. At sixty-nine, I became a CoverGirl.

Can you imagine? I never did. I would never have predicted that letting my hair go gray would be the secret to becoming a supermodel. I first walked a runway at fifteen, and they told me I'd be done at eighteen. As a model, I never expected to be carrying on this long—and certainly not in my prime at seventy-one. But here I am, fifty-six years later, and I'm still just getting started.

Women don't have to slow down as they age. I'm running like a speeding bullet. Exploring everything, having fun, working more than ever, working on social media to make sure that I'm working more than ever, and having the most fun. Did I mention fun? If men don't have to slow down, we shouldn't have to either. Don't let aging slow you down or stop you from moving ahead. Look after yourself as best you can by eating well, smiling, and being active, happy, and confident. I have never been afraid of aging. Funny enough, when I see the wrinkles on my face—and after sixty, wrinkles on my thighs

and my arms—I find them amusing. I’m just so happy to be in good health.

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I started modeling as a teenager in Pretoria, South Africa, because a friend of my parents’ ran a modeling school and agency. Her name was Lettie, and her husband had a plane, like my father. Every Sunday night, they would have dinner with our family. Lettie was very beautiful and graceful, and she had a quiet confidence that made you want to do what she asked you to.

When my twin sister, Kaye, and I were fifteen, Lettie invited us to do her modeling course for free, which we did without giving it much thought. For the final walk, the one that would get us our diplomas, I made myself a pink suit in the style of Chanel. I had my brown hair done, and I did my own makeup.

Lettie was the one who started hiring me to model, too. I would do runway shows on Saturday mornings in a department store when she asked, or print jobs. I didn’t feel special or privileged about being a model. It was just a job. It was better-paying than other jobs, which was nice, but when I found that out, it surprised me. You went somewhere, you put on a dress, you walked around the room, you went home. Why would that be well-paid? But it was, especially for a girl my age.

I had no idea back then that I would still be a model at seventy-one. You just had to look around the room at these things to understand that all the models were very young. I knew it was temporary, and it didn’t bother me at all. I was just happy to get paid. My goal wasn’t to model; it was to go to university.

I still modeled in university, to my surprise. As planned, I got my degree, and then I got married: another surprise. My goal wasn’t to have children so quickly either. I didn’t realize I could fall pregnant on a honeymoon and have three kids in three years. Elon, Kimbal, and Tosca were three more surprises. With each child, I added a few blond highlights to my hair. After Tosca, I was completely blond.

I started modeling again after I'd had my three kids, because Lettie asked me to. Her agency needed somebody to do mother-of-the-bride runway shows, and they couldn't have an eighteen-year-old do it. All the other girls were too young. So she asked me, because I was a very grown-up twenty-eight. In this way, I became the oldest model in South Africa.

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I moved to Durban as a single mother at thirty-one because I was running away from my husband. I couldn't afford to have anybody else color my hair anymore, so I started doing it myself and it became various shades of blond and orange. Blorange, as they call it. It was pretty bad. Very frizzy, and I was cutting it myself to save money. They still let me model for some reason, so I didn't worry about it. It didn't affect my nutrition practice, which I had started at twenty-two in my apartment in Pretoria, in any case. As long as I could help my clients, they didn't pay attention to what my hair looked like.

At forty-two, when I moved to Toronto, I went to school for my PhD while I modeled and taught, keeping current in both professions. I had a model portfolio that showed that I could get work, so a Toronto agency was willing to take me on because they thought they could make money with me. Most of the modeling jobs out there were for younger women, but sometimes they just needed an older model in order to make it look realistic. That was when I did my first grandmother ad, a front cover. I was only forty-two!

I was not the only model in Toronto in my forties, of course. While usually I'd be the only person at a modeling job who wasn't in my teens or twenties, that was not always the case. Remember, this was not high fashion or haute couture. This was not New York Fashion Week or Milan.

I remember once doing a runway show where it was all older women and guys. Afterward, we all went out for a drink. One of the guys said to me, "You're going to have to buy your own drink, because you're the only person who hasn't been in bed with me."

I just looked at him.

He said, "Yeah, I've done mattress ads with all the other models."

That was the kind of job available for older models.

Advertisements for sales on beds, and that kind of thing.

I didn't care, because I wasn't there to be exciting. It was just work, and I needed to work. I kept modeling because it was fun, kept me looking good, and got me away from the office to explore different cities and to meet new people. In those years, they had to book me three weeks ahead of time to not disrupt my practice, and I wouldn't model more than four days a month. It paid as much as my dietetics practice, which was my stable and basic income, and I wasn't going to rock that boat—that would cover everyday expenses, rent, bus fare, school uniforms, gas, and car services. Modeling enabled me to buy a cheap flight to visit family, some clothes, or something we needed for the apartment. Sometimes I would get a dress. Modeling was the cherry on top.

I didn't even tell my nutrition clients I modeled, and because there was no social media, nobody knew.

Sometimes someone would say, "Is that you in a magazine?"

And I'd say, "Yes. I'm the Sears housecoat queen."

That was my job. If Sears had a housecoat, they called me in to make it look good.

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By the time I was in my fifties, I was living in New York. I did a few great campaigns, then signed with a bigger agency, because I thought it would increase my exposure. It did the opposite. I went from sometimes modeling to barely modeling.

I'd email and say I didn't join them to stop modeling. They would write back to say that there was no work for me.

I'd call. They'd say, "They just don't want to see you. They prefer the other models who are better-known than you."

I would think, "But they're not that well-known either."

I couldn't understand why the clients never wanted to see me anymore. I'd been modeling for decades, but maybe it was time. I

was told that nobody liked my look anymore.

By chance, I would run into some people who worked in the business. They would stop me in the street or in a restaurant and say, “We’ve been trying to book you, but you’re never available.”

I would go to the agency and say, “People have been trying to book me.”

“No, they haven’t. They’re getting you mixed up with somebody else.”

That was when I decided on my own to stop coloring my hair. I thought, “Well, I’m barely modeling. I might as well see what color I am underneath.”

My hair started to grow out, and it looked terrible. There was a white patch on top and blond hair at my shoulders. As a dietitian, it doesn’t matter what color hair you have, as long as you’re good. On the advice of my best friend, Julia Perry, I cut my hair very short. It was an edgy, exciting look, nothing like I’d ever done before.

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After I went gray, the agency didn’t send me out for six months. It was a very painful period. It started to seem as though there would be no more opportunities for me there, that perhaps this was the end of my modeling career.

Then something interesting happened. A casting director called my agency to book me for the cover of *Time* magazine. This time my agency couldn’t say that I was not available, as the director’s office was a block away from my home and she saw me walking my dog every morning.

Then they had to book me for the job. That was how I wound up in *Time* magazine, on the front page of the Health section.

I realized that there *was* work out there for me. It wasn’t about my look. It was about my agency.

I needed a plan.

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Everybody has their own agenda. I wanted to take advantage of whatever work opportunities existed for me. My agents should have been promoting my career, but for some reason, they weren't. Once I understood this, I had to deal with it. I couldn't just stand by and let someone else keep work from me.

I went down to the agency to speak my mind, because if you want something, you have to ask for it.

My agent was irate.

“How dare you think we're not working hard for you!”

She was lying. We both knew it. It's one thing to go to an audition and not get the job. That had happened to me many, many times. You go and you wait in line and so do twenty other women, and you don't get the job. That is part of being a model. Not being sent to castings by your representation—that's bad.

They refused to admit it. They kept insisting that there was no work. I was stuck, because I had a contract.

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When you're in a bad work situation that isn't changing and you want to get out of it, you can't be sure about what will happen next. It is scary. You will have a miserable time at work every day. If you are not experiencing any joy, your day will be gloomy. You need to look forward to your work and love it, because you spend most of your waking hours working. In my dietetics practice, I had many female lawyer clients who loved their work but didn't like their bosses. I know that because their unhappiness and stress made them eat poorly. I would tell them to change their situation. They would make a change, go to a new law firm or start off on their own, and they would be happier and eat better. My clients always said I was cheaper than a psychologist.

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I looked at my model contract, and I saw that it covered New York City only. So I contacted agents in Philadelphia. The Hamptons.

Connecticut. New Jersey. LA, Hamburg, Munich, Paris, London. I signed with those agencies, and I started getting some work. I began to go to Europe to shoot catalogs, to do some editorial work, or for hair and pharmaceutical ads. It paid well, for me, and I always flew economy and traveled on a budget.

Closer to home, I was doing catalogs, commercials, and showroom work. It wasn't glamorous, but it was work. The job was to show clothes to clients of inexpensive department stores. I would have a little tiny cardboard cubicle to change in, and then I'd come out. There would be thirty people sitting there, watching me wear the clothes. In between outfits I'd go back to that little cubicle, where I had a bagel with cream cheese, and every time I got changed, I would just take a small bite, because I didn't have time to eat a whole bagel.

Most of the jobs were in New York, and I was still being held back from those opportunities. I knew that I could do better. I knew that it was not my age or my looks standing in my way. It was them, not me!

I had to find a way around it. I went and sat in their waiting room, and I sat there, and I sat there, and I sat until they sent me in to see the senior person.

I said to her, "I haven't had a casting for six months. You've got to let me go."

I was determined not to leave until I had gotten what I wanted, and eventually they agreed. I should've done that sooner. Please learn quicker than I did, and you will suffer less. If it's not going to change, get out of it as soon as you can, even if you end up having nothing afterward or thinking you'll have nothing afterward. Or be financially strapped afterward.

• • •

That was when I joined a boutique agency that had worked with me before. They were excited to work with me, and they loved my new look. They sent me to do an editorial in Toronto, which was remarkable, because as you got older, nobody wanted you for editorials. Editorial work was cool. I wasn't cool. I had no idea how to pose for an editorial!

For catalogs, you're relaxed, and you're a happy person, and you don't crease the garment. You don't pull it in a funny angle. In an editorial, suddenly there's license to leap and dance and stretch out and do crazy stuff. I had to learn, so I started looking in magazines.

The only editorial experience I had was when I was forty-five, and in that shoot I was the awkward background for the supermodel they were featuring.

I flew to Toronto. I was the only model at the shoot.

I said, "Where are all the other models?"

They said, "No, you're the only one."

Then I was in this creative world of designer, couture, beautiful clothes. They shot a white story, eight pages in white outfits. It was so beautiful. A different hairstyle every time, even with the short hair.

When I saw it, all I could say was, "Wow."

Then the bookings started coming in. When I had first moved to New York, Kimbal and I were in Times Square, looking up at all the giant ads, and I told him, "One day I'll be in one of those." We both chuckled. And now there I was: on a fifteen-foot-tall billboard in Times Square for the first time.

I had gone to a casting with three hundred women for a Virgin America advertisement, and they booked me. At the shoot, there was a young girl and a young man there as well, very young models, too fabulous to talk to me. Yet on the final billboards, I was the face you saw. At sixty-seven, I was everywhere: in Times Square, on the subways, and in every airport in America. You couldn't get off a train or on a plane without seeing my face.

Who knew things would take off when I went silver?! At fifteen, I had been told I'd be done by eighteen, and at seventy-one, I'm the biggest I've ever been. What I've learned is that you can always find a way. You can always make another plan. Of course, it took time for me to learn, and I'm still learning!

Something else happened that was a huge surprise. Social media! Through my postings, people would absolutely love my white hair, and modeling jobs would be booked because of the color of my hair. Now I'm very happy to walk into a room knowing I'm the only person

TWO

BE FASCINATING

It's better to be interesting than to be beautiful



I was in my fifties when I went to a casting for a beauty ad. The casting director said, “Oh, you’re so beautiful.”

I said, “Well, isn’t that the prerequisite?”

I mean, I was coming for a beauty campaign. I thought I was hilarious, because having grown up in South Africa, I was accustomed to people being very self-deprecating.

They were horrified. They didn’t find me funny at all . . . I wasn’t even considered for that job, because I was too cheeky.

After that, I learned to just say, “Thank you.”

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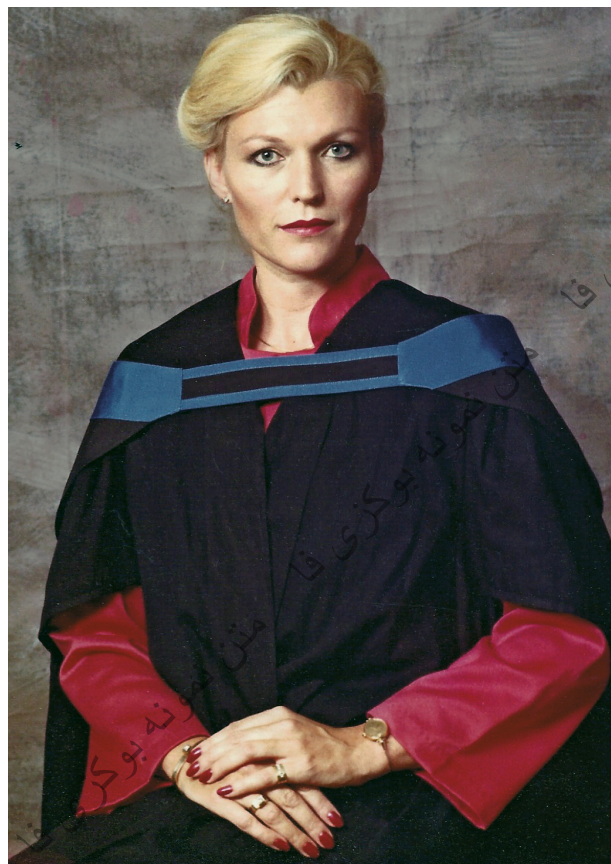
I have never understood why everybody in America talks about being beautiful. In South Africa, you are more valued as a woman if you’re intelligent and interesting and have a good sense of humor. Rather than your outer look. People said, “You’re funny.” And I thought I was. And I think I am. They were more interested in my work as a dietitian, and that I was up to date on research and giving talks. And doing media work. And had my practice. They were more interested in my work ethic and professionalism.

When I first got to America, I called my twin sister, Kaye, to tell her about this American quirk of talking about being beautiful.

My sister Kaye is one of my favorite people. We talk every night, and she tells me the truth about everything. She is the person I go to for advice about everything from investments to whether I should get veneers (she said no). She's always been there for me and always been supportive of me.

The best thing about Kaye is that she's straight-talking and takes no nonsense at all. She just says what she thinks.

That doesn't mean that she is a serious person. Kaye is always laughing, and between us, she is the fun one. Except she isn't trying to amuse anybody except herself. The result is that people love her to bits, and everybody hovers about her when she begins speaking. If you met her, you'd love her, too. Once someone has met Kaye, I might as well sit in the corner knitting. Unfortunately, you will never meet her, as she's a hermit.



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Kaye said, "People always thought you were beautiful, even if they didn't say it. When you walked into a room, people always looked at you."

I haven't even noticed, because I wasn't looking at anybody. I was just looking where I was going. It made me remember guys I dated over the years who would say, "Maye, when we walk into the restaurant, will you walk in front of me?"

I would, and then they would join me so that everyone could see they were with me. Of course, they'd wind up dumping me anyhow,

because that's what people who can only see the outside will do.

I should have dropped them first. When you meet someone who is beautiful, of course you would like to enjoy their company. If they are not interesting, you will move away very quickly. It's better to have people like you for your personality rather than for your outside beauty.

I remember meeting a couple; he was so handsome and she was plain. It seemed like an odd couple. Until the moment she started talking—then she was the most magnetic person in the room.

It was her attitude. It was her confidence. It was the way she looked at life. She became a good friend, because she was so intelligent and so much fun. I couldn't get enough of her.

There are very many things a person can be. I'd rather my gravestone read "She was funny" than "She was beautiful."

Being obsessed with outer beauty can create insecurities if you aren't perfect-looking. It could make you unhappy and stop you from developing many other characteristics that are wonderful, like intelligence or being fun and interesting.

• • •

My advice is to be kind to others, listen to others, and be upbeat. Don't start talking about your miserable life. Show confidence, respect, interest in others, and smile; that will make you fascinating. Everyone has a talent that they can share with other people. If at the moment you feel as though you don't have any talents, go to a time in the past when you felt confident about some aspect of your life. Work on that section, study it, share it, and become more interesting. If you have a profession, a hobby, or a special interest, read about it, and mention it in conversations. Be excited about it, and you'll be more interesting and more intelligent. You don't have to be good at everything, but you need to be good at something. When people ask me about recipes, I cannot help them because I'm not a good cook. I don't feel bad about it; it's just not my talent nor interest. I am certainly not going to experiment with new foods to impress

everyone, when I don't enjoy it. Be sure to be good at something you enjoy.

Also, try to have a sense of humor, and be less sensitive about what people are saying. When a man wants to date me, and I say no, he will say he can find someone younger than me. I just laugh. I don't care what he can find; I am not interested in him, and I'm certainly not going to be upset about it. We need to move on and be happy with ourselves. If you can speak with a sense of humor, laugh at yourself, and add lightness in your voice, you will be more fun. It's hard not to talk about yourself, especially if you're going through a hard time, but you need to be fascinating.

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THREE

GREAT MODEL, DRESSES TERRIBLY

You don't have to be stylish; just find a stylish friend



I used to dress glam once or twice a year for my birthday or a wedding. Only when I was sixty-seven and went to the Met Ball, a huge fashion gala, as Elon's guest, did I know how much preparation goes into walking the red carpet. When I'm in a glam dress, I feel fantastic. I walk taller, stand up straighter, smile at everyone, and have an extra bounce in my step.

Now I appreciate how much a glam team does to prepare celebrities for the red carpet of awards shows and film premieres. Designers, stylists, and stylist assistants all stress out finding the perfect outfit. What you don't realize is that the perfect undergarment makes the dress fall nicely. Also, accessories are important, from demure to dramatic. Hair needs to look different every time so people know that you're making an extra effort. Makeup people will decide on the "no makeup" natural look (still takes an hour) or high-glamour look with false lashes and major contour. Now I know it takes a village. You should appreciate this in celebrities, too.



When I go to an event dressed wonderfully, it's because Julia Perry, who has been my best friend and stylist for nearly thirty years, is