

# Remain unbroken: the story of survival in unbroken by laura hillenbrand

[Psychology](#), [Personality](#)



## **Introduction**

Throughout the powerful novel *Unbroken: A World War II Story of Survival, Resilience and Redemption* by Laura Hillenbrand, Louis Zamperini shows a relentless will to survive in extreme ways that most could not, also demonstrating many counts of leadership. Louis Zamperini has been innovative and quick thinking since day one. A youngster who never backs down will flourish into an even stronger man who can tackle anything life throws at him. Louis Zamperini is an exceptional man who survives and thrives in ways most humans could not.

## **Not an Average Life**

A young Louis Zamperini could be found stealing, drinking or most likely running from the cops. As he grew up, he was introduced to his new profound love for running track. As Hillenbrand states, "Pete was right about Louie's talent, but being forced to run is what made Louie defiant" (Hillenbrand, 15). Track is what helped him ripen from the town's tyrant to the "Torrance Tornado". He became the talk of the town, breaking new records every day and heading to the Olympics is a real possibility. Very quickly he turns the talking into reality, Zamperini is heading to the 1936 Berlin Olympics. Shortly after the Olympics, Louis Zamperini joined the air force, taking the position of the bombardier, also known as the person who drops the bombs and is lucky enough to yell the cliché phrase "Bombs Away!" While the SuperMan, Zamperini's first plane, takes a harsh landing he ties down and tends to wounded men, intertwines cables and opens a

parachute while their plane does flips, talk about resiliency. Certainly not the life of your “ average Joe”.... Louis is an exceptional man.

## **Resilient Will to Live**

After suffering 594 bullet holes SuperMan lands safely. Zamperini was always pushing the limits. After setting the national high-school record, being only 19 years old and attending the Olympics, and even capturing the attention of Adolf Hitler. However now was his time to begin training for the 1940 Olympics. Unfortunately as he continued working towards the Olympics, the war grew closer to the United States. His true grit sparked when the Green Hornet was going down. Louis Zamperini has always been extraordinary. When Green Hornet hammered into the Pacific Ocean he instantly took the lead and in order to secure his life. He immediately kills a bird by ripping its head off for food, but it reeks so badly they cannot eat it. In a desperate attempt to maintain sanity, Louis instructs the two other crewmen who survive, Russle Allen “ Phil” Phillips and Francis “ Mac” Mcnamara to recite the alphabet and describe their favorite home cooked meals.

When a plane approaches they all do their best to wave it down, it flies away then circles back. The men were relieved until the plane they thought would be their way out turned out to be a Japanese plane who would then begin shooting at the vulnerable men who are being swarmed with sharks. The days that followed were composed of Louis Zamerini and Francis McNamara fighting off huge sharks and Louis Zamperini hand catching fish for the weak men to eat. On the 47th day the men will float into what seems to be their very own death sentence, a thread of Japanese Prisoner of War camps.

Zamperinis' resilient will to live shines through in his weakest moments. In Laura Hillenbrand's eyes," The same attributes that had made him the boy terror of Torrance were keeping him alive in the greatest struggle of his life" (Hillenbrand, 148). He is bounced in and out of multiple Prisoner of War camps for two years, but one of the guards referred to as " The Bird" made it feel like a lifetime full of pain and suffering. Once again, most human's spirit could not endure this type of physical and emotional torment...Louis is exceptional.

## **Perseverance**

The coward would have caved. The average Joe would have caved. Not once in interrogation did he give into revealing the secrets he had inside him, instead he took the beating day after day. One of the many miserable days of being captured Louis Zamperini's strength and determination was pushed to limits that he had no idea he was capable of. The love and loyalty for his country ignites his courage ... he stands for all that is good. Louis Zamperinis' perseverance shines through his eyes and The Bird wants to break his spirit at any cost, so he goes out of his way to dehumanize him. The Bird demanded him to hold up a beam over his head and if he dropped another guard was instructed to hit him with his gun. In Hillenbrand's words " He felt his consciousness slipping, his mind losing adhesion, until all he knew was a single thought: He can not break me" (Hillenbrand, 296). Under the harshest circumstances, Louis Zamerpini will not let anyone so deranged break his character. He truly exemplifies what it means to be exceptional.

## **Saving Himself**

When Louis Zamperini finally returns home, he is suffering from post traumatic stress disorder and alcoholism. His life seems to be taking a dramatic fall downhill nevertheless he makes a change in his life. He saves himself by turning to God and forgiving people who hurt him, something many people cannot do. Louis Zamperini is an exceptional man who survives and thrives in ways most humans could not. Through it all Louis Zamerpini remains, Unbroken.