

THE WHOLE AGAIN HEALING TOOLKIT

A Gentle Place to Begin Healing

A practical guide for rebuilding safety, self-trust,
and hope after emotional abuse.

Amy Carmen

Founder, Whole Again

HEAL. DISCOVER. BECOME.

Welcome Home

"You don't have to heal everything today.

You only have to take one gentle step."

Dear Friend,

If this toolkit has found its way into your hands, I want to begin by saying something that I hope you will carry with you throughout these pages:

I'm so glad you're here.

Perhaps someone shared this resource with you.

Perhaps you found Whole Again while searching for answers.

Or perhaps you're simply exhausted from carrying things that have felt too heavy for too long.

Whatever brought you here, you are welcome.

If you've experienced emotional abuse, narcissistic abuse, manipulation, or a relationship that slowly caused you to question yourself, you may be feeling confused, overwhelmed, or uncertain about what comes next.

Those feelings make sense.

Healing after emotional abuse isn't simply about leaving a relationship.

It's about reconnecting with yourself.

Learning to trust your own voice again.

Helping your body feel safe again.

Remembering that hope is still possible.

This toolkit isn't meant to fix everything overnight.

Instead, think of it as a gentle companion—a place to pause, reflect, learn, and practice one small step at a time.

You don't have to complete it all at once.

Read a few pages.

Try one exercise.

Return whenever you need encouragement.

Healing is rarely about giant leaps.

More often, it's built through quiet, consistent choices that gradually help us feel more grounded, more confident, and more like ourselves again.

It is an honor to walk beside you.

With hope,

Amy Carmen

Founder, Whole Again

How to Use This Toolkit

This workbook was created with one goal in mind:

To give you practical tools that you can return to whenever you need them.

There is no "right" way to work through these pages.

You might choose to complete one section each week.

You might skip ahead to the exercises that feel most helpful.

You might simply keep this nearby for the days when you need a reminder that you're not alone.

As you move through this toolkit, I encourage you to:

- Go at your own pace.
- Take breaks when needed.
- Be honest with yourself.
- Celebrate small victories.
- Return to favorite exercises often.
- Extend yourself the same compassion you would offer someone you love.

There is no finish line.

Only the next gentle step.

Before You Continue...

As you begin, make yourself a simple promise:

I will not measure my healing by how quickly I move.

I will measure it by my willingness to keep showing up.

Healing Isn't Linear

One of the biggest misconceptions about healing is that it should look like a straight line.

It doesn't.

Some days you'll feel stronger.

Other days old emotions may return unexpectedly.

That doesn't mean you've failed.

It doesn't mean you've lost progress.

It simply means you're human.

Healing often looks more like a winding path than a staircase.

You may experience:

- Moments of clarity followed by confusion.
- Days of peace followed by grief.
- Confidence followed by self-doubt.
- Hope followed by discouragement.

Every step still counts.

Growth isn't measured by never struggling again.

Growth is measured by your willingness to keep moving forward with kindness toward yourself.



Pause & Reflect

As you begin this journey, write a few words about where you are today.

Right now, I feel...

[illegible]

What I hope to gain from this toolkit is...



One Gentle Step

Today, don't worry about finishing this workbook.

Simply take one slow breath.

Turn the page.

And keep going.



PART ONE

Understanding Your Healing

Where Am I Today?

"Awareness is the beginning of healing."

Before we talk about what happened...

Before we explore nervous system regulation, boundaries, or rebuilding your life...

Let's simply pause.

Healing doesn't begin by rushing forward.

It begins by noticing where you are today.

Many people who have experienced emotional abuse become so focused on surviving that they rarely stop to ask themselves one important question:

"How am I really doing?"

There is no right answer.

There is no perfect place to begin.

Your story is uniquely yours, and wherever you find yourself today is a valid starting point.

Instead of judging yourself, approach this page with curiosity.

Notice what feels true.

Allow yourself to be honest.

You don't have to minimize your pain.

You also don't have to have everything figured out.

Today is simply about taking inventory with kindness.

Check In With Yourself

Right now, I feel...

- [illegible]

The hardest part of my healing right now is:

One thing I hope changes over the next six months is:

One strength I know I still have is:



Whole Again Reminder

You don't have to be "further along."

You only have to begin from where you are today.

One Gentle Step

Before you continue...

Place one hand over your heart.

Take one slow breath.

Then quietly remind yourself:

"Today, I choose compassion over criticism."

That one choice is enough for today.

What Happens After Emotional Abuse?

If you've experienced emotional or narcissistic abuse, you may have found yourself wondering:

"Why am I still struggling?"

"Why can't I just move on?"

"Why do I still replay everything in my mind?"

These questions are incredibly common.

The effects of emotional abuse often linger because they reach far beyond the relationship itself.

They can affect the way you think, feel, respond to stress, and even the way you see yourself.

You may notice that you:

- Second-guess your decisions.
- Apologize even when you haven't done anything wrong.
- Feel anxious without understanding why.
- Struggle to relax.
- Find it difficult to trust people—or yourself.
- Feel emotionally exhausted.
- Minimize your own needs.
- Constantly seek reassurance.
- Feel disconnected from who you used to be.

None of these reactions mean you are weak.

In fact, many are signs that your mind and body adapted in order to survive a difficult environment.

Survival strategies can be incredibly effective when you're living in chaos.

The challenge comes when those same strategies continue long after the danger has passed.

The good news is this:

What was learned can be gently unlearned.

Safety can be rebuilt.

Trust can be restored.

Hope can grow again.

Reflection

As you read this list, which experiences feel most familiar to you?

Write down three that stand out and why they resonate.

Whole Again Reminder

Your reactions make sense in light of what you've lived through.

Healing begins with understanding, not self-judgment.

Why Healing Can Feel So Confusing

"Confusion is often one of the deepest wounds emotional abuse leaves behind."

One of the most painful parts of emotional abuse is that it often doesn't leave visible bruises.

Instead, it leaves questions.

You may find yourself thinking:

"Maybe it wasn't really that bad."

"Perhaps I'm overreacting."

"Maybe I was the problem."

"Why do I miss someone who hurt me?"

"If they loved me sometimes, does that mean I imagined the rest?"

If these thoughts sound familiar, you're not alone.

Confusion is not a sign that you are weak or incapable.

It's often the result of living in an environment where your thoughts, feelings, and experiences were repeatedly questioned, minimized, or dismissed.

Over time, this can make it difficult to trust your own perceptions.

You may begin relying on someone else's version of reality instead of your own.

This isn't because you're gullible.

It's because your mind was trying to make sense of experiences that didn't make sense.

When someone's words consistently don't match their actions...

When kindness is followed by cruelty...

When apologies are followed by repeated harm...

Your brain naturally searches for explanations.

That search can become exhausting.

Healing begins when you no longer have to argue with your own experience.

Instead of asking,

"Was it really that bad?"

You can gently ask,

"What was it like for me?"

That question shifts the focus away from proving your pain and toward honoring it.

And that is where clarity begins.



Signs You're Beginning to Heal

As clarity grows, you may begin to notice:

- You trust your memories a little more.
- You stop replaying every conversation.
- You recognize unhealthy patterns more quickly.
- You no longer feel responsible for everyone else's emotions.
- You become more curious than self-critical.
- You begin to believe your own inner voice.

Healing doesn't erase the past.

It changes your relationship with it.



Pause & Reflect

Finish these sentences:

One truth I'm beginning to accept is...

Something I'm ready to stop questioning is...



One Gentle Step

The next time you catch yourself asking,

"Was it really that bad?"

Pause and replace it with:

"My experience matters, and I'm allowed to trust what I lived through."

What Is Narcissistic Abuse?

"You cannot heal what you cannot first name."

Narcissistic abuse is not defined by one argument, one disagreement, or one difficult season in a relationship.

It is a pattern of behaviors that gradually shifts power, creates confusion, and causes a person to question their own reality.

These behaviors may include:

- Manipulation
- Gaslighting
- Emotional invalidation
- Control
- Blame shifting
- Criticism
- Silent treatment
- Love bombing followed by withdrawal
- Unpredictable affection
- Intimidation or coercion
- Chronic lack of empathy

Not every relationship that includes these behaviors involves someone with Narcissistic Personality Disorder.

And it's important to remember that only qualified mental health professionals can diagnose personality disorders.

What matters most isn't applying a label to another person.

What matters is recognizing the impact the relationship had on you.

Healthy relationships generally help people feel:

- Safe
- Heard
- Respected
- Encouraged
- Emotionally secure

Emotionally abusive relationships often leave people feeling:

- Confused
- Anxious
- Constantly on edge
- Emotionally drained
- Afraid of saying the wrong thing
- Unsure of themselves

If you recognize these patterns, know this:

Understanding them is not about staying focused on the past.

It's about gaining the clarity needed to make healthier choices moving forward.

Knowledge is not the destination.

It is the doorway.

Healthy vs. Unhealthy Relationship Snapshot

Healthy Relationships

Unhealthy Relationships

Respect differences

Demand control

Encourage growth

Create fear

Take responsibility

Shift blame

Welcome honest communication

Punish honesty

Repair after conflict

Repeat harmful patterns

Build trust

Create confusion

Whole Again Reminder

Understanding what happened isn't about assigning blame.

It's about reclaiming clarity, confidence, and your ability to move forward with wisdom.

One Gentle Step

This week, choose one trusted resource—a book, article, podcast episode, or workshop—that helps you better understand emotional abuse.

Learning one new truth can become the beginning of lasting freedom.

Understanding Gaslighting

"When someone repeatedly denies your reality, it's natural to begin doubting yourself."

Gaslighting is one of the most confusing forms of emotional manipulation because it doesn't simply challenge your opinions—it challenges your reality.

Over time, you may begin to question your own memories, instincts, emotions, and perceptions.

You might find yourself wondering:

"Did that really happen?"

"Maybe I'm remembering it wrong."

"Perhaps I'm being too sensitive."

"Maybe I caused this."

Gaslighting often happens gradually.

It may begin with small comments like:

- "You're overreacting."
- "That never happened."
- "You're imagining things."
- "You're too emotional."
- "You're remembering it wrong."
- "Everyone else agrees with me."

Eventually, those repeated messages can become louder than your own inner voice.

The goal of gaslighting isn't simply to win an argument.

Its effect is often that the other person becomes increasingly unsure of themselves.

When you're unsure of yourself, you're more likely to seek reassurance from the very person who has been causing the confusion.

That cycle can feel incredibly disorienting.

The encouraging truth is this:

Your ability to trust yourself can be rebuilt.

Healing often begins by gently honoring your own experience again.

You don't have to convince anyone else of what happened.

Your healing begins when you believe yourself.



Signs You May Be Recovering From Gaslighting

As healing progresses, you may notice:

- ✓ You pause before apologizing unnecessarily.

- ✓ You trust your memory more often.
- ✓ You recognize manipulation more quickly.
- ✓ You feel less responsible for other people's reactions.
- ✓ You become more confident making decisions.
- ✓ You stop needing everyone else's approval.

Those are meaningful signs of growth.



Pause & Reflect

Complete these sentences:

One experience I no longer want to dismiss is...

One truth I'm learning to trust about myself is...



One Gentle Step

Today, practice believing yourself.

When a feeling arises, instead of asking,

"Am I overreacting?"

Try asking,

"What is this feeling trying to tell me?"

Understanding Trauma Bonds

"Missing someone who hurt you does not mean you should return to them."

One of the most confusing parts of healing is realizing you can deeply love someone who also caused you profound pain.

Many survivors wonder:

"If the relationship was unhealthy, why do I still miss them?"

The answer is often found in something called a trauma bond.

A trauma bond develops when periods of affection, kindness, or connection are repeatedly interrupted by emotional pain, manipulation, fear, or unpredictability.

The brain begins to associate relief with the very person who caused the distress.

This creates an emotional cycle that can be difficult to break.

A trauma bond is not proof that the relationship was healthy.

It's evidence that your nervous system adapted to inconsistent safety.

That doesn't mean your love wasn't genuine.

It means your body and brain learned to survive an unpredictable environment.

As healing progresses, many people begin to separate two important truths:

"I loved this person."

and

"This relationship was not healthy for me."

Both statements can be true at the same time.

Healing doesn't require you to erase your memories.

It invites you to see the relationship more clearly, with compassion for yourself.

Common Feelings During Trauma Bond Recovery

You may experience:

- Missing the relationship while knowing it wasn't healthy.
- Feeling guilty for leaving.
- Remembering the good moments more than the painful ones.
- Hoping the other person will change.
- Feeling lonely after choosing safety.
- Questioning your decision to leave.

These experiences are common.

They do not mean you've failed.

They simply mean your heart and nervous system are adjusting to a new reality.

With time, support, and intentional healing, those intense emotional pulls often become less powerful.

Pause & Reflect

Finish these statements:

One thing I miss is...

One thing I don't miss is...

The relationship taught me...

One Gentle Step

When you miss someone who hurt you, gently remind yourself:

Missing someone doesn't mean I need to return to what harmed me.

It simply means I'm human, and I'm learning to choose what is healthy for me.

Why Leaving Can Feel So Difficult

"Leaving isn't always the hardest part. Healing afterward often is."

People who have never experienced emotional abuse sometimes ask a painful question:

"Why didn't you just leave?"

If you've ever been asked that question, you may have felt misunderstood.

The reality is that leaving a relationship affected by emotional abuse is rarely simple.

Many survivors don't stay because they enjoy being mistreated.

They stay because relationships are rarely harmful all of the time.

There may have been moments of genuine affection.

Shared dreams.

Children.

Financial concerns.

Spiritual beliefs.

Fear.

Hope.

Promises to change.

And perhaps most of all...

Love.

Emotional abuse often develops gradually.

Small compromises become larger ones.

Boundaries slowly disappear.

Confidence quietly erodes.

Over time, what once felt unimaginable begins to feel normal.

By the time many people recognize the pattern, they may already feel emotionally exhausted, financially dependent, isolated from support, or afraid of what might happen if they leave.

Leaving also brings grief.

Not only grief for the relationship...

But grief for the future you imagined.

The person you hoped they could become.

The life you thought you were building.

Healing means making space for all of those emotions.

You don't have to criticize yourself for loving someone.

You also don't have to ignore the ways that relationship affected your well-being.

Both compassion and honesty belong in your healing.



It's Okay to Grieve

You may be grieving:

- The relationship you hoped for.
- Lost time.
- Missed opportunities.
- Trust.

- Your sense of safety.
- The version of yourself that felt easier before the relationship.
- Dreams that didn't come true.

Grief isn't a sign that leaving was the wrong decision.

It's a sign that something important mattered to you.



Pause & Reflect

Complete these sentences:

One thing I am grieving is...

One thing I am beginning to accept is...



One Gentle Step

Today, allow yourself to grieve without judging your emotions.

You don't have to rush healing.

You don't have to explain your tears.

You only have to be kind to yourself.

Before We Move Forward

"Understanding creates the foundation. Safety allows healing to grow."

Take a moment to pause before continuing.

You've just spent time learning about emotional abuse, gaslighting, trauma bonds, and why healing can feel confusing.

That's a lot to hold.

If you notice yourself feeling emotionally tired, that doesn't mean you're doing this wrong.

It means you've been engaging with difficult experiences honestly.

That takes courage.

Before moving into the next section, I'd like to remind you of something important.

You are not expected to remember everything you've read.

You are not expected to heal overnight.

You are not expected to have all the answers.

You are simply invited to take the next gentle step.

In the next section, we'll shift our focus from understanding what happened...

To helping your body experience safety again.

Because healing isn't only something we think our way through.

It's something we experience.

When your nervous system begins to feel safe...

Everything else becomes easier.

What I've Learned So Far

Take a few moments to reflect.

One thing that surprised me...

One truth I want to remember...

One way I can show myself compassion this week...

Whole Again Reminder

Understanding your story is the beginning of healing.

Helping your body feel safe is what allows healing to continue.

One Gentle Step

Before you turn the page...

Take one slow breath.

Relax your shoulders.

Notice your feet on the floor.

Without changing anything else, simply ask yourself:

"What does safety feel like in this moment?"

There is no perfect answer.

Just notice.

That awareness is the beginning of reconnecting with yourself.

PART TWO

Helping Your Body Feel Safe Again

Your Body Has Been Protecting You

"Your body isn't working against you. It's been working hard to protect you."

Have you ever found yourself wondering,

"Why can't I just relax?"

"Why do I jump when my phone rings?"

"Why do I always feel like something bad is about to happen?"

"Why am I exhausted even after resting?"

These are questions many survivors ask.

The answer isn't that you're weak.

It's that your nervous system has spent a long time trying to keep you safe.

When we experience chronic stress, emotional abuse, or unpredictable relationships, our bodies often adapt by becoming highly alert.

Your brain begins scanning for danger.

Your muscles stay tense.

Your breathing becomes shallow.

Your heart beats a little faster.

You may have trouble sleeping, concentrating, or feeling fully present.

These responses are not signs that something is wrong with you.

They are signs that your body learned to survive.

The beautiful news is this:

Just as your nervous system learned to protect you, it can also learn what safety feels like again.

That process takes time.

It takes patience.

And it begins with very small moments of calm.

Throughout this section, you'll learn simple practices that gently remind your body,

"In this moment, I am safe."

Healing doesn't mean you'll never feel anxious again.

It means you'll gradually build the skills to return to safety with greater confidence.



Your Nervous System Isn't Broken

Think of your nervous system like the smoke detector in your home.

A smoke detector has one important job:

To notice danger.

But after living in an emotionally unsafe environment, that alarm system can become extra sensitive.

Instead of responding only to real danger...

It may begin reacting to reminders of past experiences.

A raised voice.

A certain text message.

Silence.

Conflict.

Even positive changes can sometimes feel overwhelming because your body has become used to preparing for the worst.

This isn't failure.

It's protection.

Our goal isn't to silence the alarm.

Our goal is to gently teach it the difference between past danger and present safety.



Pause & Reflect

When do I notice my body feeling most tense?

What situations help me feel even a little calmer?



One Gentle Step

Several times today, pause and ask yourself:

"What is one thing around me that reminds me I am safe right now?"

Maybe it's sunlight through a window.

A warm cup of tea.

A trusted friend.

Your favorite blanket.

Your pet resting nearby.

Safety often begins with noticing small moments.

Learning to Breathe Again

"Sometimes the first step toward peace is simply remembering to breathe."

When we're under stress, our breathing often becomes fast and shallow.

This is our body's way of preparing us to respond to danger.

The challenge is that many of us continue breathing this way long after the danger has passed.

Slow, intentional breathing sends a gentle message to your nervous system:

"You can begin to settle."

One of the simplest ways to practice this is called **Box Breathing**.

It has been used by healthcare professionals, athletes, first responders, and many others to help regulate stress.

Box Breathing

Imagine tracing the outline of a square.

Step One

Breathe in slowly through your nose for **4 counts**.

- ☐ 1
- ☐ 2
- ☐ 3
- ☐ 4

Step Two

Hold your breath gently for **4 counts**.

- ☐ 1
- ☐ 2
- ☐ 3
- ☐ 4

Step Three

Exhale slowly through your mouth for **4 counts**.

- ☐ 1
- ☐ 2
- ☐ 3
- ☐ 4

Step Four

Pause for **4 counts** before taking another breath.

Repeat this cycle four or five times.

There is no need to force your breathing.

Simply allow it to become a little slower than before.

When to Practice

Box Breathing can be especially helpful:

- Before difficult conversations
- Before bed
- When you feel overwhelmed
- Before entering stressful environments
- After receiving upsetting news
- Anytime you notice your body feeling tense

Like any new skill, it becomes easier with practice.

Even one minute can make a difference.



Pause & Reflect

How did my body feel before I practiced?

How do I feel now?



Whole Again Reminder

You don't have to force yourself to feel calm.

You're simply giving your body an opportunity to remember what calm feels like.



One Gentle Step

Practice Box Breathing once each day this week.

You don't have to wait until you're overwhelmed.

Sometimes the most powerful healing happens during ordinary moments.

The 5-4-3-2-1 Grounding Exercise

"When your thoughts race into the past or future, your senses can gently bring you back to the present."

When we experience anxiety, panic, or emotional overwhelm, our minds often leave the present moment.

We replay conversations.

We imagine worst-case scenarios.

We become trapped in memories or fear about what might happen next.

Grounding is a gentle way of reminding your brain:

"I am here."

"This moment is different."

"Right now, I am safe."

The 5-4-3-2-1 Grounding Exercise uses your senses to reconnect with the present.

There is no right or wrong way to do it.

Move slowly.

Notice without judgment.

Look Around You

Name 5 things you can see.

Touch 4 things you can feel.

Examples:

- Your feet on the floor
- Your clothing
- The chair supporting you
- A blanket

Write what you notice.

Listen for 3 sounds.

Perhaps...

Birds.

A fan.

Your breathing.

The wind.

Write them here.

Notice 2 things you can smell.

Notice 1 thing you can taste.

Now pause.

Take one slow breath.

Notice how your body feels.

You don't need to force anything.

Simply notice.

Whole Again Reminder

Grounding doesn't erase difficult emotions.

It reminds your nervous system that you are here, now, in this moment.

One Gentle Step

Practice this exercise once this week—even on a good day.

Grounding isn't only for moments of crisis.

It's a way of helping your nervous system become more familiar with safety.

The Butterfly Hug

"Sometimes the comfort we long for can begin with our own gentle touch."

The Butterfly Hug is a calming technique that uses gentle, alternating taps to help settle the nervous system.

It has been incorporated into trauma-informed practices around the world as one way to support emotional regulation.

Many people find it comforting because it encourages slow breathing, present-moment awareness, and self-compassion.

How to Practice

1. Cross your arms comfortably over your chest.
2. Rest your hands just below your collarbones or on your upper arms.
3. Imagine your hands are the wings of a butterfly.
4. Slowly alternate gentle taps.

Left.

Right.

Left.

Right.

There is no need to hurry.

Allow your breathing to remain slow and natural.

Continue for one to three minutes, or until you notice your body beginning to settle.

While You Tap

You may wish to quietly repeat:

I am safe.

I am here.

I can move through this moment.

Or simply notice your breath.

Whatever feels supportive.

When This Exercise May Help

- After a difficult conversation
- During periods of anxiety
- When difficult memories surface
- Before bed
- During moments of emotional overwhelm

- Anytime you notice yourself feeling disconnected from your body

Pause & Reflect

How did this practice feel?

Was anything different afterward?

Whole Again Reminder

Healing doesn't always require doing more.

Sometimes healing begins by slowing down enough to care for yourself with gentleness.

One Gentle Step

The next time you notice yourself becoming overwhelmed, pause before trying to solve the problem.

Take one minute.

Breathe.

Practice the Butterfly Hug.

Then decide what comes next.

Your body deserves the opportunity to feel supported before it feels pressured to respond.

Progressive Muscle Relaxation

Releasing Tension One Breath at a Time

"Your body often holds stress long after your mind is ready to let it go."

Have you ever noticed that your shoulders ache after a stressful day?

Or that your jaw feels tight without realizing you've been clenching it?

Emotional stress doesn't only affect our thoughts—it often settles into our muscles.

When we experience prolonged stress or emotional abuse, our bodies can become accustomed to staying "ready" for danger.

Over time, that constant state of tension can leave us feeling exhausted, restless, and disconnected from ourselves.

Progressive Muscle Relaxation is a simple practice that helps you notice where your body is holding tension and gently invites those muscles to soften.

You don't have to do this perfectly.

Simply approach this exercise with curiosity and kindness.

Let's Begin

Find a comfortable position.

Take one slow breath.

As you move through each area of your body, gently tighten the muscles for about **five seconds**, then slowly release.

Notice the difference between tension and relaxation.

Hands

👐 Gently make a fist...

Hold...

Release.

Arms

Tighten your arms...

Hold...

Release.

Shoulders

Lift them toward your ears...

Hold...

Release.

Face

Scrunch your forehead and jaw gently...

Hold...

Release.

Stomach

Gently tighten your core...

Hold...

Release.

Legs

Press your legs together...

Hold...

Release.

Feet

Curl your toes...

Hold...

Release.

Take one final slow breath.

Notice how your body feels now.



Pause & Reflect

Where did I notice the most tension?

After releasing it, I feel...



Whole Again Reminder

Your body deserves moments of rest just as much as your mind.



One Gentle Step

Today, notice one area of your body that feels tense.

Instead of ignoring it, pause for one minute.

Breathe.

Soften.

Allow your body to experience even a small moment of relief.

Creating Your Safe Place

A Gentle Visualization

"Sometimes healing begins by remembering what safety feels like."

Your brain responds not only to what is happening around you but also to what you imagine.

Visualization can become a powerful way to remind your nervous system that peaceful experiences exist.

Your Safe Place doesn't have to be real.

It can be somewhere you've visited before.

A favorite vacation.

A quiet beach.

A forest trail.

A rocking chair on a porch.

A mountain cabin.

A peaceful garden.

Or it can be entirely imagined.

The goal isn't perfection.

The goal is creating a place your mind begins to associate with calm.

Close Your Eyes

Imagine arriving somewhere completely safe.

Take your time.

Notice...

What do you see?

What do you hear?

What do you smell?

What does the air feel like?

How does your body feel here?

Stay here for a few slow breaths.

There is nowhere else you need to be.

My Safe Place

Give your safe place a name.

Draw it...

Describe it...

Or write about it below.



Whole Again Reminder

Safety isn't only a place you find.

It's an experience your nervous system can slowly learn again.

One Gentle Step

Visit your Safe Place for just two minutes each day this week.

The more familiar your brain becomes with peaceful experiences, the easier it becomes to access them when you need them most.

A Gentle Body Scan

Coming Back to Yourself

"Your body is always communicating with you. Healing begins when we learn to listen with kindness instead of judgment."

Many of us spend so much time focused on what is happening around us that we lose touch with what is happening within us.

After emotional abuse, it is common to disconnect from your body as a way of coping. You may ignore hunger, tension, exhaustion, or even your own emotions because survival required your attention to be somewhere else.

A Body Scan is an opportunity to gently reconnect.

There is nothing you need to change.

Nothing to fix.

Nothing to judge.

Simply notice.



Sit comfortably or lie down if you prefer.

Take one slow breath.

Close your eyes if that feels comfortable.

Now slowly bring your attention to each part of your body.

Forehead

Is it relaxed or tense?

Without forcing it, invite it to soften.

Jaw

Are you clenching?

Can you allow just a little space between your teeth?

Neck & Shoulders

Notice if you're carrying tension.

Imagine those muscles becoming just a little heavier.

Arms & Hands

Notice warmth.

Coolness.

Pressure.

There is no right answer.

Chest

Observe your breathing.

Simply notice.

Stomach

What sensations do you notice?

No judgment.

Only awareness.

Hips & Legs

Can you feel the chair supporting you?

The floor beneath your feet?

Feet

Notice where they connect with the ground.

Allow yourself to feel supported.

Take one final slow breath.

When you're ready, gently open your eyes.



Pause & Reflect

What part of my body needed the most attention today?

What surprised me during this exercise?



Whole Again Reminder

Awareness is not weakness.

Awareness is the beginning of healing.



One Gentle Step

Set a reminder on your phone once each day.

Pause for thirty seconds.

Ask yourself:

"What is my body trying to tell me right now?"

Simply notice.

Listening is enough.

Your Daily Nervous System Check-In

"Small moments of awareness create lasting change."

Healing isn't only about what happens during workshops, coaching sessions, or while reading a workbook.

It also happens during ordinary moments.

Checking in with yourself each day helps you notice patterns, celebrate progress, and respond with greater compassion instead of criticism.

You don't have to complete every box every day.

Even one thoughtful answer can help you reconnect with yourself.



Morning Check-In

Today I feel:

- ☐ Calm
 - ☐ Hopeful
 - ☐ Rested
 - ☐ Anxious
 - ☐ Overwhelmed
 - ☐ Sad
 - ☐ Tired
 - ☐ Curious
 - ☐ Peaceful
 - ☐ Other _____

One word that describes my emotional state:

Midday Pause

Right now, my body needs:

Evening Reflection

Today I noticed...

One thing that helped me feel safe was...

One thing I'm grateful for today...

Whole Again Reminder

Progress isn't measured by having perfect days.

It's measured by returning to yourself with compassion, again and again.

One Gentle Step

Complete this check-in three times this week.

Don't worry about writing long answers.

Simply practice noticing yourself with kindness.

That alone is a powerful act of healing.

Building Your Comfort List

Small Things That Help You Feel Safe

"Healing doesn't always happen through big moments. Often, it happens through small acts of care repeated over time."

When life feels overwhelming, it can be difficult to remember what actually helps.

That's why creating a Comfort List before you need it can be so valuable.

A Comfort List is simply a collection of healthy, nurturing activities that help your mind and body feel a little more settled.

These aren't ways to avoid difficult emotions.

They're ways to care for yourself while you move through them.

You may not need every idea listed below.

Choose what feels genuine to you.

Things That Comfort Me

Places That Help Me Feel Calm

People I Feel Safe With

Activities That Help Me Slow Down

- ☐ Walking outside
- ☐ Reading
- ☐ Journaling
- ☐ Listening to music
- ☐ Prayer

- ☐ Deep breathing
- ☐ Gardening
- ☐ Stretching
- ☐ Warm bath
- ☐ Calling a friend
- ☐ Other

Things That Bring Me Joy

Words That Encourage Me

Write a verse, quote, affirmation, or reminder that brings you hope.



Whole Again Reminder

Comfort is not weakness.

Healthy comfort helps your nervous system remember that peace is possible.



One Gentle Step

Choose **one** item from your Comfort List today.

Even if you only have five minutes.

Especially if you think you're too busy.

Your well-being matters.

Before We Continue

Celebrating Small Steps

"Healing rarely announces itself with dramatic moments. More often, it quietly grows beneath the surface."

Take a moment to notice something.

You've just completed an entire section dedicated to helping your body experience greater safety.

Perhaps some exercises felt helpful.

Perhaps others didn't.

That's perfectly okay.

Healing isn't about finding one perfect tool.

It's about slowly discovering what supports you best.

As you continue through this workbook, you'll likely return to these exercises many times.

Some days you may choose Box Breathing.

Other days you may need grounding.

Sometimes you'll simply need a quiet reminder that your body deserves compassion.

Every practice is another invitation to reconnect with yourself.

And every time you choose one of these practices, you're strengthening a new pattern—one rooted in safety rather than survival.

That is something worth celebrating.

Pause & Reflect

Which exercise helped me the most?

Which one would I like to practice more often?

What did I learn about my body?

One thing I'm proud of myself for is...

Whole Again Reminder

Your nervous system doesn't need perfection.

It needs repeated experiences of gentleness, safety, and care.

One Gentle Step

This week, choose **one regulation practice** and make it part of your daily routine.

Don't aim for perfection.

Aim for consistency.

Small moments of safety, practiced often, create lasting change.

PART THREE

Returning Home to Yourself

You Were Never Lost

"Healing isn't about becoming someone new. It's about returning to the person who has always been there beneath the pain."

One of the most common things I hear survivors say is,

"I don't even know who I am anymore."

If you've ever felt that way, I want you to know something important.

I don't believe you've disappeared.

I believe you've been surviving.

When life becomes centered around managing someone else's moods, avoiding conflict, or trying to keep the peace, it's easy to lose touch with your own needs, preferences, and dreams.

You may have stopped asking yourself:

"What do I want?"

"What brings me joy?"

"What feels true to me?"

Not because those questions didn't matter.

But because survival demanded your attention elsewhere.

The beautiful truth is this:

The real you has not been erased.

Your kindness.

Your creativity.

Your curiosity.

Your sense of humor.

Your compassion.

Your dreams.

They've been waiting patiently beneath the layers of fear, exhaustion, and self-doubt.

Healing isn't about inventing a brand-new person.

It's about gently uncovering the person you've always been.

And that journey begins with curiosity—not pressure.



Pause & Reflect

Complete these sentences:

I feel most like myself when...

One thing I've always loved is...

One quality I hope to reconnect with is...



Whole Again Reminder

You are not starting over.

You are coming home to yourself.



One Gentle Step

Today, spend ten minutes doing something you enjoyed before life became so heavy.

Not because you're productive.

Not because you have to.

Simply because it reminds you that joy still belongs to you.

Discovering Your Values

"When you know what matters most, your decisions become clearer."

Many people leave emotionally unhealthy relationships unsure of what they actually want.

After spending so much time adapting to someone else's expectations, it can feel unfamiliar to ask,

"What matters to me?"

Your values are the principles that guide your life.

They're not goals.

They're the qualities you want to bring into your everyday choices.

Understanding your values can help you:

- Make decisions with greater confidence.
- Build healthier relationships.
- Set boundaries that reflect what matters most.
- Create a life that feels more authentic.

There are no perfect values.

Only the ones that feel true to you.



Which of These Values Feel Most Important?

Circle or highlight the ones that resonate.

- ☐ Authenticity
- ☐ Compassion

- ☐ Courage
- ☐ Creativity
- ☐ Faith
- ☐ Family
- ☐ Freedom
- ☐ Growth
- ☐ Health
- ☐ Honesty
- ☐ Joy
- ☐ Kindness
- ☐ Learning
- ☐ Peace
- ☐ Purpose
- ☐ Respect
- ☐ Security
- ☐ Service
- ☐ Simplicity
- ☐ Trust
- ☐ Wisdom
- ☐ Other:

My Top Five Values

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

Reflection

How would my life look different if I made decisions based on these values?



Whole Again Reminder

The life you build becomes stronger when it's rooted in values instead of fear.



One Gentle Step

Choose one value from your list this week.

Ask yourself each morning:

"What is one small way I can live this value today?"

Small choices, repeated consistently, create a meaningful life.

Rediscovering Joy

Giving Yourself Permission to Feel Alive Again

"Joy isn't a reward for healing perfectly. It's part of the healing itself."

After living through emotional abuse, many people find themselves asking a question they never expected:

"What do I even enjoy anymore?"

When so much energy has been spent surviving, joy often slips quietly into the background.

You may have stopped pursuing hobbies.

Stopped laughing as freely.

Stopped trying new things.

Perhaps you convinced yourself there simply wasn't time.

Or maybe it no longer felt safe to enjoy life.

Over time, survival can become so familiar that peace feels unfamiliar.

But healing gently invites us to remember something important.

You were created for more than survival.

You were created to experience beauty.

Connection.

Laughter.

Wonder.

Rest.

Purpose.

Joy doesn't ignore pain.

It exists alongside it.

Some days joy may feel like a deep belly laugh with a friend.

Other days it may simply be enjoying your morning coffee while watching the sunrise.

Both count.

Both matter.

The goal isn't to force happiness.

The goal is to notice moments that remind you life still holds goodness.

Every moment of joy becomes evidence that healing is unfolding.



My Joy List

Complete as many as you'd like.

I feel most peaceful when...

Something that always makes me smile is...

I lose track of time when...

One place that makes me feel calm is...

A hobby I'd like to revisit is...

Something I've always wanted to learn is...

Music that lifts my spirit...

One adventure I'd like to experience someday...



Whole Again Reminder

You don't have to earn joy.

You simply have to give yourself permission to receive it.



One Gentle Step

Choose one item from your Joy List.

Schedule time for it this week.

Even fifteen minutes matters.

Joy grows through intentional practice.

Celebrating Your Strengths

You Are More Than What Happened to You

"Survival required extraordinary strength. Healing allows you to recognize it."

When people have experienced emotional abuse, they often become experts at noticing what they believe is "wrong" with them.

Very few stop to recognize what helped them survive.

Take a moment to consider everything you've already carried.

You kept going.

You searched for answers.

You found your way here.

That tells me something important.

There is strength within you.

Perhaps you've forgotten it.

Perhaps no one ever reflected it back to you.

Let's begin changing that today.



Strengths I Already Carry

Read through the list below.

Circle every quality you see in yourself—even if it feels small.

- ☐ Compassion
- ☐ Courage
- ☐ Determination
- ☐ Empathy
- ☐ Faith
- ☐ Forgiveness
- ☐ Hope
- ☐ Honesty
- ☐ Kindness
- ☐ Patience
- ☐ Perseverance
- ☐ Resilience
- ☐ Wisdom
- ☐ Curiosity
- ☐ Creativity
- ☐ Loyalty
- ☐ Generosity
- ☐ Humor
- ☐ Flexibility
- ☐ Integrity
- ☐ Other

Three strengths I rely on most:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

A strength I'm beginning to recognize in myself:

How has this strength helped me?



Looking Through a Kinder Lens

Imagine someone who loves you deeply describing you.

What do you think they would say?

Whole Again Reminder

Your story includes pain.

It also includes resilience, courage, wisdom, and hope.

One Gentle Step

Every evening this week, write down **one thing you did well that day**.

It doesn't have to be extraordinary.

Maybe you rested when you needed to.

Maybe you asked for help.

Maybe you simply kept going.

Small victories deserve to be noticed.

Learning to Trust Yourself Again

Your Inner Wisdom Has Never Left You

"The voice you've been searching for has been within you all along."

One of the quietest losses after emotional abuse is the loss of confidence in yourself.

Not because you suddenly became incapable.

But because you were repeatedly taught not to trust your own thoughts, feelings, or instincts.

Perhaps you heard messages like:

"You're too sensitive."

"You're overreacting."

"You're remembering it wrong."

"You're making a big deal out of nothing."

Over time, those messages can become your own inner dialogue.

You may begin asking other people what you should think.

You may hesitate before making even simple decisions.

You may apologize for things that don't require an apology.

If that's your experience, I want you to know something important.

Your intuition wasn't destroyed.

It became quieter while you were trying to survive.

Healing is the gentle process of learning to hear that quiet voice again.

Not perfectly.

Just a little more clearly than yesterday.

Self-trust doesn't appear overnight.

It grows every time you make one small decision that honors who you are.

Remember a Time You Trusted Yourself

Think back to a moment when you listened to your instincts.

Maybe it was small.

Maybe it changed your life.

Write about it below.

My Inner Wisdom Has Helped Me By...

Whole Again Reminder

You don't have to know every answer.

You only have to trust yourself with the next gentle step.

One Gentle Step

Today, make one decision without asking anyone else for reassurance.

It can be something small.

Trust begins with practice.

Rewriting the Story You Tell Yourself

From Self-Criticism to Self-Compassion

"Healing changes the way you speak to yourself."

Many of us carry an inner voice shaped by years of criticism, manipulation, or unrealistic expectations.

Without realizing it, we begin repeating those messages to ourselves.

You may think:

"I'm not enough."

"Everything is my fault."

"I always mess things up."

"No one will ever love me."

"I'm too much."

"I'm not enough."

Those thoughts can feel convincing because they've been repeated so often.

But they are not the whole truth.

Healing invites us to ask a different question:

"What would I say to someone I love if they believed this about themselves?"

The answer is often far kinder than the words we use with ourselves.

You deserve that same kindness.



Old Story → New Story

Old Thought

A Kinder Truth

I always fail.

I'm learning and growing every day.

I'm too much.

My needs and emotions matter.

I should have known better.

I made the best decisions I could with the information I had.

I'm broken.

I'm healing.

I'll never be the same.

I am becoming stronger and wiser.



My New Story

One belief I'm ready to let go of:

A kinder truth I'm choosing to practice:

How might my life change if I believed this new truth?



Whole Again Reminder

Speak to yourself the way you would speak to someone whose healing mattered deeply to you.
Because yours does.



One Gentle Step

Every morning this week, look in the mirror and gently say:

"I am worthy of kindness, beginning with my own."

It may feel unfamiliar.

That's okay.

Healing often begins by practicing words your heart has needed to hear for a long time.

A Letter to Your Younger Self

Offering Yourself the Compassion You Always Deserved

"Healing often begins when we offer ourselves the kindness we once needed from someone else."

Take a quiet moment before beginning this exercise.

Imagine yourself at a younger age.

Perhaps you're remembering yourself as a child.

A teenager.

A young adult.

Or simply a version of yourself before life became so complicated.

Notice their face.

Their hopes.

Their fears.

Their innocence.

Now imagine sitting beside them.

Not to change the past.

Not to erase the pain.

Simply to offer the comfort, protection, and encouragement they deserved.

You don't need perfect words.

Write from your heart.

Dear Younger Me...

If You Get Stuck...

You might begin with:

- I wish someone had told you...
- I want you to know\...
- None of this was your fault...
- You deserved...
- One day you'll discover...
- I am so proud of you because...

Whole Again Reminder

Your younger self still deserves gentleness.

Today, you have the opportunity to offer it.

One Gentle Step

After writing your letter, place your hand over your heart.

Read it slowly.

Imagine those words being received with the love they were always meant to carry.

A Letter From Your Future Self

Meeting the Person You're Becoming

"Hope begins when we allow ourselves to imagine a future that is no longer defined by survival."

Now let's do something different.

Instead of looking backward...

Let's look forward.

Imagine yourself five years from today.

You've continued healing.

You've practiced boundaries.

You've learned to trust yourself.

Life isn't perfect.

But it feels peaceful.

Steady.

Hopeful.

Now imagine that future version of yourself writing a letter to you today.

What would they say?

How would they encourage you?

What wisdom would they share?

What would they thank you for beginning today?

There is no wrong answer.

Simply allow hope to speak.



Dear Present Me...

Imagine Your Future Self Saying...

Complete the sentences:

Thank you for...

Keep believing...

One day you'll realize...



Whole Again Reminder

The future version of you is cheering for the choices you're making today.



One Gentle Step

Fold this page—or mark it with a bookmark.

Return to it six months from now.

Notice what has changed.

Celebrate every step, no matter how small.

Dreams Worth Rediscovering

Giving Yourself Permission to Dream Again

"Healing isn't only about letting go of what hurt you. It's also about making room for what brings you life."

When life has been centered around surviving, dreaming can feel unfamiliar.

Maybe you once imagined traveling.

Starting a business.

Returning to school.

Learning an instrument.

Writing a book.

Volunteering.

Creating art.

Building a peaceful home.

Perhaps those dreams slowly faded beneath the weight of daily survival.

If so, you're not alone.

One of the beautiful things about healing is that it gently reawakens possibility.

Not all at once.

Not with pressure.

But with quiet invitations to ask:

"What still matters to me?"

"What kind of life do I want to create?"

You don't have to pursue every dream.

You simply have to remember that you're still allowed to have them.

Dreams aren't selfish.

They remind us that our future can hold more than what we've already lived through.



Dreams I'd Like to Revisit

Write down anything that comes to mind.

Nothing is too small.

Nothing is too big.

I've always wanted to...

A place I'd love to visit...

A skill I'd like to learn...

Something I'd like to create...

One experience I'd love to have...



Whole Again Reminder

Your future deserves your attention just as much as your past deserved your healing.



One Gentle Step

Choose one dream.

Ask yourself:

"What is one tiny step I could take toward this?"

Small beginnings often become meaningful journeys.

Becoming Whole Again

Looking Toward the Life You're Creating

"You are not defined by what happened to you. You are shaped by the choices you make as you move forward."

Take a moment to notice how far you've already come.

You've reflected on your story.

You've learned about emotional abuse.

You've practiced calming your nervous system.

You've begun reconnecting with your values, strengths, and dreams.

That is meaningful work.

Healing doesn't happen because we complete a workbook.

Healing happens because we begin living differently.

One gentle choice at a time.

As you continue your journey, there will still be difficult days.

There may be moments when old fears return.

That doesn't erase your progress.

Growth isn't measured by never struggling again.

It's measured by your willingness to keep coming back to yourself.

Each boundary you honor.

Each act of self-compassion.

Each peaceful decision.

Each courageous conversation.

Each hopeful dream.

They all become part of the person you are becoming.

And that person is worthy of a beautiful life.

Looking Ahead

As I continue healing, I want my life to be filled with...

The kind of person I hope to become is...

The values I want to carry into my future are...

Whole Again Reminder

You don't have to become someone different.

You are simply becoming more fully yourself.

One Gentle Step

Write one promise to yourself.

Not a promise of perfection.

A promise of kindness.

A promise of courage.

A promise to keep showing up.

My promise:

Sign your name below as a reminder that your healing matters.

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Looking Ahead

On the next page, we'll begin **Part Four: Boundaries That Protect Your Peace**.

Together we'll explore how healthy boundaries are not walls that keep people out—they are bridges that help us build relationships rooted in respect, honesty, and emotional safety.

PART FOUR

Boundaries That Protect Your Peace

What Healthy Boundaries Really Are

"Boundaries aren't about pushing people away. They're about creating relationships where everyone is treated with dignity and respect."

If you've struggled with boundaries, you're not alone.

Many of us were never taught what healthy boundaries actually look like.

Perhaps you learned that saying "no" was selfish.

Maybe you were praised for always putting everyone else first.

Or perhaps you've spent years trying to keep the peace, even when it meant sacrificing your own well-being.

If that's true for you, I want you to know something:

Needing boundaries doesn't make you difficult.

It makes you human.

Healthy boundaries are not walls designed to keep people out.

They're guidelines that help us protect our emotional, physical, spiritual, and mental well-being.

Boundaries help us answer questions like:

- What am I comfortable with?
- What am I not comfortable with?
- How do I want to be treated?
- What will I do if someone repeatedly crosses my limits?

Notice that last question.

Boundaries are not about controlling another person's behavior.

They are about deciding how **you** will respond.

That shift changes everything.

Healthy boundaries allow us to love others without losing ourselves.



What Healthy Boundaries Sound Like

Healthy boundaries might sound like:

- "I'm not available tonight."
- "I need some time to think before I answer."
- "That topic isn't something I'm willing to discuss."
- "I understand your perspective, and mine is different."
- "I'm choosing what feels healthy for me."

Simple.

Clear.

Respectful.



Whole Again Reminder

Boundaries are an act of self-respect, not selfishness.



One Gentle Step

Finish this sentence:

One area of my life that could benefit from healthier boundaries is...

Why Boundaries Feel So Difficult

"If boundaries feel uncomfortable, it doesn't mean they're wrong. It may simply mean they're new."

Have you ever noticed that saying "yes" feels automatic, even when you want to say "no"?

Many survivors experience this.

Not because they lack courage.

But because saying "yes" once helped them stay emotionally or physically safe.

If you've experienced emotional abuse, people-pleasing may have become a survival strategy.

You learned to avoid conflict.

You anticipated other people's needs.

You tried to keep everyone happy.

Those patterns often continue long after the relationship ends.

As a result, setting boundaries may bring up feelings like:

- Guilt
- Fear
- Anxiety
- Shame
- Worry about disappointing others
- Fear of rejection
- Fear of being misunderstood

Those feelings are understandable.

They don't necessarily mean you're making the wrong choice.

They may simply mean you're practicing something unfamiliar.

Every healthy boundary is an opportunity to remind yourself:

"My needs matter too."



My Boundary Beliefs

Read each statement.

Place a ✓ beside the ones you've believed at some point.

- ☐ If I say no, people won't like me.
- ☐ It's my job to keep everyone happy.
- ☐ Good people always put others first.
- ☐ Setting boundaries is selfish.
- ☐ Conflict always means something is wrong.
- ☐ My needs aren't as important as everyone else's.
- ☐ If someone gets upset, I must have done something wrong.

Reflection

Which belief would you like to release?

What healthier belief would you like to practice instead?

Whole Again Reminder

Feeling guilty doesn't mean you're doing something wrong.

Sometimes it simply means you're doing something different.

One Gentle Step

The next time you notice guilt after setting a healthy boundary, pause before changing your decision.
Instead, ask yourself:

"Is this guilt coming from wisdom... or from an old survival pattern?"

You don't have to answer immediately.

Simply notice.

That awareness is part of healing.

Healthy Boundary Scripts

Words You Can Borrow Until They Become Your Own

"You don't have to explain your worthiness. You only have to communicate with honesty and respect."

Many people avoid setting boundaries because they don't know what to say.

The good news is this:

Healthy boundaries don't require perfect words.

They simply require honesty, clarity, and respect.

You are not responsible for controlling another person's reaction.

You are responsible for communicating your needs with integrity.

If speaking up feels uncomfortable, that's okay.

Like any new skill, boundaries become easier with practice.

Think of the examples below as starting points.

Adjust them to sound like you.

When You Need Time

"I'd like some time to think before I answer."

"I'm not ready to make a decision today."

"I'll get back to you tomorrow."

When You Need Space

"I need some quiet time this evening."

"I'm going to take a break from this conversation."

"I'd like to continue this when we're both calmer."

When Someone Crosses a Line

"I'm not comfortable being spoken to that way."

"I want to have this conversation, but not if we're yelling."

"If the conversation continues this way, I'm going to step away."

When You Need to Say No

"No, thank you."

"I won't be able to do that."

"That doesn't work for me."

"I appreciate you asking, but I'll have to decline."

Remember

A healthy boundary does not require:

- A long explanation.
- An apology for having needs.
- Permission from someone else.
- A perfectly worded response.

Simple is often enough.

Whole Again Reminder

A respectful "no" is healthier than a resentful "yes."

One Gentle Step

Practice saying one boundary out loud today.

Even if you're alone.

Your voice deserves to hear your own confidence.

Giving Yourself Permission

You Don't Have to Earn Healthy Boundaries

"One of the greatest acts of healing is giving yourself permission to care for yourself without guilt."

For many survivors, boundaries don't fail because they don't know what to do.

They struggle because they don't believe they're allowed to do it.

This page is your reminder.

You have permission.

Not because someone else gave it to you.

Because your well-being matters.

Read each statement slowly.

If one speaks to your heart, place a check beside it.

Return to this page often.

Today I Give Myself Permission To...

- ☐ Say no without feeling guilty.
- ☐ Rest without needing to earn it.
- ☐ Change my mind.
- ☐ Ask for help.
- ☐ Protect my peace.
- ☐ Leave conversations that become disrespectful.
- ☐ Take time before responding.
- ☐ Make mistakes without condemning myself.
- ☐ Choose relationships that feel safe.
- ☐ Trust my instincts.
- ☐ Walk away from manipulation.
- ☐ Value my own needs.
- ☐ Celebrate my progress.
- ☐ Heal at my own pace.

☐ Begin again tomorrow.

My Own Permission Slip

Today I give myself permission to...



Whole Again Reminder

You don't have to justify taking care of yourself.

Your well-being has value simply because you do.



One Gentle Step

Choose one permission from today's list.

Write it on a sticky note.

Place it somewhere you'll see it throughout the week.

Let it become a gentle reminder that healing includes treating yourself with the same kindness you so freely offer others.

Relationship Check-In

Recognizing Relationships That Support Your Healing

"Healthy relationships don't require you to abandon yourself in order to belong."

One of the lasting effects of emotional abuse is that unhealthy behaviors can begin to feel normal.

Over time, you may become so accustomed to walking on eggshells, questioning yourself, or keeping the peace that respect and consistency feel unfamiliar.

Healing includes learning to recognize the difference.

Healthy relationships are not perfect.

People make mistakes.

They disagree.

They disappoint one another from time to time.

The difference is that healthy relationships are built on mutual respect, accountability, and emotional safety.

As you read through the lists below, remember:

No relationship is perfect.

Instead of looking for perfection, look for patterns.



Signs of Healthy Relationships

Healthy relationships often include:

- ☐ I feel emotionally safe expressing my thoughts.
- ☐ My opinions are respected, even when we disagree.
- ☐ I can say "no" without fear.
- ☐ We repair after conflict.
- ☐ I don't feel responsible for managing the other person's emotions.
- ☐ We encourage one another's growth.
- ☐ I feel accepted rather than controlled.
- ☐ My boundaries are respected.
- ☐ I can be honest without fear of punishment.
- ☐ I feel more like myself after spending time with this person.

Reflection

Think about one relationship that feels emotionally safe.

What qualities make it feel different?



Whole Again Reminder

The healthiest relationships allow you to feel more like yourself—not less.



One Gentle Step

Identify one relationship that leaves you feeling peaceful.

Consider spending a little more intentional time with that person this week.

Healthy relationships help us heal.

Red Flags, Yellow Flags & Green Flags

Learning to Notice Patterns

"Pay attention to patterns, not promises."

When we're longing for love, acceptance, or connection, it can be easy to overlook warning signs.

This isn't because we're foolish.

It's because hope is a beautiful human quality.

Healing doesn't ask you to stop hoping.

It invites you to notice whether someone's actions consistently support their words.



Red Flags

These behaviors deserve serious attention:

- ☐ Frequent dishonesty
- ☐ Controlling behavior
- ☐ Blaming others for everything
- ☐ Extreme jealousy

- ☐ Repeated disrespect
- ☐ Name-calling or insults
- ☐ Isolation from family or friends
- ☐ Ignoring boundaries
- ☐ Intimidation
- ☐ Manipulation
- ☐ Refusing accountability
- ☐ Making you feel afraid

Yellow Flags

These may simply mean the relationship needs honest conversations and healthy growth.

Examples include:

- ☐ Difficulty communicating
- ☐ Avoiding conflict
- ☐ Forgetting commitments occasionally
- ☐ Trouble expressing emotions
- ☐ Different communication styles

Yellow flags are invitations to pay attention—not automatic reasons to end a relationship.

Green Flags

Healthy patterns often include:

- ☐ Accountability
- ☐ Honesty
- ☐ Kindness
- ☐ Emotional consistency
- ☐ Respect
- ☐ Curiosity
- ☐ Empathy
- ☐ Healthy conflict resolution
- ☐ Encouragement
- ☐ Reliability
- ☐ Shared responsibility
- ☐ Genuine apologies followed by changed behavior

Reflection

Which green flags do I want to prioritize in future relationships?

Which red flags am I no longer willing to ignore?

Whole Again Reminder

Listen to repeated actions more than repeated promises.

Trust grows through consistency.

One Gentle Step

Choose one green flag from today's list.

This week, intentionally notice that quality in someone you trust.

Healthy relationships become easier to recognize when we spend time experiencing them.

My Boundary Plan

Creating Boundaries That Reflect My Values

"Boundaries are promises you make to yourself about how you will protect your peace."

One of the biggest misconceptions about boundaries is that they're only something we use when relationships become difficult.

In reality, healthy boundaries are part of everyday life.

They help us make decisions that align with our values.

They protect our time, energy, emotions, and well-being.

The purpose of this page isn't to create rigid rules.

It's to help you think intentionally about the life you're building.

As you complete this exercise, remember:

Your boundaries may change over time.

That's okay.

Healthy boundaries grow as we grow.

My Personal Boundary Plan

To protect my emotional well-being, I will...

To protect my physical well-being, I will...

To protect my time, I will...

To protect my peace, I will...

When someone repeatedly ignores my boundaries, I will...

My Reminder

Healthy boundaries help me become the kind of person I want to be because...

Whole Again Reminder

Every healthy boundary is a way of saying,

"My well-being matters too."

One Gentle Step

Choose **one** boundary from this page.

Practice it this week.

Not perfectly.

Simply consistently.

Living With Confidence

Building a Life You No Longer Have to Escape From

"Healing becomes visible in the choices you make every day."

There will probably come a day when you realize something has changed.

Not because life suddenly became easy.

But because **you** became different.

Perhaps you'll notice that you no longer apologize for everything.

Maybe you'll recognize manipulation more quickly.

Maybe you'll say "no" without spending hours feeling guilty.

Maybe you'll choose rest instead of pushing yourself beyond your limits.

Those moments matter.

Healing often looks ordinary.

It's found in:

Choosing peace instead of chaos.

Responding instead of reacting.

Trusting yourself.

Speaking kindly to yourself.

Protecting your time.

Allowing yourself to laugh again.

Building relationships that feel safe.

These small choices become the foundation of a life you no longer have to survive.

They become a life you get to enjoy.

Looking Back

As you reflect on this section, what has stood out to you most?

One boundary I feel ready to practice is...

One relationship I want to invest in is...

One way I want to protect my peace moving forward is...

Whole Again Reminder

Confidence isn't the absence of fear.

It's the willingness to choose what is healthy, even when it feels unfamiliar.

One Gentle Step

Before the week ends, ask yourself:

"Did my choices this week move me closer to peace or further from it?"

No judgment.

Just curiosity.

That question alone can become a powerful guide for future decisions.

Looking Ahead

On the next page, we'll begin the final section of this workbook:

Hope & Moving Forward

This is where everything you've learned begins to come together.

We'll explore how healing becomes a way of living—not simply something you recover from.

We'll focus on building a future rooted in purpose, peace, and hope.

PART FIVE

Hope & Moving Forward

What Healing Really Looks Like

"Healing doesn't mean you never struggle again. It means struggle no longer defines your life."

Many people begin healing with one quiet hope:

"I just want to feel like myself again."

It's a beautiful hope.

But healing often surprises us.

Instead of returning to the person we once were...

We often become someone wiser.

Someone gentler.

Someone who understands themselves more deeply than ever before.

Healing isn't measured by whether difficult emotions disappear.

It's measured by what you do when they appear.

Healing looks like:

Pausing before reacting.

Trusting your instincts.

Choosing peace over chaos.

Resting without guilt.

Laughing again.

Feeling safe enough to dream.

Building relationships rooted in honesty and respect.

Speaking kindly to yourself.

Asking for help.

Allowing joy to return.

Some days healing feels obvious.

Other days it feels invisible.

But every healthy choice matters.

Even the small ones.
 Especially the small ones.
 Healing is not perfection.
 Healing is progress.

What Healing Looks Like for Me

When I imagine myself continuing to heal, I hope to...
 I will know I am growing because...
 The version of myself I'm becoming is...

Whole Again Reminder

Healing isn't about becoming fearless.

It's about becoming freer.

One Gentle Step

At the end of today, ask yourself:

"What is one small way I honored my healing today?"

Write your answer somewhere you'll see it tomorrow.

Building Daily Hope

"Hope isn't something we wait to feel. It's something we choose to practice."

Hope isn't pretending life is easy.
 Hope doesn't ignore pain.

Hope simply whispers,

"There is still more to your story."

Some mornings hope feels strong.
 Other mornings it feels very small.
 That's okay.
 Even the smallest hope can become the beginning of profound change.
 Hope grows through ordinary choices.
 Choosing to get out of bed.
 Choosing to attend a workshop.
 Choosing to call a friend.
 Choosing to take a walk.

Choosing to pray.

Choosing to breathe.

Choosing to believe that today's pain will not last forever.

Hope is strengthened every time we take one gentle step forward.

Ways I Can Practice Hope

This week I can...

- ☐ Spend time outside.
- ☐ Read something encouraging.
- ☐ Listen to uplifting music.
- ☐ Practice gratitude.
- ☐ Pray or meditate.
- ☐ Call someone I trust.
- ☐ Journal.
- ☐ Attend a Healing Circle.
- ☐ Read one Whole Again article.
- ☐ Take a walk.
- ☐ Rest.
- ☐ Celebrate one small win.
- ☐ Other:

Reflection

What helps me feel hopeful?

Who reminds me that healing is possible?

What gives my life meaning?

Whole Again Reminder

Hope grows every time you choose to believe your future can be different from your past.

One Gentle Step

Before going to bed tonight...

Write down **three things that went well today**.

They don't have to be extraordinary.

Perhaps you smiled.

Perhaps you rested.

Perhaps you simply kept going.

Every one of those moments matters.

Daily Habits That Support Healing

Small Choices Create Lasting Change

"Healing is rarely found in one life-changing moment. More often, it grows through small choices repeated with compassion."

When people think about healing, they often imagine dramatic breakthroughs.

Sometimes those moments happen.

More often, healing is much quieter.

It's choosing to drink water when you've been ignoring your body.

It's taking a walk instead of staying isolated.

It's reading one encouraging page instead of replaying painful memories.

It's practicing one boundary.

One grounding exercise.

One kind thought toward yourself.

Healing is built through ordinary moments.

The beautiful thing about habits is that they become easier with repetition.

The goal isn't perfection.

The goal is creating a life that consistently supports your well-being.

Ask yourself,

"What kind of daily life helps me become the person I want to be?"

Then begin with one small habit.

Not ten.

One.

Because one practiced consistently is far more powerful than ten practiced occasionally.



My Daily Healing Habits

Choose the habits you'd like to practice this week.

- ☐ Drink enough water.
- ☐ Get 7–8 hours of sleep.
- ☐ Spend time outside.
- ☐ Practice deep breathing.
- ☐ Pray or meditate.
- ☐ Read something encouraging.
- ☐ Journal for five minutes.
- ☐ Stretch or move my body.
- ☐ Listen to uplifting music.
- ☐ Connect with someone safe.

- ☐ Practice gratitude.
- ☐ Rest without guilt.
- ☐ Say one kind thing to myself.
- ☐ Celebrate one small win.
- ☐ Other:

This Week, My One Daily Habit Will Be:

Why is this habit important to me?



Whole Again Reminder

Small habits create meaningful change because they remind your mind and body that healing is part of everyday life.



One Gentle Step

Choose **one habit** from this page.

Practice it every day this week.

Not perfectly.

Simply consistently.

My Circle of Support

Healing Was Never Meant to Be Done Alone

"Strength isn't measured by how much you carry alone. It's measured by your willingness to let others walk beside you."

One of the painful effects of emotional abuse is isolation.

Sometimes isolation happens because someone intentionally separated you from supportive people.

Other times it happens because shame, fear, or exhaustion made reaching out feel impossible.

Healing invites us back into healthy connection.

Not with everyone.

With safe people.

Support doesn't always look the same.

For some people, it's a trusted friend.

For others, it's a counselor, coach, pastor, support group, or family member.

The important question isn't,

"Do I have a lot of people?"

It's,

"Who helps me become more fully myself?"

Those are the relationships worth nurturing.



My Circle of Support

People I Feel Safe Talking To

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.

People I Can Contact When I'm Having a Difficult Day

Communities That Help Me Heal

- ☐ Whole Again Healing Circle
- ☐ Faith Community
- ☐ Trusted Friends
- ☐ Family
- ☐ Therapist
- ☐ Coach
- ☐ Support Group
- ☐ Other

One Relationship I'd Like to Strengthen

One Way I Can Reach Out This Week



Whole Again Reminder

Healing doesn't require you to carry everything by yourself.

Healthy support is a sign of courage, not weakness.



One Gentle Step

Reach out to one safe person this week.

It doesn't have to be a long conversation.

A simple text.

A phone call.

A cup of coffee.

Healing grows through healthy connection.

My Healing Goals

Creating a Vision for the Life You're Building

"Healing isn't about becoming perfect. It's about becoming more fully yourself."

It's easy to focus on what we want to leave behind.

The anxiety.

The fear.

The self-doubt.

The exhaustion.

But healing also invites us to ask a different question:

"What am I moving toward?"

Goals aren't about proving your worth.

They're about creating direction.

As you complete this page, remember that healing goals don't need to be dramatic.

Sometimes the most meaningful goal is simply:

"I want to wake up feeling more peaceful."

Small goals, practiced consistently, become lasting transformation.

Over the Next Year, I Hope To...

Emotionally

Physically

Spiritually

Relationally

Personally

Three Goals I'm Choosing Right Now

Goal One

My first small step:

Goal Two

My first small step:

Goal Three

My first small step:

Whole Again Reminder

Big change begins with small, consistent choices.

One Gentle Step

Circle the goal that feels most important today.

Forget the rest for now.

One meaningful step is enough.

Celebrating Progress

Learning to Notice How Far You've Come

"Healing grows where gratitude notices progress."

One of the challenges many survivors face is constantly noticing what still needs work while overlooking how much has already changed.

Your brain learned to scan for danger.

Now you're teaching it to notice growth.

Progress isn't measured by never having difficult days.

It's measured by how differently you respond to them.

Perhaps today you:

- Recognized a trigger more quickly.
- Spoke kindly to yourself.
- Took a deep breath before reacting.
- Asked for help.
- Rested without guilt.
- Said no respectfully.
- Trusted your instincts.

Those moments matter.

Celebrate them.

They are evidence that healing is already happening.



Looking Back

Six months ago...

I was...

Today...

I notice...

I'm proud of myself because...



My Small Wins

This week I celebrated...

- ☐ Setting a healthy boundary
- ☐ Taking time to rest
- ☐ Practicing grounding
- ☐ Asking for support
- ☐ Speaking kindly to myself
- ☐ Letting go of guilt
- ☐ Trying something new
- ☐ Keeping a promise to myself
- ☐ Other

Whole Again Reminder

Progress deserves to be celebrated, even when it feels small.

Small victories become lasting transformation.

One Gentle Step

Tonight, write down **one thing you're proud of yourself for.**

Not because it was perfect.

Because it reflected the person you're becoming.

My Next Brave Step

You Don't Have to Know the Whole Journey

"Healing doesn't ask you to have all the answers. It simply asks you to keep taking the next gentle step."

If you've ever stood at the bottom of a mountain, you know something important.

You don't reach the summit by taking one giant leap.

You reach it one step at a time.

Healing works the same way.

It's natural to want certainty.

To want to know exactly how long healing will take.

To wonder when you'll finally feel "finished."

But healing isn't about arriving at a destination.

It's about learning to live differently each day.

One conversation.

One boundary.

One healthy decision.

One act of courage.

One moment of self-compassion.

Those moments become your new life.

As you finish this workbook, remember:

You do not have to change everything today.

You only have to decide what your next step will be.

Then take it.

My Next Brave Step

The next step I'm ready to take is...

The biggest obstacle I may face is...

One way I can prepare for that challenge is...

The person who can encourage me is...

The date I will begin is:



Whole Again Reminder

You don't need perfect confidence to begin.

You only need enough courage for the next step.

One Gentle Step

Choose one action you can complete within the next **24 hours**.

Keep it small.

Keep it realistic.

Then celebrate yourself for beginning.

A Promise to Myself

The Life I'm Choosing to Create

"Every day you choose healing, you are writing a new chapter of your story."

Take a deep breath.

Pause for a moment.

Look back through the pages you've completed.

You've learned.

You've reflected.

You've remembered.

You've practiced.

You've dreamed.

You've planned.

That is meaningful work.

Healing doesn't happen because life suddenly becomes easy.

Healing happens because you continue choosing yourself, even when it's difficult.

Today is an opportunity to make a promise.

Not a promise that you'll never struggle again.

Not a promise that you'll never make mistakes.

A promise that you'll keep coming back to yourself with compassion.

My Promise

I promise...

When life feels difficult, I will remember...

I want my future to be filled with...

Signature

Today I choose hope.

Today I choose healing.

Today I choose myself.

Signature

Date

Whole Again Reminder

Healing isn't measured by never falling.

It's measured by your willingness to keep getting back up with grace.

One Gentle Step

Place today's date on your calendar.

One year from now, return to this page.

Read your promise again.

Notice how far you've come.

Celebrate every step.

- ☐ Movement
- ☐ Connection
- ☐ Fresh Air
- ☐ Nourishment
- ☐ Joy
- ☐ Grace

Today's Intention

This evening I want to remember...



Whole Again Reminder

You don't have to fix every feeling.

You simply need to notice it with kindness.

Weekly Reflection

"Healing becomes visible when we pause long enough to notice it."

This week I celebrated...

One challenge I faced...

What helped me most?

Something I learned about myself...

One boundary I honored...

One moment of joy...

Something I'm grateful for...

One gentle step for next week...



Whole Again Reminder

Progress isn't measured by perfect weeks.

It's measured by your willingness to keep showing up.

Trigger Tracker

"Triggers are invitations to respond with compassion rather than criticism."

Situation

What Happened?

- | -

Heal. Discover. Become. • 74

- ☐ Call someone safe
- ☐ Pray
- ☐ Journal
- ☐ Other ______________\\

...

Safe People

1.

1.

...

3.

My Comfort List

My Reminder

This feeling is temporary.

I have gotten through difficult moments before.

Emergency Encouragement

Breathe.

Slow down.

You are safe enough to take one gentle step.

Twenty Trauma-Informed Affirmations

Choose one each day.

- I am worthy of kindness.
- My feelings matter.
- I can trust myself one step at a time.
- Healing takes time, and that's okay.
- My needs are important.
- I deserve relationships built on respect.
- Rest is productive.
- I can begin again today.
- I am learning to protect my peace.
- My voice deserves to be heard.
- I don't have to earn love.
- I release what no longer serves me.
- I can choose differently than I did yesterday.
- My past does not define my future.
- Hope is growing within me.

- I am becoming more fully myself.
- I celebrate every small victory.
- I deserve moments of joy.
- I am stronger than I realize.
- One gentle step is enough for today.

Page 54

My Favorite Whole Again Practices

Circle the exercises that help you most.

- ☐ Box Breathing
- ☐ Butterfly Hug
- ☐ Body Scan
- ☐ Safe Place Visualization
- ☐ Daily Check-In
- ☐ Trigger Tracker
- ☐ Weekly Reflection
- ☐ Boundary Scripts
- ☐ Comfort List
- ☐ Journaling
- ☐ Prayer
- ☐ Walking
- ☐ Gratitude

My Personal Healing Routine

- Morning
- Afternoon
- Evening

Whole Again Resources

Continue Your Journey

Healing Circles

- Understanding Narcissistic Abuse
- Regulating the Nervous System
- Boundaries Without Guilt

- Returning Home to Yourself
- Divorcing a Narcissist
- Emotionally Unavailable Parents
- Parental Alienation
- Holding On to Hope

Additional Support

- One-on-One Coaching
- Whole Again Resource Library
- Free Articles
- Free Healing Toolkit Updates
- **Unmasked: The Podcast**
- Members Library

Website

[www.getwholeagain.com](<http://www.getwholeagain.com/>)

Remember

You don't have to do this alone.

A Final Letter From Amy

Dear Friend,

If you've made it to the end of this toolkit, I want to pause for a moment and simply say...

Thank you.

Thank you for trusting me with a small part of your journey.

I know that healing isn't easy.

There will be days when progress feels obvious.

There will also be days when it feels like nothing is changing at all.

On those days, I hope you'll remember something important.

Healing isn't measured by how quickly you move.

It's measured by your willingness to keep returning to yourself with compassion.

Every boundary you practice.

Every breath you take.

Every time you choose kindness over self-criticism.

Every moment you choose hope instead of giving up.

Those moments matter.

Please don't underestimate the courage it takes to begin again.

You are not behind.

You are not broken.

You are becoming.

And no matter where you are today, I hope you'll remember the words that have guided this entire workbook:

You don't have to heal everything today.

You only have to take one gentle step.

Thank you for allowing Whole Again to be part of your journey.

With hope,

Amy Carmen

Founder, Whole Again

Heal. Discover. Become.
