



A MICRO - WORKBOOK

First Steps

from Survival Mode



Five small reflections for the days when getting through is enough.

— for the long way home —

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CPS-MH • PBT

HEART OF CARE • A REAL-LIFE STORYBOOK

heart-of-care.life

A note, *from me to you —*

If you opened this, something is heavy. I'm glad you're here. I wrote this for the version of me who couldn't read a whole book, couldn't journal for an hour, couldn't do anything but get through the day.

You don't have to fix yourself in these pages. You don't have to be honest in a pretty way. You don't even have to use full sentences. Scribbles count. One word counts. Skipping a page counts.

There are five reflections. Each one is the same shape: a small idea, two or three gentle questions, and room to write. Do one a day. Or one a week. Or one, ever. The point isn't the workbook. The point is you.

When you're done, the last page is yours to keep — a small promise to carry with you.

*soft and steady,
Briana*

How to use this workbook

01 Find five quiet minutes.

Not perfect minutes. Just five.

02 Read the reflection slowly.

Out loud if that helps. Twice if it doesn't land the first time.

03 Answer one prompt – or all three.

There is no right amount. Write a word. Write a list. Draw a shape.

04 Close the workbook.

That's the whole practice. You showed up. That counts.

a small reminder –

This is not therapy. It is a companion. If you are in crisis, please reach out – 988 in the US, or a person who knows your name.

02 The smallest next thing

When everything feels impossible, the answer is almost never 'do more.' It's 'do smaller.' Not the whole load of laundry — one sock. Not call your sister — open the text. The smallest next thing is still movement, and in survival mode, movement is medicine.

GENTLE PROMPTS

- *What is the smallest possible next step I could take today?*
- *What would make that step 50% easier?*
- *Who or what could witness me doing it?*

ROOM TO WRITE

04 What the body is asking

The body keeps a list of needs we've stopped hearing. Water. Food. Sleep. Sunlight. Touch. Stillness. Survival mode tunes them out to keep going — which works, until it doesn't. A gentle check-in is not weakness. It's maintenance.

GENTLE PROMPTS

- *When did I last drink water? Eat something? Sleep more than four hours?*
- *Where in my body am I holding the most tension right now?*
- *What is one small thing my body has been quietly asking for?*

ROOM TO WRITE

05 A permission slip

Some days the most healing thing you can do is officially let yourself off the hook. Not forever — just today. Survival mode runs on shame. Permission is the antidote. Write the slip. Sign it. Hand it to yourself.

GENTLE PROMPTS

- *What am I allowing myself to NOT do today?*
- *What story am I ready to set down for 24 hours?*
- *If a friend were this tired, what would I tell them they're allowed to skip?*

ROOM TO WRITE

A small promise

When you've finished — or when you're far enough along that it feels true — write one sentence here. Not a goal. Not a resolution. A promise small enough that you can actually keep it.

I promise myself —

Signed, _____

Date: _____

You came back to the page. That's already the thing.

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carry this with you.



thank you for sitting with this.



About Heart of Care

Heart of Care is a real-life storybook by Briana F. Harden — a wellness, recovery, and creative-lifestyle home for the people doing the quiet work of getting better.

Workbooks, art, and honest writing for the long way home.

Find more at heart-of-care.life

see you on the porch.

FIRST STEPS FROM SURVIVAL MODE

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