



Empowering survivors of

Gender-Based Violence

MY HEALING JOURNEY WORKBOOK

A Gentle Workbook for Survivors

"Healing is not about forgetting what happened. It is about reclaiming your life, your voice, your choices, and your future."

A Personal Note

If you are reading this workbook, you have already taken an important step.

Healing after abuse is rarely a straight line. Some days may feel hopeful and empowering, while other days may feel heavy, confusing, or overwhelming. All of these experiences are normal.

This workbook is not about "fixing" yourself because you are not broken. It is designed to help you understand your experiences, recognise your strengths, develop self-compassion, and support your healing journey.

Take your time. There is no right or wrong way to complete these pages.

Use what feels helpful and leave what does not.

Most importantly:

You survived. You are healing. You are not alone.

Before You Begin

A Helpful Reminder

As you work through these exercises, you may experience strong emotions.

If you begin feeling overwhelmed:

- ✓ Pause
- ✓ Take a few slow breaths
- ✓ Ground yourself in the present moment
- ✓ Reach out to someone you trust if needed
- ✓ Return when you feel ready

You are always in control of this process.

Section 1: My Story of Survival

Reflection Exercise

Before focusing on healing, take a moment to acknowledge what you have survived.

Journal Prompt

Without sharing details that feel too difficult, write about your journey so far.

- What challenges have you overcome?
- What helped you survive?
- What strengths did you rely on?

Reflection

What does surviving tell you about yourself?

Section 2: Understanding My Strength

Many survivors focus on what was done to them and overlook the strength it took to survive.

Strength Identification Exercise

Tick any qualities that apply to you:

- ☐ Courageous
- ☐ Resilient
- ☐ Determined
- ☐ Compassionate
- ☐ Protective
- ☐ Loyal
- ☐ Resourceful
- ☐ Strong
- ☐ Patient
- ☐ Hopeful
- ☐ Persistent
- ☐ Caring
- ☐ Independent
- ☐ Brave
- ☐ Adaptable

My Own Strengths

What strengths helped me survive?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____

Section 3: Where Am I Today?

Understanding where you are emotionally can help identify what support you need.

Emotional Check-In

Today I am feeling:

- ☐ Hopeful
- ☐ Sad
- ☐ Angry
- ☐ Anxious
- ☐ Numb
- ☐ Confused
- ☐ Proud
- ☐ Overwhelmed
- ☐ Relieved
- ☐ Lonely
- ☐ Strong
- ☐ Other: _____

Reflection

What emotions have been showing up most often recently?

What might these emotions be trying to tell you?

Section 4: My Trauma Responses

Trauma responses are survival responses.

They developed to help you stay safe.

Which responses do you recognise in yourself?

Fight

- ☐ I became angry. ☐ I defended myself. ☐ I argued back.

Flight

- ☐ I avoided conflict. ☐ I left situations quickly. ☐ I tried to keep the peace.

Freeze

- ☐ I felt unable to react. ☐ I felt paralysed. ☐ I struggled to speak.

Fawn

- ☐ I put other people first. ☐ I apologised excessively. ☐ I tried to prevent conflict.

Reflection

Which response do I recognise most strongly?

How might this response have helped me survive?

Section 5: My Support Network

Healing is easier when we do not carry everything alone.

Safe People Map

Write the names of people you trust.

Family

Friends

Professionals

Community Support

Emergency Support

Reflection

Who helps me feel safe, heard, and supported?

Section 6: Practising Self-Compassion

Many survivors speak to themselves more harshly than they would ever speak to someone they love.

Self-Compassion Exercise

Complete these sentences:

What happened to me was...

It was not my fault because...

I deserve healing because...

If a friend had experienced this, I would tell them...

Today I will tell myself...

Section 7: Building Safety

Healing begins when we feel safer.

**Things That Help Me Feel Safe
Places**

People

Activities

Comfort Items

Grounding Techniques

Section 8: My Self-Care Plan

Self-care does not need to be expensive or complicated.

Things that calm me

1.

2.

3.

Things that bring me joy

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Things that help me feel connected

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Section 9: Reclaiming Myself

Abuse often causes survivors to lose touch with who they are.

This section is about rediscovering yourself.

Things I enjoy

Things I value

My interests

What makes me feel happy?

What would I like more of in my life?

Section 10: My Healing Goals

Healing happens one step at a time.

Short-Term Goals

What would I like to achieve over the next month?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Long-Term Goals

What would I like my future to look like?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Growth is often easier to see when we pause and look back.

What progress have I made so far?

What progress have I made so far?

[illegible]

What would they want you to know?

Final Reflection

Healing does not happen all at once.
Every boundary you set.
Every act of self-care.
Every moment of courage.
Every step forward.
They all matter.

Remember:

You are not defined by what happened to you.
You are not broken.
You are healing.
You are worthy of peace, safety, and happiness.
And you never have to walk this journey alone.