

**HOW
TO HEAL
FROM**
TOXIC
Relationships

*5 Stages to Overcome
Past Hurts, Rebuild Your
Life, and Embrace the
Joyful Future You Deserve*



JENNIFER KEOGH

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Past Hurts, Rebuild Your Life, and
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CHAPTERS 1 & 2 SAMPLE

Jennifer Keogh

Thank you so much for downloading the first two chapters of my book. I hope they've been helpful.

To learn more or purchase the book, please visit:

<https://bit.ly/TRBOOK>



You can also learn more about me and my services
at: www.jenniferkeogh.com

Holding space for you... Jen.

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Trigger Warning

Trigger Warning: This book contains discussions of trauma, complex post-traumatic stress disorder (CPTSD), and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). Reader discretion is advised for those who may be sensitive to these topics.

Introduction

Life is either a daring adventure or nothing at all. –Helen Keller

This book has been passionately written for the version of me who, in an instant, was stripped of everything she thought her life was. This is the book I needed when my heart was torn apart and my soul was screaming silently. I needed it when I could not eat, sleep, or function, yet I still needed to care for my beautiful son, who was dealing with his own heartache.

As a mom diagnosed with fibromyalgia, I have had to dig deep, navigate, and understand what this means to my life. Fibromyalgia has become like a barometer of how aligned I am with my soul, sending me loud messages with flare-ups, pain, and fatigue when I am out of alignment with myself. This long and slow process requires patience and has been a teacher for me, and I can see how fibromyalgia fits into my whole life experience.

Over the years, I have been to therapists, psychologists, energy healers, coaches, you name it. I have gone deep within myself and understand more about my CPTSD and PTSD. Before my journey started, I had no true concept of what either meant. I still live with the effects of trauma daily, and I will always be a work in progress. I do not believe we are ever truly "healed;" healing is a lifelong process that moves in cycles and rhythms as we peel back layers and go deeper within ourselves, and there is a certain beauty in that.

I have been able to create a beautiful life for myself, my son, and our black cat, Ziggy Woo. All three of us are happy and safe and live on our terms. We have found a new rhythm that works for us. Most importantly, my son is doing well, is happy, and is becoming a confident young man.

It has not been easy; instead, it has been heartbreaking, gut-wrenching, and terrifying; but life has also been beautiful and full of love and

silliness, and I have learned so much. I'm very proud of what I have created for my tiny but mighty family.

Investing my time skillfully into studying meditation, ancient wisdom, yoga, and life coaching has changed my life profoundly. I embrace the journey I am on: a journey that has empowered me and will continue to empower me with the tools and insights I need to change lives.

As a life transformation coach, my passion is to help people like me progress through their life challenges and truly thrive. This book is one of my contributions that will help others navigate challenging times and reimagine their most beautiful lives.

When your entire world crumbles around you in an instant, it leaves you shattered and feeling as if you are drowning and gasping for air simultaneously. During these desperate moments, it might feel like a sudden silent miracle happens when your survival instincts are activated, and they propel you to carry on and do what is necessary to keep living.

Many people have had their entire lives fall apart in a moment due to toxic relationships and the ending of it. When you have given and spent your life, both internal and external, giving to others, it is devastating when all of that comes to an unexpected end.

At times like these, you find yourself in a place where you are forced to take charge of your life and start anew. Despite knowing that much self-improvement work lies ahead, you embrace this with a newfound courage. You are determined to carry on and put in any of the hard work that you need to.

While every day brings new challenges, you start making peace with the situation you have found yourself in, realizing that with commitment, you have the power to create your dream life. You know that with

patience, dedication, time, and work, you will be able to lead a much healthier and more fulfilling life.

With silent excitement, you acknowledge the advantages of your current situation. The most remarkable aspect is that this phase of your life allows you to prioritize yourself and live life on your terms.

Yes, it is hard to start over again, and you will most certainly go through a time of grief. This time of grief is when you will be grieving the loss of what you thought your life would be like. The reality is that this will be a difficult time. Sometimes, your heart will hurt so badly, and you might even feel or wish that you will not survive this, but the truth is that you will.

Remember that grieving the life you envisioned is necessary to heal from a toxic relationship. Forgive yourself and be kind to your inner warrior within who has helped you to survive and will help you thrive through life. Remember Maya Angelou's wise words: "Do the best you can until you know better. Then, when you know better, do better."

Do not be too hard on yourself if there are times when you feel that you need to take some time out from the rest of the world. It is normal to feel like you need to withdraw from the world and focus on yourself. Embrace that solitude without judgment. Remember that your inner warrior will know when you need to emerge from your alone time.

The fact that you are reading this already means that you are a true warrior with remarkable strength. The reality is that the warrior within you will never allow you to give up and will always guide you to reaching your full potential in life. You are brave, resilient, and strong, even on those days when tears flow and you wish you could quietly melt into the earth.

Sometimes, on your journey, you might think you have hit rock bottom or even feel like you are floating about with no direction. You may even be petrified of the unknown, and that, too, dear warrior, is perfectly normal.

Remember that embarking on a journey of self-healing and starting anew requires courage. Always keep in mind that there is a profound beauty in

rebuilding your life, especially when you do so with genuine intention, guided by your values, beliefs, and boundaries. Stay aware of the immense power of applying the lessons learned from your life's journey to create a new life that aligns with your true self.

How to Use This Book

How to Heal From Toxic Relationships will gently guide you through the various stages of rebuilding yourself and creating your dream life. You can use this book as your safe space and return to it anytime you need to, always reminding yourself that you are a true warrior.

In this book, you will find simple methods you can use to support yourself emotionally, mentally, and physically and better understand your emotions and current state. You will also discover helpful tools and steps to help you achieve your desired outcomes. Consider this book a safe haven for you to nurture your heart, mind, and soul—a place where you can learn how to truly love and treat yourself with the kindness and respect your authentic self deserves.

When you are ready to delve deeper into your healing journey, you will also find additional resources to help guide you. Remember that healing is an ongoing process of growth and learning. Healing is a perfectly natural part of life for all human beings. You are not broken, and there's nothing to fix.

With the help of *How to Heal From Toxic Relationships*, you will be empowered to live your best life. Step by step, you will be guided through the five important stages of healing to help you overcome your past hurts. You will also be taken on a fantastic journey of self-discovery, where you will be given helpful tips and tools to help you rebuild your life.

This book is divided into five sections to facilitate you throughout your healing journey. Section 1, titled *Understanding*, will guide you to prioritize self-care on a fundamental physical level, forming the basis for your overall well-being. You will receive valuable advice, suggestions, and empowering exercises to teach you how to nurture yourself.

Additionally, you will gain valuable information about how your nervous system controls you, enabling you to recognize and break free from the negative patterns in your life. You will also learn how to release what no

longer serves you and what is no longer aligned with you while making room for the people and things that do.

Section 2 is titled *Vision* and will help you to reclaim, reframe, and reimagine your life. With the help of these chapters, you can take back your power, rewrite the narrative, and rework your destiny. Finally, you will be able to understand the stories you have told yourself and are telling yourself. You will be given tips and tools to help you reframe the stories you tell yourself more positively to create a future vision of your life that inspires you.

Then, you will move on to Section 3, titled *Values*, which will help you realize your true life values and understand how to use them to create a life of alignment. You will be equipped to use your values to create healthier boundaries in your life. Additionally, you will also be taught how to set those healthy boundaries.

Next, you will be shown how self-discipline is a powerful form of self-love that can genuinely transform your life. You will be shown how to use self-discipline as a long-term guide to becoming the very best version of yourself.

Section 4, titled *Action*, helps you identify your support team and explore different people who can play a helpful role in your healing journey. You will also discover routines, habits, and rituals to create structure and support the development of your new life vision. Additionally, you will learn about intentional living and how to be intentional in every aspect of your life.

Tools will be provided to help you become more organized and plan your activities. In this section, you will also gain clarity on your ideal schedule to reduce overwhelming feelings. Lastly, you will receive tips to simplify your life by focusing on what matters most and eliminating or reducing what doesn't.

Lastly, Section 5, titled *Celebrate*, will help you realize the importance of celebrating your achievements on your healing journey. You will be given ideas on bringing more self-love, fun, and joy into your daily life. In this

final section of the book, you will be encouraged to celebrate and embrace your unique self truly in meaningful ways.

Please take your time to enjoy each section of this book, the tips, and the exercises so you truly get the most out of your experience. Let us hop right into your journey to a happier, healthier, and more fulfilled you.

BOOK BONUSES

At the back of this book, there is a page with a link to bonuses I have created that you can use as you please to support your healing journey.

These bonuses include:

- A personal introduction video on how to use this book
- Guided meditations
- Downloads of relevant trackers, planners, etc.
- Additional coloring pages for mindfulness

To get the most out of your healing journey, you may find it useful to watch the introduction video first, then download the other bonuses so they're ready for you to use when you need them.

Stage 1:

Understanding

Chapter 1:

Recovery: Self-Care

Keep your face always toward the sunshine—and shadows will fall behind you.
—Walt Whitman

Recovering from a toxic relationship is a challenging journey that requires strength and resilience. The healing process demands your attention, care, and self-love. After being in a toxic relationship, it's easy to neglect your well-being as you navigate complex emotions and deep scars. However, practicing self-care becomes essential during these challenging times.

After experiencing everything you have, it is time to prioritize and take care of yourself. From here on out, you will need to make an effort to focus more on yourself. You will need to start prioritizing your emotional, mental, and physical health, as good health is crucial for your happiness and essential for healing.

You can think of self-care as a guiding light that illuminates your path toward healing, self-discovery, and reclaiming your sense of self. This chapter explores the significance of self-care. If you are unsure what self-care should look like, this chapter will help you understand your needs in life so you can start to thrive. Let's start by exploring what science and psychology say about self-care.

Science and Psychology

Needs

Truly understanding Maslow's hierarchy of needs can help you address your different needs as you heal from a toxic relationship. Maslow's theory will give you a basic framework explaining human motivation and needs that must be met so you can thrive in life.

When it comes to recovery and healing, Maslow's theory suggests that you must first address your most basic physiological needs, like food, water, and rest. These needs are crucial for your physical well-being and provide a solid foundation for your healing process.

The next level in the hierarchy is your safety needs. In recovery, this involves creating a stable, safe, genuinely supportive environment that promotes healing and protects you from anything you perceive as harmful. After taking care of your physiological and safety needs, you can then start to focus on your social needs.

Your social needs include things like building healthy relationships, seeking support from your loved ones, and being a part of a supportive community. Remember that your social connections will play an important role in your recovery and healing. The social connections you have will give you the emotional support you need, reduce any possible feelings of isolation, and help you realize that you belong.

The fourth level of Maslow's hierarchy of needs is your esteem needs. In the context of your recovery, this involves rebuilding your self-esteem and self-worth. On your healing journey, you must learn to regain confidence in yourself and your abilities.

Finally, the highest level of the hierarchy is self-actualization. During recovery and healing, self-actualization refers to finding your life's true meaning and purpose and reaching your full potential. This can involve

working on personal growth, pursuing your passions, and finding true fulfillment in your life.



Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs

Stress Reactions

As you become familiar with your stress reactions, there are a few important things to know. First, just like you are unique, so is how your body reacts to stress. It's crucial to remember that your reactions to stress are not your fault; your body is simply trying its best to protect you.

Eighty percent of your nervous system's processing is from the afferent nerves in your body (Hall, 1990). Your nervous system processes information from these afferent nerves and constantly scans for signs of safety and danger. By understanding your nervous system and how it works, you can learn to regulate it. If you are dealing with any kind of trauma, it's important to seek help from a trauma-informed therapist, psychologist, or coach to support you on your healing journey.

The polyvagal theory is important because it helps you really understand your stress reactions. When you face a threat or a stressful situation, your nervous system reacts in specific ways. This is known as the fight-flight-

freeze response. Dr. Stephen Porges introduced the idea of the fawn response, which is an important social engagement response.

Your nervous system is remarkable and is responsible for sending signals throughout your body. When you perceive a threat, your autonomic nervous system, which has two main branches, kicks into action. These two branches are responsible for opposite yet equally essential functions in your body, which are:

- sympathetic nervous system
- parasympathetic nervous system

The sympathetic nervous system activates your body's fight-flight response. This system prepares your body for action by increasing your heart rate and blood pressure and releasing stress hormones like adrenaline. By doing so, this response helps you confront or escape anything you perceive as a threat.

On the other hand, your parasympathetic nervous system is all about relaxation and restoration. This system helps calm your body once your perceived threat has passed, returning your heart rate and blood pressure to normal levels (Institute for Quality and Efficiency in Health Care, 2016).

Alongside your nervous system, your brain is hard at work when you perceive threats. When you experience a threat, the amygdala—the part of your brain responsible for processing your emotions—sends signals to activate the fight-flight-freeze-fawn response. The amygdala then triggers the release of stress hormones, which prepares your body for action.

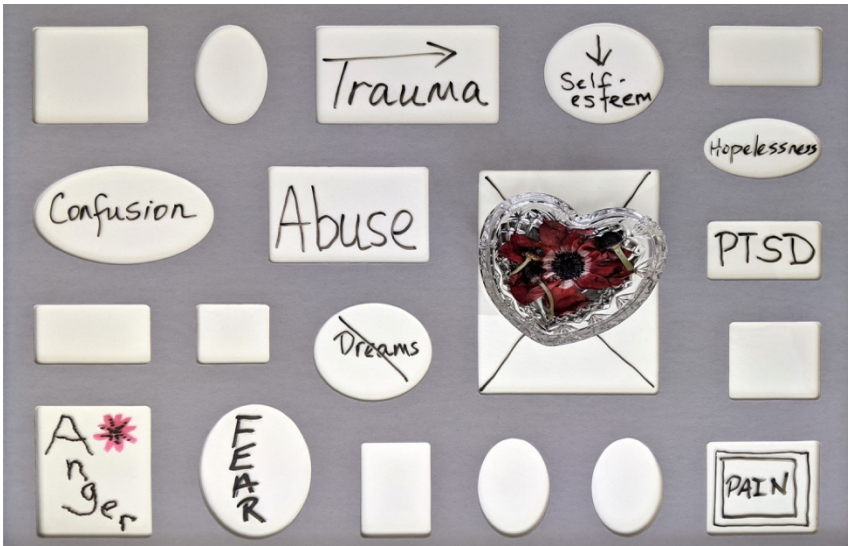
Understanding these responses and how your brain functions in different modes can help you recognize and manage your reactions to stress and threats. When faced with a threat, there are four common responses: fight, flight, freeze, and fawn.

- Fight response involves confronting a perceived threat—physical or verbal—by displaying aggression, assertiveness, and a desire for self-protection. In fight mode, your prefrontal

cortex, responsible for rational thinking and decision-making, may become less active as the focus shifts to survival instincts and impulsive reactions.

- Flight response results in a strong urge to escape or avoid the threat, accompanied by heightened fear, anxiety, and a desire to flee the situation. When in flight mode, your brain scans your environment for escape routes and potential dangers while experiencing heightened anxiety and fear.
- Freeze response entails a state of immobility or dissociation, characterized by the temporary shutdown of bodily functions, including reduced heart rate and muscle tension. In freeze mode, your brain may temporarily shut down, reducing awareness and responsiveness to the external environment.
- Fawn response involves appeasing or pleasing others to avoid harm, characterized by a strong desire for approval, compliance with others' demands, and prioritizing others' needs over yours. When in fawn mode, your brain may prioritize social engagement

and seek safety through appeasement and compliance with others.



Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) and Complex Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (CPTSD)

Many people go through extreme stress and life-altering trauma but choose to carry on without being aware of the implications it can cause if not properly dealt with. Post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and complex post-traumatic stress disorder (CPTSD) are psychological conditions caused by traumatic events.

PTSD usually develops after you have experienced a single traumatic event, like a natural disaster, car accident, or violent act. The symptoms

associated with PTSD can last for an extended period, typically more than one month, and can significantly impact your daily life.

Some common symptoms of PTSD include:

- nightmares, traumatic memories, or intrusive thoughts
- avoidance of reminders or triggers that are associated with the trauma
- hyperarousal, including heightened anxiety, irritability, and difficulty sleeping
- negative changes in mood and cognition, like feelings of guilt, shame, or detachment

Conversely, CPTSD is often associated with repeated or prolonged trauma, like ongoing physical or emotional abuse, neglect, or captivity. Extended trauma can result in this, particularly when there is no chance of escape or rescue.

Some common symptoms of CPTSD include:

- emotional dysregulation, including difficulty managing emotions and intense emotional reactions
- distorted self-perception, like feelings of worthlessness or shame
- difficulties in forming and maintaining relationships
- chronic feelings of emptiness or hopelessness
- dissociation or feeling disconnected from oneself or the surrounding world

CPTSD is often seen in people who have experienced prolonged childhood trauma, like those subjected to chronic abuse or neglect.

Exposure to these kinds of trauma can have a long-lasting impact on your sense of self and overall functioning.

If you are having difficulty dealing with trauma, seek the help you need. Please reach out to a therapist, psychologist, or coach specializing in trauma so you can heal from the inside out. It's important to acknowledge that PTSD and CPTSD can have serious effects, and getting a professional diagnosis and treatment is crucial.

Looking After You

You must take care of your physical body, per Maslow's hierarchy of needs. Please remember that taking care of your physical self helps take care of your nervous system.

Nutrition and Hydration

Caring for yourself means treating yourself kindly, staying hydrated, and eating well. Remember that you will struggle if you do not fuel your body, mind, and soul with what it needs to thrive.

It cannot be emphasized enough how crucial it is for you to stay hydrated. Always remember to drink plenty of water. If you need to, set an alarm to remind yourself to drink every hour. Also, be mindful of the types of beverages you consume and limit your intake of alcohol and caffeine.

Nutrition is another important part of self-care that will support your health and healing journey. One of the most basic and important things

you can do for your health is to start reducing the amount of processed foods you eat.

While some processed foods can be yummy, they should never replace real, healthy, home-cooked meals. Instead of eating unhealthy processed food, consider cooking healthy meals in batches and freezing them.

There may also be times when you might not be able to go to the store, but thanks to technology, there are options that can make your life a bit easier. Consider shopping online for essentials; it is simple and can be a lifesaver.

Here are some items you can add to your shopping list:

- weekly essentials: fresh fruit, vegetables, milk, and juices
- pantry essentials: raw nuts, seeds, dark chocolate, pasta, pasta sauce, and rice
- freezer essentials: peas, salmon, berries, spinach, mixed vegetables (Remember to keep items that are great to add to your favorite meals.)
- fridge essentials: yogurt, miso soup, concentrated bone broth
- Anti-inflammatory and antioxidant herbs and spices: turmeric, garlic, cinnamon, ginger
- natural sweeteners: honey, maple syrup, stevia
- other essentials: Epsom salts, coarse sea salt, St. John's wort, valerian root
- herbal teas: cinnamon, chamomile, ginger, or peppermint

Supplements

Consult your doctor or nutritionist to have tests done to see if you need any supplements. Remember that it is important to consult a healthcare professional before trying new supplements or making significant

changes to your diet. At the very least, most professionals recommend a healthy intake of the following supplements:

Magnesium is an important mineral that plays a crucial role in various bodily functions. Here are some ways in which magnesium can be beneficial to you:

- supports muscle function
- supports bone health
- promotes heart health
- helps produce energy
- supports nervous system function
- helps regulate blood sugar
- prevents migraines

Vitamin D can help support your health in various ways, including:

- supports bone health
- supports the immune system
- aids muscle function
- improves mood and mental health
- supports heart health
- helps prevent cancer
- helps address autoimmune conditions
- supports diabetes management

Zinc can help support your health in various ways, including:

- supports the immune system

- assists in the wound-healing process
- assists normal growth and development
- helps improve cognitive function
- improves taste and smell
- improves reproductive health
- improves eye health
- improves skin health

Turmeric can help support your health in various ways, including:

- offers anti-inflammatory properties
- aids digestion
- offers cognitive benefits
- strengthens the immune system
- contains anti-cancer properties
- supports the cardiovascular system
- promotes wound healing
- improves the overall appearance of the skin

Fish oil can help support your health in various ways, including:

- reduces the risk of heart disease
- promotes brain health
- contains anti-inflammatory properties
- maintains good eye health
- nourishes the skin

- positively impacts mood disorders, like depression and anxiety
- promotes healthy immune system functioning
- provides crucial support for the development of the baby's brain and eyes during pregnancy
- reduces the risk of preterm birth

Healthy Sweet Recipe: No-Bake Energy Bites

Should you have a sweet tooth, here is a healthy and easy sweet recipe you can easily make. These no-bake energy bites are packed with wholesome ingredients and make for a delicious and nutritious sweet treat. Feel free to customize this recipe by adding your favorite nuts, seeds, or spices to suit your unique taste buds. Your energy bites can be stored in the refrigerator for up to a week in an airtight container.

Ingredients:

- 1 cup rolled oats
- ½ cup nut butter (like almond butter or peanut butter)
- ¼ cup honey or maple syrup
- ¼ cup ground flaxseed
- ¼ cup mini chocolate chips or dried fruit (optional)
- 1 tsp vanilla extract
- Pinch of salt

Directions:

1. Combine rolled oats, nut butter, honey or maple syrup, ground flaxseed, mini chocolate chips or dried fruit (if using), vanilla extract, and a pinch of salt in a mixing bowl.
2. Stir all the ingredients together until well combined. Add more nut butter or honey/maple syrup if your mixture seems too dry.
3. Once the mixture is well mixed, refrigerate it for about 30 minutes.
4. After chilling, roll small portions of the mixture into bite-sized balls.
5. Place your freshly rolled energy bites on a baking sheet with parchment paper, then refrigerate it for at least 1 hour.
6. Once firm, your energy bites are ready to enjoy.

Exercise: Organize Your Kitchen

Based on the information above, use these simple planners to help create your shopping and pantry lists. Remember that the more organized the different aspects of your life are, the more manageable your life will be.

Shopping List

Item Needed	Check	Item Needed	Check

Pantry List

Spices, Herbs, and Seasonings	Check	Condiments and Sauces	Check
Oils and Vinegars	Check	Baking Supplies	Check

Grains and Starches	Check	Canned and Jarred Goods	Check
Fresh Produce	Check	Pet Supplies	Check

Household Cleaning Supplies	Check	Personal Hygiene Products	Check
Medicines	Check	Supplements	Check



Sleep

Sleep is an essential aspect of self-care, and it is important to recognize that everyone's sleep needs differ. While sleep is the most important foundation for improving, please do not stress or worry if you are having

trouble with your routine, as that will make it even harder for you to improve.

To improve your sleep routine, consider the following suggestions:

- Establish a consistent sleep schedule by going to bed at the same time and waking up at the same time every day, including weekends.
- Develop a relaxing bedtime routine to signal your body to unwind at the same time every night. This may involve reading, taking a warm bath, or practicing relaxation techniques.
- Create a comfy sleep environment by ensuring your bedroom is dark, quiet, and pleasant.
- Minimize exposure to electronic devices before bedtime, as the blue light they emit disrupts sleep, so set a time to put screens down or away.
- Avoid stimulants like caffeine, nicotine, and alcohol close to bedtime, as they can also disrupt sleep patterns.
- Add exercises that you enjoy to your daily routine and avoid exercise close to your bedtime.
- Create a tranquil ambiance in your bedroom using calming fragrances or soft melodies.
- Refrain from consuming large meals, spicy foods, or excessive fluids near bedtime to prevent discomfort and frequent bathroom visits.
- Discover healthy ways to manage anxiety and stress with meditation, deep breathing, or journaling before bed.

Exercise: Improving Your Sleep Routine

Think about your personal sleep routine. How can you improve it? In the space below, take some time to write down different areas you need to change to improve your sleep routine. For instance, do you need to set a regular time when you go to bed and wake up, or do you perhaps need to make your environment a little more sleep-friendly?

Areas to focus on to improve my sleep routine:

Rest and Exercise

Another important aspect of self-care is rest. Take some time out to be present in the moment, relish, and enjoy your life. Challenge yourself to

put your phone down or step away from work without feeling guilty. It is vitally important to take time to fill your cup first.

Take the time to enjoy a bath, take a walk, or even watch a movie. Spend some time outdoors appreciating the precious gift of sunlight. Just as important as it is to get some rest, you also need exercise. Take some time to experiment with different kinds of exercise until you find activities you enjoy and that get you moving. Remember that the more

you enjoy the exercise you choose, the more likely you are to make it part of your daily routine.

If you skip out on your exercise occasionally, do not be too hard on yourself. Instead, keep moving your way to better health and increased happiness.

Exercise: Health and Wellness Planner

You need to prioritize your health and wellness. Use this health and wellness planner to help you get and keep your life on the right track. Below is a template you can use as a weekly health and wellness planner.

Day of the Week	Morning	Afternoon	Evening
Monday			
Tuesday			
Wednesday			
Thursday			
Friday			
Saturday			
Sunday			

Remember that you can customize this planner based on your personal preferences and goals. It is important that you always listen to your body and adjust as needed.

Monday

- Morning: 30-minute yoga session
- Afternoon: 20-minute walk during lunch break
- Evening: Prepare a nutritious dinner with lean protein and vegetables

Tuesday

- Morning: 15-minute meditation session
- Afternoon: Drink at least eight glasses of water throughout the day
- Evening: Try a new healthy recipe for dinner

Wednesday

- Morning: 20-minute strength training workout
- Afternoon: Take a break and go for a short walk outside
- Evening: Practice a relaxing bedtime routine, like reading or taking a warm bath

Thursday

- Morning: 30-minute cardio workout (running, cycling, or dancing)
- Afternoon: Pack a healthy lunch of various fruits and vegetables
- Evening: Attend a fitness class or try a new workout video

Friday

- Morning: Practice deep breathing exercises for 10 minutes
- Afternoon: Take a break and stretch your body
- Evening: Plan a fun and active weekend activity, such as hiking or swimming

Saturday

- Morning: Go for a long walk or hike in nature
- Afternoon: Prepare a healthy and balanced picnic lunch
- Evening: Engage in a hobby or activity that brings you joy and relaxation

Sunday

- Morning: Practice mindfulness or engage in a creative activity
- Afternoon: Cook a healthy meal for the week ahead
- Evening: Reflect on the past week and set goals for the upcoming week.

Get Creative: The Sweetness of Nothing

Dolce far niente—the sweetness of nothing

Draw, doodle, or describe something you love to do when you are doing nothing. For instance, perhaps you enjoy eating a croissant while drinking a cup of coffee on a bench at your favorite park.

Dolce Far Niente



Now that you have looked at the importance of self-care, you are ready to explore another equally important topic. The next chapter will explore the importance of self-love.

Chapter 2:

Recovery: Self-Love

Fall in love with taking care of yourself. Mind, body, and spirit.

–Unknown

Brave warrior, it is time for you to embrace self-love and shower yourself with the love you deserve. After being in a toxic relationship, the chances are good that you neglected yourself to the point where loving yourself was a foreign concept. When you exist for everyone else but yourself, it will leave you feeling unhappy, unfulfilled, and unmotivated.

The path toward healing is one that you must courageously embrace. It is important to remember that the path to inner healing you are on can be a complex and unpredictable journey with moments of significant progress and even setbacks.

There might be times when you feel discouraged and as though you have backtracked. In times like these, you must stand tall and hold your chin higher than ever before. Fret not because it is at these times when you need to recognize that you are still in a far better state than you were when you started your healing journey.

Starting anew can be daunting, even for the strongest people. You must regularly acknowledge your bravery and resilience as you embark on your unique path toward becoming a healthier, happier version of yourself. This chapter will delve into the true meaning of self-love, its significance, and how you can cultivate it in your life.

Who Is in Control?

Have you taken the time to sit back and consider who is in the driver's seat of your life? Have you searched your inner person for any fear, shame, traditions, and societal expectations you subconsciously hold onto?

Have you given your family or close friends too much power in your life? So often, you can unconsciously give your true power away to other people and situations to the point where you are so drained that you have nothing left to give yourself.

You must come to a place where you realize that choosing *you* is okay. It is okay to choose your own physical, mental, and emotional well-being over the needs of others, especially when they are leaving your cup empty. Remember that you can create space between yourself and the things keeping you from living your best life.

While it can be tough to be brutally honest with yourself and take stock of the actual state of your life, this is something you have to do. Once you have taken some time to figure out to whom you have given your control in life, it is time for you to take your power back. It is time to get into the driver's seat and steer your life in the direction you choose.

The time has come to empower yourself by cultivating self-love to live your best-healed life. Self-love is all about caring for and valuing yourself for the unique person you are. It is a practice that involves developing a positive relationship with yourself, accepting your strengths and weaknesses, and treating yourself with the kindness, compassion, and respect that you deserve.

True self-love is about recognizing your worth, setting healthy boundaries, and prioritizing self-care. If you do not truly love yourself, how can you expect others to? As you embrace your journey to healing, it is important to know that self-love is an essential aspect of well-being

and can increase your self-confidence and resilience and create a more fulfilling life.

Embracing self-love is important because it can help you develop the positive sense of self-worth and acceptance that you need to lead a healthier and more balanced life. When you practice self-love, you are not selfish; you simply say that you matter enough to prioritize your well-being and happiness. It also allows you to

- set healthy boundaries.
- make choices that align with your values.
- take care of your physical, emotional, and mental needs.
- enhance your relationships.
- establish healthier connections.
- communicate your needs effectively.

Cultivating Self-Love

Cultivating self-love is a continuous journey that demands patience, self-compassion, and adopting empowering practices and mindset shifts. Remember to be kind to yourself and celebrate your progress as you heal and grow.

Self-discipline is a form of self-love. It involves being firm with yourself, almost like parenting yourself, and being disciplined enough to make healthy choices in your life. For example, you can improve your well-being by getting enough sleep and reading instead of watching TV late

at night. These are simple ways to bring self-discipline into your life, which you need to thrive.

Here are some simple ways for you to cultivate greater self-love in your life:

- Practice self-care: Prioritize self-care and compassion to honor your unique needs and prioritize activities that nourish your mind, body, and soul. This can include taking time out for exercise and healthy eating, getting enough sleep, engaging in hobbies, and relaxing.
- Challenge any negative self-talk: Become aware of your inner critic and start replacing those negative thoughts that are holding you back with positive and affirming ones. Always treat yourself with the same kindness and compassion as you would a loved friend.
- Set boundaries: Learn to say no to the things draining your valuable energy or compromising your well-being. When you have been in a toxic relationship, asserting boundaries might be difficult, but you have got this, warrior. Establish healthier boundaries to protect your time, emotions, and personal space.
- Practice self-acceptance: Embrace your beautiful, unique, authentic self and celebrate your strengths and weaknesses. Recognize that no person on this planet is perfect, and it is okay to make mistakes. Choose to embrace and acknowledge your accomplishments and focus on your positive qualities.
- Acknowledge your emotions: Develop self-love by acknowledging and accepting your emotions without judgment. Identify areas in your life that require your attention or healing by acknowledging your emotions. Embrace the emotions you feel so you can foster authenticity and self-love.
- Surround yourself with positivity: It is easy to overlook the importance of the people around you. Start surrounding yourself

with supportive and uplifting people who genuinely appreciate, support, and value your authentic self. Start taking positive action in your life by minimizing your exposure to negative influences that can bring you down.

- **Engage in self-reflection:** Take time to get to know and understand yourself better. Reflect on your authentic values, goals, and desires. Remember that different activities, like journaling or even meditation, can be helpful practices you can use for self-reflection.
- **Practice forgiveness:** Forgive yourself for the past mistakes you might have made and choose to let go of any grudges or resentment you might be holding onto. It's important to let go of limiting negative emotions so you can love yourself and live your life to the fullest.
- **Seek support:** Reach out to your trusted friends, family members, or even professionals if you need additional guidance or assistance in your journey to self-love. It is important to remember that various forms of therapy or counseling can be beneficial as you explore and address underlying issues holding you back in life. Remember that reaching out for support is not a sign of weakness but remarkable strength.

While leaving a toxic relationship can be challenging, there are ways you can handle any triggers you are dealing with. Remember, healing takes time, so be patient, celebrate your progress, and focus on your personal growth.

Exercise: From Triggers to Glimmers

Glimmers are the opposite of triggers, and everyone has them. Everyone deserves to be happy, and part of self-love is choosing to do things that

genuinely fill and feed your soul. While you might feel it is tough to find joy right now, remember that there are always things out there.

Take a moment to think about the things that make you smile. What are the things that make you feel good and forget about those difficult things in your life? For instance, eating your favorite chocolate, walking in nature, or maybe even swimming in the ocean.

For this exercise, take some time for deep introspection. List all the different things that fill your soul and think about how you can bring

them back into your life. Additionally, consider what changes you must make to bring those activities into your life.

My Glimmers List

My soul-feeding activity:	How to bring that activity into my life:

Meditation: Five-Minute Mindfulness

This simple exercise will not take much time and can be easily incorporated into your daily life to help you become more mindful.

Believe it or not, you can practice mindfulness while you are enjoying a cup of coffee or a bar of chocolate. This will enhance your experience and allow you to appreciate the flavors and sensations fully.

Follow these steps to drink coffee or eat chocolate mindfully:

1. Prepare your beverage or chocolate with care and attention. Take the time to appreciate the aroma and sound of brewing or unwrapping.
2. Engage your senses by observing your coffee's or chocolate's appearance, color, and texture. Take note of any patterns or details.
3. Smell the aroma of your coffee or chocolate by bringing it closer to your nose and inhaling deeply. Notice any notes or nuances in the scent.
4. Take a small bite or sip and pay attention to the flavors, textures, and sensations in your mouth. Notice any sweetness, bitterness, or creaminess.
5. Slow down and savor each bite or sip. Pay attention to the way the flavors evolve and spread throughout your mouth.
6. Be aware of any physical sensations or reactions you experience as you consume your coffee or chocolate, such as warmth or tingling.
7. Stay present throughout the process and return your focus to the taste and texture if your mind wanders.

Exercise: Five Senses Mindfulness Technique

Life is available only in the present moment. —Thich Nhat Hanh

The five senses exercise is a mindfulness technique that can help bring you back into the present moment by engaging your senses. By engaging your senses, you redirect your attention away from racing thoughts or worries and start to anchor yourself in the present moment. This exercise can help you feel more grounded, centered, and connected to your immediate surroundings.

Here's how you can practice it:

1. **Sight:** Look around and identify five things you can see. Notice the colors, shapes, and details of each object. Take a moment to appreciate the visual beauty around you.
2. **Sound:** Pay attention to the sounds in your environment. Identify four things you can hear, like birds chirping, traffic passing by, or the hum of a fan. Focus on each sound individually and let it anchor you to the present moment.
3. **Touch:** Notice three things you can physically touch or feel. It could be the texture of a surface, the sensation of your clothes against your skin, or the feeling of the ground beneath your feet. Take a moment to experience the tactile sensations fully.
4. **Smell:** Bring your awareness to your sense of smell. Identify two things you can smell, whether the scent of flowers, freshly brewed coffee, or the aroma of a scented candle. Take a deep breath and allow the smells to awaken your senses.
5. **Taste:** Finally, focus on your sense of taste. Notice one thing you can taste, such as a sip of water, a piece of fruit, or a mint. Pay

attention to the flavors and sensations in your mouth as you savor the taste.

Get Creative: Imperfectly Perfect

Color this illustration and reflect on your perfect imperfection. Acknowledge that you are authentically you and you deserve to treat yourself well.

*I am imperfectly,
perfect*



Well done for completing Chapter 2. The next chapter will explore your patterns so you can finally release the things that have been holding you back in your life.

Thank you so much for downloading the first two chapters of my book. I hope they've been helpful.

To learn more or purchase the book, please visit:

<https://bit.ly/TRBOOK>



You can also learn more about me and my services
at: www.jenniferkeogh.com

Holding space for you... Jen.

Conclusion

*The future belongs to those who believe in the beauty of their dreams. –
Eleanor Roosevelt*

Well done on embarking on a healing journey, exploring the path of healing from toxic relationships, and emerging as a healthier, stronger version of yourself. Always remember that healing is not a linear process; it is a mosaic of experiences, emotions, and revelations.

As you embarked on your life journey, you never anticipated facing the challenges you have encountered. It's important not to blame yourself for the negative experiences. Instead, focus on striving to live your best life by doing everything within your power to improve and heal yourself, both on the good days and bad.

While the road to healing has both challenges and triumphs, never give up. Be mindful of the fact that your worth is never defined by your past experiences but by the unconditional love and care you give yourself.

Be sure to reflect on the incredible strength of the human spirit regularly. Even when you are feeling a little battered and broken, remember that you have the capacity to build yourself even more beautiful than you already are.

Embrace your deepest scars as symbols of great resilience and growth. On your journey ahead, always be kind to yourself and seek the support you need when you need it. Remember that you are never alone and

there will always be a community of survivors somewhere out there who can cheer you on.

May this book guide you and be a valuable resource throughout your path to healing and self-discovery. Nurture the beautiful soul within you and keep growing into a healthier, stronger, and more authentic you. Come back and refer to this book as often as you need to. Refer to any section that is relevant at the time and keep reminding yourself that you are both resilient and amazing.

There may be moments when you feel like you are spiraling downward, and that's alright. In challenging times, it's important to remember that you won't sink as low as you have in the past. Instead, despite your current emotions, you are making great progress, with a few ups and downs along the way.

Never stop believing in yourself and do not ever doubt your self-worth. No matter what comes your way, remember that you will be okay. All the work and effort you are putting in along your healing journey is well worth it and real evidence that you can overcome life's challenges and that you are brave.

Please remember that while this book is packed with techniques, tips, and exercises, is it important that these are not used as a replacement for therapy. It is important to contact a professional. Feel free to review the different sections of this book, the tips, and the exercises as many times as you like.

Your journey does not need to be your journey alone; you can transform your pain into power and purpose. One day, when you feel healed and strong enough to, perhaps you can impact someone else's life. It is a sad reality that many people find themselves in toxic relationships. One day, your experiences and courage can serve as a guiding light and a source of great inspiration and hope for others who are facing similar struggles. Until we meet again, may your path be filled with growth, beauty, love, and light as you grow and blossom into your best self.