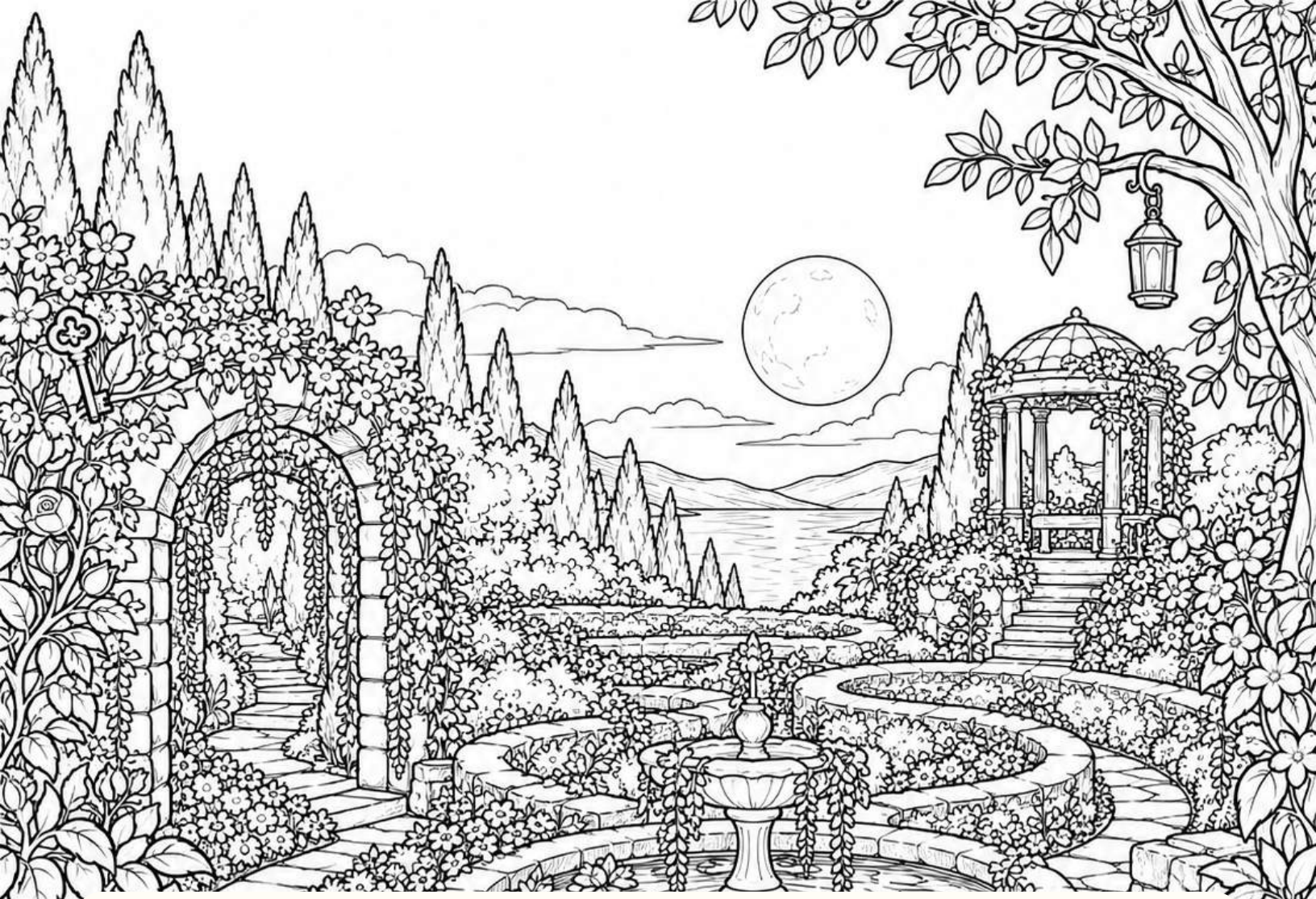


My Next Small Step Tbi Friendly Worksheet

A gentle way to use this resource

Begin anywhere. Read one section at a time, choose only what fits, and skip, adapt, pause, or stop as needed. Try one practice before adding another. Reflection is an invitation, not a requirement.

Created by Michelle D. Elder, MSW, LMHC | My Reflective Collective

Educational wellness material. Not therapy, diagnosis, medical advice, crisis care, or a substitute for individualized professional support.



Before you begin

Take a moment to notice where you are starting. There is no correct answer and no requirement to complete every prompt.

What is most present?	What would feel supportive?
[ ] Tension or restlessness [ ] Heavy emotion [ ] Numbness or shutdown [ ] Racing thoughts [ ] Low energy [ ] Something else: _____	[ ] More steadiness [ ] More clarity [ ] Comfort or rest [ ] A practical next step [ ] Connection or support [ ] Something else: _____

A simple rhythm

1. Notice	Name what is happening without judging it.
2. Choose	Select one prompt or practice that fits your energy and circumstances.
3. Try	Use it gently for a clear amount of time. Smaller still counts.
4. Check	Notice whether you feel even slightly steadier, clearer, safer, or less alone.

Low-energy option

Read only the headings. Circle or note one sentence that feels useful. Then choose one action that takes five minutes or less. You can return later; stopping is allowed.

A trauma-informed educational wellness worksheet for reflection, choice, self-care, and support.

Use this at your own pace. Skip, adapt, pause, or stop. You are allowed to choose what fits your body, culture, privacy, energy, safety, access needs, and real-life limits today.

A printable reflection and practice resource

My Next Small Step

Calm feelings - Build confidence - Connect

safely

SCAN TO HEAR

Tap the speaker

You can circle, check, draw, speak, or ask someone to write for you. One small step is enough.

START HERE: TODAY'S CHECK-IN

My name or initials:

_____ Today is: date or day of the week _____

My energy right now is:

0 1 2 3 4 5 very low very high

I feel:

-] calm [ ] sad

-] mad [ ] worried

-] tired [ ] confused

-] hopeful [ ] other

My body is telling me:

-] tight body [ ] fast heart

-] head hurts [ ] shaky

-] heavy or slow [ ] okay right now One thing I need today is: rest, help, food, water, space, support

_____

_____ Michelle D. Elder, MSW, LMHC | Educational support - not crisis care. Call/text 988 or call 911 for immediate danger.

Goal 1: Calm My Body

Notice - Choose one tool - Check again

_____

_____

SCAN TO HEAR

Tap the speaker

Strong feelings are signals. They are not failures.

My feeling BEFORE I use a tool:

0 1 2 3 4 5 calm very strong

The first body sign I notice is:

_____

CHOOSE ONE TOOL

-] Breathe out slowly 5 times [ ] Press both feet into the floor

-] Name 5 things I can see [ ] Drink water or eat something

-] Move to a quieter place [ ] Call or text a safe person

-] Stretch or take a short walk [ ] Ask for a 10-minute break My plan: When I notice _____, I will _____. _____

My feeling AFTER I use the tool:

0 1 2 3 4 5 calm very strong What helped, even a little?

_____

_____

_____

_____ If nothing changed, that does not mean you failed. Try a different tool or ask for help.

Goal 2: Build Confidence

The moment is not your identity

SCAN TO HEAR

Tap the speaker

A hard moment is something I am going through. It is not who I am.

What happened? Use only a few words

_____

_____

_____

_____ What hard thought showed up? Example: "I always mess up."

_____

_____

_____

_____

That thought may be:

-] a fact [ ] a fear

-] an old message [ ] I am not sure A kinder and true thought is: Example: "I am learning. I can try one step."

_____

_____

CHOOSE ONE SMALL ACTION

-] rest without guilt [ ] finish one small task

-] ask for help [ ] write down one strength Today I showed this strength: courage, honesty, patience, effort, kindness

_____

_____

Goal 3: Connect Safely

Small steps - Clear boundaries - Safe people

SCAN TO HEAR

Tap the speaker

One safe person is:

_____

_____ SAFE PEOPLE USUALLY...

-] listen [ ] respect "no"

-] keep private things private [ ] act consistently

-] let me take a break [ ] do not pressure or threaten me One small connection step this week: text, call, short visit, group, or ask for help _____ _____ My boundary sentence: "I need a break." "Please do not yell." "I will answer tomorrow."

_____

_____

MY SIMPLE WEEKLY TRACKER

1st time 2nd time 3rd time Used a calm tool [ ] [ ] [ ] Used a kind thought [ ] [ ] [ ] Made a safe [ ] [ ] [ ] connection Progress means practicing. It does not have to be perfect.

SAFETY, PRIVACY & EDUCATIONAL USE

MY REFLECTIVE COLLECTIVE - MICHELLE D. ELDER, MSW, LMHC

If there is immediate danger or a medical emergency: Call 911 in the United States or use your local emergency number. For U.S. suicide or mental-health crisis support, call or text 988. For relationship-safety support, contact the National Domestic Violence Hotline at 800-799-7233, text START to 88788, or visit TheHotline.org from a safer device when

possible. _____
_____ Privacy and safer searching

If someone may monitor your device, accounts, internet connection, location, downloads, or browser activity, consider using a safer device and a trusted network. Private browsing may reduce locally saved history but does not make activity invisible. Clearing history can also be noticed. A website Quick Exit button changes the page; it cannot erase browser,

download, router, account, employer, school, carrier, or device records. Choose only steps that feel safer in your situation.

Do not store identifying or safety-sensitive answers where another person may find them.

Educational scope and professional limits This resource provides general psychoeducation, reflection, and wellness support. It is not therapy, counseling, diagnosis, assessment, treatment, medical advice, legal advice, crisis response, forensic evaluation, or an individualized safety plan.

It does not replace care from a licensed clinician, healthcare professional, attorney, trained advocate, emergency service, or other qualified professional. Laws, court procedures, services, and risks vary by location and circumstance.

Choice, pacing, and inclusion You may skip, change, discuss, dictate, draw, pause, or stop any activity. No exercise can determine what you experienced, diagnose a condition, prove a legal claim, guarantee safety, or tell you whether to stay, leave, report, reconcile, forgive, or pursue court action. Adapt language and activities for culture, identity, disability, neurotype, age, literacy, sensory needs, and personal preference. Automatic translation can make mistakes; confirm legal, medical, emergency, and safety-critical wording with a qualified person.

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MyReflectiveCollective.com - Pause - Reflect - Learn - Practice

EDUCATIONAL RESOURCE - NOT THERAPY OR INDIVIDUALIZED CARE

Immediate danger or medical emergency: call 911 | U.S. crisis support: call or text 988 | Michelle D. Elder, MSW, LMHC

Supportive practices and reminders

Trauma-informed choice

You are in charge of pace, privacy, and participation. Keep your eyes open if that feels safer. Change the words, position, movement, or environment. Skip any prompt that increases distress. You never have to describe a traumatic experience to benefit from grounding or reflection.

A one-minute mindfulness pause

Notice one point of support beneath you. Look around and name three neutral things you see. Notice one sound and one body sensation without trying to change either. Ask, 'What would support me in the next few minutes?' Choose the smallest workable response.

Believable affirmations

Choose language your mind can accept. Try: 'I can take one step at a time.' 'My needs and boundaries matter.' 'I am allowed to pause.' 'I can ask for support.' 'This moment is difficult, and it will not always feel exactly like this.' Edit any statement until it feels honest and respectful.

Practical tips

Pair reflection with water, food, movement, rest, medication as prescribed, or contact with a safe person when needed. Save the most helpful page where it is easy to find. Revisit the resource when you are relatively steady so the choices feel familiar during harder moments.

When more support is appropriate

A worksheet cannot provide emergency care, diagnosis, or individualized treatment. Consider a qualified health or mental-health professional when distress is intense, persistent, worsening, affecting daily functioning, or connected with safety concerns. In immediate danger, contact local emergency services or a crisis service available in your country.

Integrate and choose your next step

Pause after reading. More information is not always more helpful; the goal is to leave with one choice you can actually use.

What stood out?

_____

_____

What is one kind, realistic next step?

_____

_____

What support, boundary, or adaptation would help?

_____

_____

If this did not help

You did not fail. Try making the step smaller, changing from a thinking practice to a body or sensory practice, checking basic needs, or involving a safe person. Strong, persistent, or worsening distress may need professional or crisis support beyond a worksheet.