Rebuilding After Abuse Recovery Workbook

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.

This is a reflection tool, not a test. One honest sentence, one checked box, or one small next step can be enough.

A printable reflection and practice resource

Rebuilding After Abuse

A survivor-led workbook for identity, boundaries, parenting, self-trust, shame, grief, finances, relationships, community, and nervous-system recovery.

Workbook 07

Safety, Advocacy & Recovery Education

Created by Michelle D. Elder, MSW, LMHC Free therapeutic-style education - not therapy, legal advice, medical care, or emergency response My Reflective Collective - Safety, Advocacy & Recovery Education Page 1 Before you begin This is a person-centered, trauma-informed workbook. You decide what to read, write, print, share, skip, or stop.

You do not need to prove that something is bad enough before seeking support. A worksheet should never be used to pressure someone to leave, stay, report, confront, forgive, remember more, or take legal action.

Immediate danger or medical emergency: call 911 in the U.S. or Canada. For suicide or mental-health crisis support in the U.S. or Canada, call or text 988. For relationship-abuse support in the U.S., contact the National Domestic Violence Hotline at 800-799-SAFE (7233), text START to 88788, or visit thehotline.org. Services, privacy practices, and emergency-response policies vary by location.

Technology safety: if someone may monitor your device, accounts, vehicle, home network, or location, use a safer device or location when possible. Private browsing and deleting history do not erase every record. Changing access or settings may alert a person who is monitoring you or erase evidence, so consider confidential technology-safety support before making changes.

This workbook provides general education, not legal advice, representation, investigation, diagnosis, psychotherapy, medical care, crisis response, or an individualized safety plan. Laws, court procedures, evidence rules, deadlines, confidentiality, and available remedies differ by place and situation. Consult a licensed attorney, legal-aid program, tribal legal service, court self-help program, or trained advocate for guidance that fits your circumstances.

Choice and pacing

- Keep your eyes open, work in short sections, use initials, leave blanks, ask an advocate to sit with you, or stop.

Store or dispose of completed pages only in ways that support safety. Do not investigate, confront, or test another person because of a worksheet.

What would help this feel safer or more manageable today? _____

_____

__ _____

_____ My Reflective Collective - Safety, Advocacy & Recovery Education Page 2 My support and safety page Write only what is safe to keep. Consider neutral contact names or an advocate's guidance if discovery is a _____

_____ _____

_____ concern.

Immediate emergency plan Confidential advocate or hotline Attorney, legal aid, or court self-help Medical or mental-health support Trusted person and code word Safer device or location Transportation, children, pets, language, or accessibility needs My Reflective Collective - Safety, Advocacy & Recovery Education Page 3

1. Recovery is not linear

Relief, grief, fear, anger, numbness, joy, longing, exhaustion, and uncertainty may coexist. Continued contact, court, parenting, finances, housing, or community ties can complicate the word after.

What changed

What still needs protection _____

_____ _____

_____ What recovery means to me _____

_____ _____

_____ My Reflective Collective - Safety, Advocacy & Recovery Education Page 4

2. Rebuilding identity

Control can shrink preference and experimentation. Begin with low-stakes choices: food, music, clothing, rest, privacy, routine, creativity, and who receives access to your time.

Pause point: If this section increases fear, confusion, dissociation, or urgency, stop. Orient to the date and place, move toward support, and use emergency or crisis services when needed.

Things I know I like Choices to try without explanation Parts of myself I am meeting again My Reflective Collective - Safety, Advocacy & Recovery Education Page 5

3. Boundaries after coercion

A boundary describes what you will do; it cannot guarantee cooperation. Safety planning comes before confrontation where abuse, stalking, or retaliation may continue.

A boundary within my control A safer way to communicate it - or not Support if it is challenged My Reflective Collective - Safety, Advocacy & Recovery Education Page 6

4. Parenting and caregiving

Children and dependents may need predictability, honest age-appropriate language, routine, and permission for mixed feelings. Avoid using them as messengers or investigators.

What dependents need to know _____

_____ _____

_____

Routines that help Professional or community support My Reflective Collective - Safety, Advocacy & Recovery Education Page 7

5. Trusting yourself again

Self-trust can grow through small promises kept, accurate noticing, consent with yourself, and reviewing outcomes without punishment. Being deceived or controlled does not mean you lack judgment.

A decision made with what I knew A signal I want to respect A small promise for this week

6. Shame and responsibility

Responsibility asks what can be repaired or learned. Shame declares you are the harm. Abuse belongs to the person choosing abusive behavior. Survival decisions deserve context.

What was not mine to control _____

_____ _____

_____

What I can address now

Compassionate accountability language

7. Grief

You may grieve a person, hoped-for future, home, community, identity, time, money, health, or trust. Grief does not mean returning is safe or leaving was wrong.

What I lost

What I protected or gained

How to remember without minimizing harm

_____
_____ My Reflective Collective - Safety, Advocacy & Recovery Education Page 10

8. Financial rebuilding

Begin with information about income, benefits, debts, credit, taxes, insurance, housing, childcare, legal costs, identity theft, and records. Seek qualified individual guidance.

Most urgent financial question Accounts or reports to review One realistic step and support person My Reflective Collective - Safety, Advocacy & Recovery Education Page 11

9. Dating and relationships

There is no required timeline. Notice respect for no, pacing, privacy, friendships, money, sexual consent, conflict, and independence. Green flags are patterns, not performances.

- My non-negotiables

A supportive pace People who help me stay connected to myself My Reflective Collective - Safety, Advocacy & Recovery Education Page 12

10. Nervous-system recovery

Recovery may include sleep, movement, medical care, medication as prescribed, therapy, sensory support, culture, spirituality, play, advocacy, nature, routine, and community. Agency matters as much as calm.

What settles me by five percent _____
_____ _____
_____ What restores choice or energy _____
_____ _____
_____ What deserves professional care My Reflective Collective - Safety, Advocacy & Recovery Education Page 13

11. A future with room

A future plan may be one protected hour, one document, one safe friendship, one joyful ritual, one practiced skill, or one voiced need.

In one month I want more...

In six months I want support for...

Today I can take this step...

One-page action map

- Choose only steps that fit your safety, legal advice, capacity, culture, privacy, and real life.

What I know right now

What I want help understanding

Most urgent safety consideration One person or service I may contact A step from a safer device or place A step I am intentionally not taking yet Date to review Resources and scope guidance that fits your circumstances.

National Domestic Violence Hotline (U.S.) thehotline.org | 800-799-SAFE | text START to 88788 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline Call or text 988 in the U.S. or Canada Emergency services Call 911 for immediate danger or medical emergency in the U.S./Canada WomensLaw womenslaw.org - U.S. legal information and referrals Legal Services Corporation lsc.gov - U.S. civil legal-aid finder NNEDV Safety Net techsafety.org - technology-safety education 211 211.org - community-resource connections in many areas Copyright and sharing attribution, or present this material as individualized professional advice. Resource listings are starting points, not endorsements or guarantees.

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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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