

Everything They Forgot to Tell You



Before You Begin

Please read this page. It applies to everything that follows.

WHAT THIS IS, AND WHAT IT IS NOT

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It is not medical, mental-health, legal, tax, or financial advice, and it does not create any professional relationship.

The content is general and may not fit your circumstances. For decisions about your health, your money, or your legal affairs, consult a qualified professional who knows your situation.

IF YOU ARE IN CRISIS

If you are thinking about harming yourself or someone else, put this down and get help now.

988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline — call or text 988. Crisis Text Line — text HOME to 741741. Or go to your nearest emergency room.

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Self-care isn't a treat. It's infrastructure.

The marketing version of self-care is a purchase. The real version is boring: sleep defended, meals eaten, people seen, a body moved, a mind given something other than feeds to chew on. You are the infrastructure everything else in your life runs on — and infrastructure gets maintained on a schedule, not when it collapses.

§1 finds the potholes. §2 sets the minimums and stocks the menus. §3 keeps it running through the seasons.

THREE PARTS

§1	The audit	Eight dimensions, honestly scored. p. 3–6
§2	Minimums & menus	The floor you defend and the menus for every size of day. p. 7–12
§3	The practice	Seasonal rituals, weekly logs, and the re-audit. p. 13–18

PART ONE

The audit.

Eight dimensions, one honest score each. Nobody scores well everywhere — the point is seeing which wheel is flat before deciding where to pump.

The eight dimensions.

Score each 1–10 for the last month — how it's actually been, not how it looks from outside. Then mark the two lowest; the rest of the book leans on those.

Body Sleep, food, movement, checkups **SCORE** _____ ○

Mind Learning, focus, something to chew on besides feeds **SCORE** _____ ○

Heart Feelings felt, not just managed **SCORE** _____ ○

People Connection that isn't logistics **SCORE** _____ ○

Play Fun with no productivity alibi **SCORE** _____ ○

Order Space, money, admin — calm enough not to hum with dread **SCORE** _____ ○

Meaning Purpose, faith, service — the why **SCORE** _____ ○

Rest Actual off-switch time, not collapse **SCORE** _____ ○

MY TWO FLATS — WHERE THE BOOK FOCUSES _____

The two flats, up close.

For each low dimension: what “low” actually looks like day to day, and when it was last higher — because “it was better when...” is a treasure map.

FLAT #1 — WHAT IT LOOKS LIKE IN MY ACTUAL WEEK, AND WHEN IT WAS LAST A 7+ (WHAT WAS DIFFERENT?)

FLAT #2 — SAME TWO QUESTIONS

WHAT'S PROPPING UP MY HIGHEST DIMENSION — THE MECHANISM WORTH COPYING (A SCHEDULE? A PERSON? A PLACE?)

THE ONE-LINE DIAGNOSIS — MY SELF-CARE FAILS MOSTLY BECAUSE...

Where the time actually goes.

Self-care rarely lacks time — it loses it to defaults: the scroll, the yes you didn't mean, the show you weren't even enjoying. Find the leaks before adding anything new.

THE DEFAULTS — WHERE MY EVENINGS AND WEEKENDS ACTUALLY DRAIN, HONESTLY (SCREEN-TIME REPORT WELCOME)

THE OBLIGATIONS I'VE OUTGROWN — RECURRING YESES THAT GIVE NOTHING BACK

WHAT I'D DO WITH A FOUND HOUR — THE ANSWER THAT CAME INSTANTLY

ONE LEAK I'M PLUGGING THIS WEEK — AND WHAT FILLS THE HOLE

PART TWO

Minimums & menus.

A minimum is a floor you defend, not a goal you chase. A menu is pre-decided care for each size of day — because a depleted brain can't brainstorm, but it can order.

The minimum standards.

One per dimension — embarrassingly achievable, written like law. “In bed by midnight” beats “sleep more.” These hold even in bad weeks; ESPECIALLY in bad weeks.

Body

MY FLOOR _____

Mind

MY FLOOR _____

Heart

MY FLOOR _____

People

MY FLOOR _____

Play

MY FLOOR _____

Order

MY FLOOR _____

Meaning

MY FLOOR _____

Rest

MY FLOOR _____

THE TWO FLOORS THAT MATTER MOST — MY NON-NEGOTIABLES, STARRED _____

The 5-minute menu.

For the days that are wall-to-wall. Stock 10–12 items you’ve actually enjoyed before — not aspirational ones. Rule: pick from the menu, don’t improvise.

STARTERS – STEAL FREELY

- Step outside, face the sun
- One song, loud, eyes closed
- Stretch the thing that aches
- Text someone who makes you laugh
- Make the good coffee/tea properly
- Water a plant, touch some dirt
- Write three lines in anything
- Pet the animal with full attention

MY MENU – 10 TO 12, TESTED, MINE

THE ONE I'LL DEFAULT TO WHEN I CAN'T CHOOSE

The 30-minute menu.

A lunch break, the kid's practice, the gap between calls. Big enough for real restoration — if it's pre-decided.

STARTERS

- A real walk, no podcast
- Nap with an alarm
- Cook one good thing slowly
- Call the friend, walk while talking
- A chapter in a chair by a window
- The hobby in its smallest form
- Long shower, phone in another room
- Sit somewhere new with a notebook

MY MENU – WITH THE FRICTION REMOVED IN ADVANCE (SHOES BY THE DOOR, BOOK ON THE TABLE)

THE ONE THAT RELIABLY RESETS ME

The half-day menu.

The rarest currency — a whole free morning or afternoon. Without a plan it evaporates into errands and scroll. Protect two per month like appointments.

STARTERS

- The hike / long ride / big swim
- Museum or matinee, alone, gloriously
- The project that's only for you
- A drive somewhere with good food
- Deep clean ONE space that's been bothering you (order is care)
- A long lunch with the friend you never see

MY MENU — AND WHAT I MUST NOT LET EAT THESE WINDOWS (ERRANDS, OTHER PEOPLE'S EMERGENCIES)

NEXT HALF-DAY ON MY CALENDAR: DATE, PLAN, DEFENDED

The no that funds it all.

Every minimum and menu is funded by a no somewhere else. Practice the wording now — warm, short, no invoice of excuses.

THE DEFAULT-NO FOR NEW ASKS

“Let me check my week and come back to you” — buys 24 hours for an honest answer instead of a cornered yes.

THE STANDING-COMMITMENT EXIT

“I’ve loved being part of this, and this season I can’t give it what it deserves. I’m stepping back after [date].”

THE GUILT-FREE DECLINE

“I can’t make it — but I’m so glad you asked. Next time.” No reason required. “No” is a complete sentence wearing manners.

THE NO I OWE SOMEONE RIGHT NOW

PART THREE

The practice.

Self-care that survives is seasonal and scheduled. Rituals for the year's rhythm, a two-minute weekly log, and a re-audit to prove the wheel is rounder.

Seasonal rituals.

Each season gets one anchor ritual — something to look forward to that also restores. Traditions are self-care with a calendar.

Winter

THE RITUAL _____

WHEN + WITH WHOM + WHAT IT
NEEDS _____**Spring**

THE RITUAL _____

WHEN + WITH WHOM + WHAT IT
NEEDS _____**Summer**

THE RITUAL _____

WHEN + WITH WHOM + WHAT IT
NEEDS _____**Fall**

THE RITUAL _____

WHEN + WITH WHOM + WHAT IT
NEEDS _____

THE RITUAL MY YEAR IS MISSING MOST _____

The weekly log.

Two minutes on Sunday. Floors held or not, one menu item taken, and the honest number. Four weeks per page.

Week 1 FLOORS HELD: ___ / 8 TANK 1-10 _____ MENU ITEMS TAKEN _____

THE FLOOR THAT SLIPPED — AND WHY _____

Week 2 FLOORS HELD: ___ / 8 TANK 1-10 _____ MENU ITEMS TAKEN _____

THE FLOOR THAT SLIPPED — AND WHY _____

Week 3 FLOORS HELD: ___ / 8 TANK 1-10 _____ MENU ITEMS TAKEN _____

THE FLOOR THAT SLIPPED — AND WHY _____

Week 4 FLOORS HELD: ___ / 8 TANK 1-10 _____ MENU ITEMS TAKEN _____

THE FLOOR THAT SLIPPED — AND WHY _____

THIS MONTH'S PATTERN — WHICH FLOOR NEEDS TO BE LOWER (YES, LOWER) TO HOLD _____

The burnout early-warning page.

Burnout announces itself in a personal dialect: yours might be snapping, insomnia, cynicism, or Sunday dread. Write your dialect — and the pre-agreed response.

MY YELLOW LIGHTS — THE EARLY TELLS THAT THE TANK IS UNDER A QUARTER

MY RED LIGHTS — THE SIGNS I'VE HISTORICALLY IGNORED UNTIL SOMETHING BROKE

THE PROTOCOL — WHEN TWO YELLOW LIGHTS SHOW: WHICH FLOORS GET REINFORCED, WHAT GETS CANCELLED WITHOUT GUILT, WHO GETS TOLD

CURRENTLY SHOWING: GREEN / YELLOW / RED — DATED _____

The re-audit.

Ninety days later, score the wheel again — same eight, same honesty. Improvement of one point on a flat is a big deal; act like it.

Body	THEN	_____	NOW	_____	WHAT MOVED IT	_____
Mind	THEN	_____	NOW	_____	WHAT MOVED IT	_____
Heart	THEN	_____	NOW	_____	WHAT MOVED IT	_____
People	THEN	_____	NOW	_____	WHAT MOVED IT	_____
Play	THEN	_____	NOW	_____	WHAT MOVED IT	_____
Order	THEN	_____	NOW	_____	WHAT MOVED IT	_____
Meaning	THEN	_____	NOW	_____	WHAT MOVED IT	_____
Rest	THEN	_____	NOW	_____	WHAT MOVED IT	_____

NEXT QUARTER'S TWO DIMENSIONS — AND THE FIRST FLOOR TO SET _____

The system, one page.

The fridge copy.

THE RULES

- Floors, not goals. Defend the minimum especially in bad weeks.
- Depleted brains order from menus; they don't brainstorm. Stock the menus.
- Every yes to care is funded by a no somewhere. Pre-write the no.
- Two half-days a month, protected like client meetings.
- Two yellow lights = protocol, not willpower.

THE RHYTHM

Daily	Hold the floors. One 5-minute item when the day allows.
Weekly	Two-minute log. One 30-minute item, scheduled.
Monthly	Two half-days, calendar-blocked.
Quarterly	Re-audit the wheel; rotate the focus dimensions.

MY TWO STARRED FLOORS · MY DEFAULT 5-MINUTE ITEM · MY NEXT HALF-DAY — COPIED HERE

THE ADULTING VAULT

**You are the infrastructure.
Maintain accordingly.**



SELF-CARE WORKBOOK

EVERYTHING THEY FORGOT TO TELL YOU