

THE DAY AFTER SHE LEFT

90-Day Breakup Recovery Workbook for Men

No revenge. No red pill. No therapy-speak. Function first.

THE DAY AFTER SHE LEFT WORKBOOK

A 90-DAY BREAKUP AND DIVORCE RECOVERY PROGRAM FOR MEN

31 ACTION TOOLS • 30 READY-TO-USE SCRIPTS • 13 WEEKLY FUNCTION CHECKS

NO REVENGE. NO RED PILL. NO THERAPY-SPEAK. FUNCTION FIRST.

31 action tools, 30 ready-to-use scripts, and 13 weekly Function Checks for the first ninety days after betrayal, breakup, or divorce.

ADAM SERGEANT

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The examples are composites. Names and identifying details have been changed.

This workbook is educational. It is not medical advice, mental-health treatment, legal advice, financial advice, or a substitute for a qualified professional who knows your circumstances.

READ THIS FIRST

Use this like an operating book.

You probably did not buy this because you wanted a ninety-day project. You bought it because tonight is too loud, the phone keeps winning, work is slipping, the house feels wrong, or you do not trust what you might do next.

Open the page that matches the problem in front of you. Write short. Facts before theories. One next action before a life plan. The aim is not to write beautifully. The aim is to stop pain from running the next decision.

The program is organized by time, but safety overrides the calendar. If you are on Day 50 and tonight becomes dangerous, return to the Tonight Card. If children are involved, use the child pages from Day 1. If a court, bank, doctor, lawyer, or safety service owns the question, write down the facts and take the question there.

THE RULE

Do not use this workbook to chase, threaten, monitor, punish, stalk, or win. Use it to become more reliable to yourself and safer for the people around you.

IMPORTANT USE + SAFETY NOTICE

Read this before using the tools.

If you may hurt yourself, call or text 988 in the United States, use 988lifeline.org, call 911 for immediate danger, or go to the nearest emergency department. Do not stay alone with weapons, large quantities of medication, alcohol, or car keys if risk is rising.

If you may hurt someone else, create physical distance, remove access to weapons and keys, involve another adult, and use emergency help. Do not confront the person while you are escalated.

If violence, stalking, threats, coercive control, or fear are present, use a specialist safety service and local legal advice. The National Domestic Violence Hotline is 1-800-799-SAFE and thehotline.org.

Do not start, stop, or change medication because of this workbook. Seek medical help for severe or persistent insomnia, inability to eat or drink, chest pain, fainting, hallucinations, mania, panic that will not settle, or heavy alcohol or drug use.

Family law and financial rules differ by state. Before moving out, changing parenting arrangements, recording conversations, moving money, closing accounts, signing documents, or changing access to shared property, get local legal advice.

HOW TO USE

The workbook rhythm.

You do not need the main book to use this workbook. If you own both, the mapping table at the back shows how these 31 workbook tools relate to the main book.

1. Start with Phase 0 if the breakup is new or tonight feels unstable.
2. Follow the phase order, but use safety, child, medical, legal, and financial pages whenever the facts require them.
3. Complete one weekly Function Check and one After Action Review at the end of each week.
4. Write facts and short decisions. Long narrative belongs in a separate notebook or with a professional.
5. Use the script bank when you need a sentence, not another argument.
6. Repeat tools. A second Digital Perimeter or Cooling Plan is not failure; it is maintenance.
7. Keep the Tonight Card, Contact Protocol, and Relapse Plan easy to reach.

90-DAY RHYTHM

The phases match the thirteen weeks.

The day count and weekly rhythm now use the same boundaries. Phase 0 handles the emergency runway; Phase 1 starts once you have reached Day 4.

Phase	Days	Weeks	Job
0	1-3	-	First 72 hours: prevent damage and reach the next morning
1	4-14	1-2	Stabilize: safety, sleep, daily floor, money/legal triage
2	15-42	3-6	Control: checking, contact, messages, rumination, work, home
3	43-70	7-10	Rebuild: longing, responsibility, identity, support, body, children
4	71-90	11-13	Decide: relationship, dating, relapse plan, next ninety days

PARENT PATHWAY

Tools 27 and 28 are not Phase 3-only if children are involved. Use them from Day 1 and repeat them whenever schedules, exchanges, or adult conflict change.

Find the page that matches the problem.

Problem	Start with
Tonight feels unsafe or chaotic	Phase 0 and Tool 01
I want to make a permanent decision	Tool 02
I keep checking or contacting her	Tools 05, 12, 13, 14, 15
Money or legal panic is taking over	Tools 09-11
I cannot stop replaying the story	Tools 17-18
I have children and need words	Tools 27-28
I need to decide about reconciliation	Tool 29
I want to date or replace the pain	Tool 30
I need words for her, my boss, my children, or a friend	Script Bank

TOOL MAP

Workbook order first. Main-book links second.

The workbook uses sequential numbers from 01 to 31. The main-book reference appears beside each tool for readers using both products.

WB	Main	Tool	WB	Main	Tool
01	T1	The Tonight Card	17	T11	Fact – Story – Question – Action
02	T2	The Decision Freeze	18	T12	The One Lesson Rule
03	T4	The Two-Person Protocol	19	T16	The Cooling Plan
04	T5	The Life Triage Map	20	T21	The Work Protection Plan
05	T7	The Urge Ladder	21	T22	The Home Reset
06	T13	The Night Parking Page	22	T17	Longing Versus Evidence
07	T14	The Seven-Night Sleep Record	23	T18	The Responsibility Map
08	T15	The Minimum Viable Day	24	T23	The Identity Map
09	New	Money Triage	25	T24	The Support Architecture
10	New	The Joint Account Protocol	26	T25	The Body Covenant
11	New	The First Legal Consult	27	T19	The Child-Safe Communication Plan
12	T3	The Digital Perimeter	28	T20	The Child Exchange Plan
13	T6	The Relief Trap Log	29	T26	The Relationship Decision Grid
14	T8	The Contact Protocol	30	T27	The Dating Readiness Check
15	T9	The Twenty-Minute Message Filter	31	T28	The Day 90 and Relapse Plan
16	T10	The Information Gate			

BASELINE

Your First Function Check

Score the last seven days, even if the breakup happened yesterday. Use 0, 1, or 2. This is not a diagnosis or a grade. It is a map of where protection belongs first.

- 0 = unsafe, absent, or not functioning
- 1 = partly functioning or unreliable
- 2 = reliably functioning enough for the current stage

Score behavior rather than how bad the emotion feels. Pain can remain high while function becomes more reliable.

SAFETY OVERRIDE

If Safety is 0, use the Tonight Card and professional or emergency support before doing any ordinary workbook page.

BASELINE FUNCTION CHECK

Start with behavior, not promises.

Area	0	1	2	Score
Safety	unsafe	partial plan	safe plan	
Sleep	almost none	irregular	usable	
Food/basic care	absent	partial	regular	
Work/money	failing	minimum	protected	
Contact/checking	impulsive	mixed	protocol	
People	isolated	sporadic	planned	
Children/obligations	unreliable	partial	predictable	
Direction	only reacting	some action	building	

THE AREA THAT NEEDS PROTECTION FIRST

THE FIRST TOOL I WILL USE

THE PERSON WHO KNOWS I STARTED THIS PLAN

First 72 Hours

The first job is not insight. It is preventing avoidable damage while the system is flooded.

Use the six action pages that follow before the ordinary weekly rhythm begins. You can return to them at any point in the ninety days.

FUNCTION FIRST

Do not solve the relationship tonight. Reduce danger, uncertainty, and damage by one step.

The Next Ten Minutes

Do not solve the relationship. Reduce danger and uncertainty by one step.

THE ONE THING I MUST NOT DO IN THE NEXT HOUR

THE PERSON I CONTACT NOW

MY NEXT SAFE ACTION

The First Night and Day

No speeches. No punishment. No life verdict. Stabilize the body and protect one ordinary duty.

1. Get out of bed at a named time, even if the night was bad.
2. Drink water and eat something simple with protein or slow carbohydrates.
3. Move the phone away from the bed and stop checking before work.
4. Send only essential logistics, not a relationship speech.
5. Tell one safe person the truth: "I am not doing well and I need check-ins."
6. Protect one duty: child, work, legal deadline, medical need, or housing.
7. Book the professional call that belongs to today: doctor, lawyer, therapist, bank, or crisis line.

MY WAKE TIME

MY FIRST MEAL

THE ONE NECESSARY TASK

Hours 0-24

Make tonight safer and tomorrow less chaotic.

WHERE I WILL BE

WHO KNOWS THE TRUTH ABOUT TONIGHT

WHAT I REMOVE FROM ACCESS TONIGHT

WHAT I WILL DO IF I CANNOT SLEEP

WHAT IS NOW SAFER THAN IT WAS THIS MORNING?

Hours 24-48

You are still inside the blast radius. Do not ask your most unstable hour to decide the next year.

THE LOOP I NOTICED

THE LOWER-COST REPLACEMENT

ONE ORDINARY ACTIVITY I WILL COMPLETE

THE REAL DEADLINE I CONFIRMED

Hours 48–72

Move from emergency containment into the first week of structure.

WHAT STILL FEELS MOST DANGEROUS?

WHAT PRACTICAL AREA IS MOST EXPOSED?

WHICH PROFESSIONAL NOW OWNS A QUESTION?

MY WEEK 1 MISSION

72-Hour After Action Review

What happened. What changes before the next night.

WHAT DID I PREVENT?

WHICH PERSON PROVED USEFUL?

WHICH BEHAVIOR CREATED THE GREATEST DELAYED COST?

WHAT MUST BE READY BEFORE THE NEXT NIGHT?

THE FIRST ACTION OF PHASE 1

Stabilize

Restore the floor: safety, people, sleep, daily structure, money, and first legal facts.

Weeks 1-2: stabilize the next day and restore the biological floor.

- Tools 01-11: safety, decisions, people, daily structure, money, and legal preparation.

NO REVENGE. NO RED PILL. NO THERAPY-SPEAK. FUNCTION FIRST.

Use the tool that matches the next decision. Do not turn the whole phase into a self-improvement performance.

The Tonight Card

Keep one safe night in front of you.

WHEN AND WHY

This is the page for a dangerous, chaotic, or impulsive night. It is not a mood tracker. It is a safety card: warning signs, people, a safer place, what leaves your access, 988, and the next ten-minute action.

EXAMPLE

Marcus wants to drive over and demand an answer. His friend Daniel takes the keys, he writes two warning signs, and he agrees to text again in thirty minutes.

RUN THE TOOL

- Name the warning signs.
- Write two people with phone numbers.
- Choose a safer place for the next several hours.
- Remove weapons, keys, alcohol, or large medication quantities if risk is rising.
- Use 988 or 911 if safety is not reliable.

Turn the page. Keep answers short enough to use under pressure.

The Tonight Card

Date: _____ Time: _____

MY WARNING SIGNS

MY PEOPLE – NAMES AND PHONE NUMBERS

MY SAFER PLACE FOR THE NEXT SEVERAL HOURS

WHAT LEAVES MY ACCESS TONIGHT

988 SUICIDE & CRISIS LIFELINE

Call or text 988. Use 911 for immediate danger.

LOCAL OR ADDITIONAL PROFESSIONAL CONTACT

MY REASON TO REACH MORNING

MY NEXT TEN-MINUTE ACTION

The Decision Freeze

Delay is an action when the cost of acting now is permanent.

WHEN AND WHY

Panic makes permanent moves feel urgent. The freeze does not avoid reality. It separates true deadlines from emotion-driven urgency. Use it before moving out, quitting work, sending a legal threat, signing a document, or making a major financial move.

EXAMPLE

Ben wants to cancel every shared payment tonight. The written deadline is not tonight. He freezes the decision and books a lawyer call instead.

RUN THE TOOL

- Name the decision.
- Write the real deadline.
- Compare the harm of waiting with the harm of acting now.
- List what genuinely requires action today.
- Assign the question to the right professional.

Turn the page. Keep answers short enough to use under pressure.

The Decision Freeze

Date: _____ Time: _____

DECISION

ACTUAL WRITTEN DEADLINE

HARM IF I WAIT SEVENTY-TWO HOURS

HARM IF I ACT NOW

WHAT GENUINELY REQUIRES ACTION TODAY

PROFESSIONAL WHO OWNS THE QUESTION

REVIEW DATE AND TIME

The Two-Person Protocol

Do not make one exhausted friend carry the whole crisis.

WHEN AND WHY

A breakup crisis needs different kinds of help: one person for risk and night contact, another for practical daylight support. This protocol asks for specific help so people are not guessing.

EXAMPLE

Marcus asks Daniel for evening check-ins and asks a coworker to help him protect two work deadlines.

RUN THE TOOL

- Choose a night person.
- Choose a day person.
- Ask each for a specific job.
- Agree the limits.
- Write the check-in time.

Turn the page. Keep answers short enough to use under pressure.

The Two-Person Protocol

Date: _____ Time: _____

NIGHT PERSON

NAME AND PHONE

AGREED HOURS OR LIMITS

DAY PERSON

NAME AND PHONE

PLANNED CHECK-IN

WHAT I AM ALLOWED TO SAY DIRECTLY IF RISK RISES

The Life Triage Map

Separate what must happen today from what panic wants solved today.

WHEN AND WHY

The breakup may touch children, housing, work, money, documents, medicine, pets, immigration, insurance, and safety. A map stops every concern from having the same volume.

EXAMPLE

David lists medication and a mortgage payment for today, lawyer intake and documents within seven days, and tax questions for a professional.

RUN THE TOOL

- List only true today items.
- Move seven-day items out of the emergency lane.
- Give professional questions to professionals.
- Choose one action after closing the workbook.

Turn the page. Keep answers short enough to use under pressure.

The Life Triage Map

Date: _____ Time: _____

MUST HAPPEN TODAY

WITHIN SEVEN DAYS

REQUIRES A PROFESSIONAL – ITEM AND PROFESSIONAL

FIRST ACTION AFTER CLOSING THIS WORKBOOK

The Urge Ladder

An urge is information. It is not an order.

WHEN AND WHY

Urges rise in levels. A 3/10 urge needs friction. A 7/10 urge needs people and distance. A 9/10 urge needs safety support. Write the ladder before the next wave arrives.

EXAMPLE

Marcus writes that a 6/10 urge means he cannot open Instagram. An 8/10 urge means he calls Daniel and leaves the apartment.

RUN THE TOOL

- Name your 3/10 signs.
- Name your 6/10 signs.
- Name your 8/10 signs.
- Assign one action to each level.
- Set the emergency threshold.

Turn the page. Keep answers short enough to use under pressure.

The Urge Ladder

Date: _____ Time: _____

3/10 – EARLY SIGNS AND ACTION

6/10 – MIDDLE SIGNS AND ACTION

8/10 – HIGH-RISK SIGNS AND ACTION

WHAT I DO BEFORE OPENING THE APP OR MESSAGE THREAD

EMERGENCY THRESHOLD

The Night Parking Page

Put the problem somewhere other than a message at 3:00 a.m.

WHEN AND WHY

Night thinking feels profound because it is intense. It is often sleep-deprived investigation. This page stores tomorrow's practical issues, scheduled questions, and non-actionable uncertainty so the bed does not become a courtroom.

EXAMPLE

Marcus wakes at 3:00 a.m. and wants to ask where she was. He parks the question for the scheduled thinking period and does not send it.

RUN THE TOOL

- Write matters for tomorrow.
- Write questions for the scheduled thinking period.
- Name what is not actionable tonight.
- Run the 3:00 a.m. sequence.

Turn the page. Keep answers short enough to use under pressure.

The Night Parking Page

Date: _____ Time: _____

MATTERS FOR TOMORROW

QUESTIONS FOR THE SCHEDULED THINKING PERIOD

NOT ACTIONABLE TONIGHT

IF I WAKE AT 3:00 A.M., I WILL

1. Check safety. 2. Put the phone away. 3. Write the issue here. 4. Do a quiet low-light activity for 20 minutes. 5. Contact my support person if risk rises.

The Seven-Night Sleep Record

Track sleep enough to respond, not enough to obsess.

WHEN AND WHY

Sleep collapse changes judgment. Record the basics for seven nights: estimated sleep, alcohol, caffeine, phone-in-bed, and whether medical help is needed. Do not use the record to punish yourself.

EXAMPLE

David notices that the worst nights follow two hours of messages plus alcohol. That gives him a target.

RUN THE TOOL

- Estimate sleep.
- Record phone, alcohol, caffeine, and wake time.
- Name one pattern.
- Book medical help if sleep remains unsafe or extreme.

Turn the page. Keep answers short enough to use under pressure.

The Seven-Night Sleep Record

Date: _____ Time: _____

SEVEN-NIGHT RECORD

Night / wake time / estimated sleep / phone in bed / alcohol / caffeine / note

PATTERN I NOTICED

PROFESSIONAL CONTACT OR CHANGE TO THE PLAN

The Minimum Viable Day

A small completed day beats an ambitious abandoned one.

WHEN AND WHY

When your system is overloaded, a transformation plan fails quickly. Use six anchors: get up, wash and dress, eat and drink, go outside, one necessary task, one human contact.

EXAMPLE

Andre cannot face a full routine. He completes the six anchors and does not drink before bed. That is a stabilizing day.

RUN THE TOOL

- Pick a wake time.
- Choose the six anchors.
- Define three levels: bad day, normal day, strong day.
- Prepare the next day before night.

Turn the page. Keep answers short enough to use under pressure.

The Minimum Viable Day

Date: _____ Time: _____

GET UP

WASH AND DRESS

EAT AND DRINK

GO OUTSIDE

ONE NECESSARY TASK

ONE HUMAN CONTACT

THREE LEVELS: BAD / NORMAL / STRONG DAY

WHAT I PREPARE ON A STRONGER DAY

Money Triage

Separate cash-flow danger from financial revenge.

WHEN AND WHY

Money panic is normal after separation: cards, rent or mortgage, utilities, insurance, child expenses, legal fees, and access to documents. This is not a divorce strategy. It is a first map of cash flow, risk, and appointments.

EXAMPLE

Ben lists thirty days of bills, confirms which accounts he is authorized to access, and books a family-law consult before moving money.

RUN THE TOOL

- Write the thirty-day cash need.
- List immediate risks.
- Gather documents only from accounts you are authorized to access.
- Book the right professional appointments.

Turn the page. Keep answers short enough to use under pressure.

Money Triage

Date: _____ Time: _____

THIRTY-DAY CASH FLOW

CASH AVAILABLE AND INCOME EXPECTED

IMMEDIATE RISKS: HOUSING, UTILITIES, FOOD, MEDICATION, INSURANCE, UNAUTHORIZED ACTIVITY

DOCUMENTS TO GATHER FROM ACCOUNTS I AM AUTHORIZED TO ACCESS

PROFESSIONAL APPOINTMENTS AND DATES

The Joint Account Protocol

Do not confuse access with permission to improvise.

WHEN AND WHY

Joint accounts, authorized-user cards, shared subscriptions, and credit reports can become a legal and relational minefield. Inventory first. Ask the bank, card issuer, lawyer, or financial professional before making moves that change rights or access.

EXAMPLE

David learns that he is an authorized user, not a joint cardholder, and routes the question to a lawyer instead of closing the card in anger.

RUN THE TOOL

- Inventory accounts.
- Separate joint holder from authorized user.
- Ask the institution about procedures.
- Ask a local lawyer before closing, moving, or restricting access.
- Use official credit report and freeze sources.

Turn the page. Keep answers short enough to use under pressure.

The Joint Account Protocol

Date: _____ Time: _____

ACCOUNT INVENTORY

QUESTIONS FOR THE BANK OR CARD ISSUER

QUESTIONS FOR MY LAWYER OR FINANCIAL PROFESSIONAL

CREDIT REPORT OR IDENTITY-THEFT ACTION

The First Legal Consult

Arrive with facts, not a speech.

WHEN AND WHY

A first consult should help you understand deadlines, process, risks, costs, and what not to change before advice. The lawyer does not need a six-hour story before knowing the urgent facts.

EXAMPLE

Ben brings dates, children's routines, home facts, account facts, documents served, and the three outcomes he is afraid of. The consultation becomes useful fast.

RUN THE TOOL

- Write the top three outcomes or fears.
- List deadlines and documents served.
- Summarize children, home, accounts, debts, income, and insurance.
- Ask what not to change before further advice.

Turn the page. Keep answers short enough to use under pressure.

The First Legal Consult

Date: _____ Time: _____

MY TOP THREE OUTCOMES OR FEARS

KNOWN DEADLINES AND DOCUMENTS SERVED

CURRENT CHILD ROUTINE AND IMMEDIATE CONCERNS

HOME, ACCOUNTS, DEBTS, INCOME, INSURANCE, AND TAX FACTS

QUESTIONS ABOUT MOVING, RECORDING, MONEY, PROPERTY, CONTACT, OR SIGNING

Stop Feeding the Loop

Score the last seven days by behavior. A lower score is not failure; it is information.

Area	0	1	2	Score
Safety	unsafe	partial	safe plan	
Sleep	none	uneven	usable	
Food/basic care	absent	partial	regular	
Work/money	unprotected	minimum	protected	
Contact/checking	impulsive	mixed	protocol	
People	isolated	sporadic	planned	
Children/obligations	unreliable	partial	predictable	
Direction	reacting	some action	building	

LOWEST AREA AND NEXT PROTECTIVE ACTION

What happened. What changes next.

WHAT BECAME MORE RELIABLE?

WHICH BEHAVIOR CREATED THE GREATEST DELAYED COST?

WHAT TRIGGER IS APPROACHING?

WHAT MUST BE IN PLACE BEFORE IT ARRIVES?

WHICH DECISION OR CONVERSATION BELONGS WITH A PROFESSIONAL?

WHAT IS THE SMALLEST MEANINGFUL COMMITMENT FOR NEXT WEEK?

WHO KNOWS THE TRUTH ABOUT HOW I AM DOING?

ONE SENTENCE I WILL CARRY INTO NEXT WEEK

Restore the Biological Floor

Score the last seven days by behavior. A lower score is not failure; it is information.

Area	0	1	2	Score
Safety	unsafe	partial	safe plan	
Sleep	none	uneven	usable	
Food/basic care	absent	partial	regular	
Work/money	unprotected	minimum	protected	
Contact/checking	impulsive	mixed	protocol	
People	isolated	sporadic	planned	
Children/obligations	unreliable	partial	predictable	
Direction	reacting	some action	building	

LOWEST AREA AND NEXT PROTECTIVE ACTION

What happened. What changes next.

WHAT BECAME MORE RELIABLE?

WHICH BEHAVIOR CREATED THE GREATEST DELAYED COST?

WHAT TRIGGER IS APPROACHING?

WHAT MUST BE IN PLACE BEFORE IT ARRIVES?

WHICH DECISION OR CONVERSATION BELONGS WITH A PROFESSIONAL?

WHAT IS THE SMALLEST MEANINGFUL COMMITMENT FOR NEXT WEEK?

WHO KNOWS THE TRUTH ABOUT HOW I AM DOING?

ONE SENTENCE I WILL CARRY INTO NEXT WEEK

Control

Control the loop: phone, contact, information, rumination, anger, work, and home.

Weeks 3-6: reduce checking, contact spirals, message damage, rumination, and work/home drift.

- Tools 12-21: digital perimeter, contact, messages, information, rumination, anger, work, and home.

NO REVENGE. NO RED PILL. NO THERAPY-SPEAK. FUNCTION FIRST.

Use the tool that matches the next decision. Do not turn the whole phase into a self-improvement performance.

PHASE NOTES

Prepare for Control

Use this page to preload the next block before the first worksheet. The following writing pages are set on right-hand pages for easier handwriting in print.

ONE THING THIS PHASE MUST PROTECT

THE TRIGGER MOST LIKELY TO SHOW UP

THE PERSON OR PROFESSIONAL I MAY NEED

The Digital Perimeter

Make checking harder and necessary communication easier.

WHEN AND WHY

Your phone can turn one loss into hundreds of fresh injuries. Checking her status, old messages, location, mutual friends, photographs, or a new partner may provide brief certainty. The delayed cost is usually larger.

EXAMPLE

Marcus removes shortcuts, logs out, chooses one necessary contact channel, and gives Daniel app-blocker access for two weeks.

RUN THE TOOL

- Choose one necessary contact channel.
- Remove the fastest routes to checking.
- Set fixed review windows.
- Write three first-minute replacements for the urge.

Next: use the worksheet while the trigger is still specific.

The Digital Perimeter

Date: _____ Time: _____

ONE NECESSARY CONTACT CHANNEL

REVIEW WINDOWS

APP BLOCKER OR FRICTION I WILL ADD

THREE FIRST-MINUTE REPLACEMENTS

EVIDENCE OR FILES I STORE OUTSIDE DAILY ACCESS

The Relief Trap Log

See what the behavior gives you now and costs you later.

WHEN AND WHY

Compulsive contact, checking, drinking, searching, arguing, and replay usually perform a job: connection, certainty, numbness, punishment, or validation. The log finds that job and offers a lower-cost replacement.

EXAMPLE

Andre realizes alcohol creates two hours of numbness and a worse morning. His replacement must handle evening loneliness, not just “be disciplined.”

RUN THE TOOL

- Record one real episode.
- Score immediate relief and delayed cost.
- Name the job the behavior performed.
- Choose a lower-cost replacement that performs the same job.

Next: use the worksheet while the trigger is still specific.

The Relief Trap Log

Date: _____ Time: _____

TRIGGER

BODY ALARM

STORY MY MIND TOLD

URGE

ACTION

SCORES: IMMEDIATE RELIEF / DELAYED COST

LOWER-COST REPLACEMENT THAT PERFORMS THE SAME JOB

The Contact Protocol

Decide what contact is for before the next message arrives.

WHEN AND WHY

Contact after separation usually serves logistics, relationship work, or emotion regulation. Trouble begins when one message tries to do all three. Choose the model that fits your facts and children.

EXAMPLE

Ben uses one written channel for child logistics and stops relationship talks during exchanges.

RUN THE TOOL

- Choose the contact model.
- Use one channel for practical matters.
- Define urgent before an argument.
- Write the sentence that ends an unproductive exchange.

Next: use the worksheet while the trigger is still specific.

The Contact Protocol

Date: _____ Time: _____

CHANNEL

PERMITTED TOPICS

REVIEW TIMES

NORMAL RESPONSE PERIOD

WHAT COUNTS AS URGENT

TOPICS RESERVED FOR A SCHEDULED DISCUSSION

CONDITIONS THAT END A CONVERSATION

THIRD PARTY, PLATFORM, OR PROFESSIONAL

The Twenty-Minute Message Filter

Remove the part of the message that is trying to regulate pain.

WHEN AND WHY

A message written in the first wave often demands explanation, forces reassurance, punishes, proves the case, or tries to transfer pain. The useful part may be one sentence. Draft outside the app. Wait. Cut.

EXAMPLE

Marcus writes a paragraph. After twenty minutes, the final message is one child-logistics sentence.

RUN THE TOOL

- Draft outside the app.
- Wait twenty minutes.
- Keep one practical purpose.
- Read the final version as if a professional will see it.

Next: use the worksheet while the trigger is still specific.

The Twenty-Minute Message Filter

Date: _____ Time: _____

DRAFT OUTSIDE THE APP

THE ONE PRACTICAL PURPOSE

FINAL MESSAGE

I WILL SEND / NOT SEND AT

The Information Gate

Ask only for information that changes a decision.

WHEN AND WHY

Some information protects health, children, money, or legal rights. Some helps structured reconciliation. Other detail creates vivid images without changing what you do. Use this before asking.

EXAMPLE

David wants sexual comparison details. No decision changes. The question stays closed. He books medical testing for a real health question.

RUN THE TOOL

- Write the question.
- Name the decision it changes.
- Plan for yes, no, and no answer.
- Choose ask now, structured setting, or do not ask.

Next: use the worksheet while the trigger is still specific.

The Information Gate

Date: _____ Time: _____

QUESTION I WANT TO ASK

DECISION THE ANSWER CHANGES

IF YES, I WILL

IF NO, I WILL

IF NO ANSWER, I WILL

ROUTE: ASK NOW / STRUCTURED SETTING / DO NOT ASK

Fact — Story — Question — Action

Stop a story from presenting itself as a confirmed fact.

WHEN AND WHY

Painful uncertainty invites the mind to fill gaps. A delayed reply becomes proof she is with someone else. A neutral exchange becomes proof she never cared. Separate observable fact, added story, answerable question, and controlled action.

EXAMPLE

Marcus writes: Fact — no reply since 7 p.m. Story — she is with him. Question — is there a child emergency? Action — one check at the scheduled review time.

RUN THE TOOL

- Write one observable fact.
- Name the story without defending it.
- Ask one answerable question.
- Choose one lawful action within your control.

Next: use the worksheet while the trigger is still specific.

Fact – Story – Question – Action

Date: _____ Time: _____

FACT – DIRECTLY OBSERVED OR DOCUMENTED

STORY – MEANING I ADDED

QUESTION – ANSWERABLE AND DECISION-RELEVANT

ACTION – LAWFUL AND WITHIN MY CONTROL

The One Lesson Rule

Take one usable lesson from a loop, then leave the courtroom.

WHEN AND WHY

Reflection is useful when it changes future behavior. Rumination keeps reopening the past without a new decision. The rule limits review to one behavioral lesson and one two-week experiment.

EXAMPLE

Andre stops the loop “I am unlovable” and writes a usable lesson: “I avoided difficult talks until resentment became the language.”

RUN THE TOOL

- Name the event or pattern.
- Write one lesson in behavioral language.
- Choose a two-week experiment.
- Set a review date and end the session.

Next: use the worksheet while the trigger is still specific.

The One Lesson Rule

Date: _____ Time: _____

EVENT OR PATTERN I KEEP REVIEWING

ONE LESSON IN BEHAVIORAL LANGUAGE

WHAT THIS LESSON DOES NOT MEAN ABOUT MY WORTH

TWO-WEEK EXPERIMENT

REVIEW DATE

The Cooling Plan

Lower arousal before you decide what anger means.

WHEN AND WHY

Anger can identify a boundary, injustice, humiliation, or fear. It cannot safely decide at full volume. Build a plan for early, middle, and high-risk signs.

EXAMPLE

Ben notices clenched jaw and fast driving at 6/10. At 8/10 he leaves the conversation and calls his brother.

RUN THE TOOL

- Write signs at 3-4, 5-7, and 8-10.
- Choose an exit route.
- List ways to lower arousal.
- Set the emergency threshold.

Next: use the worksheet while the trigger is still specific.

The Cooling Plan

Date: _____ Time: _____

3-4/10 SIGNS AND ACTION

5-7/10 SIGNS AND ACTION

8-10/10 SIGNS AND ACTION

WAYS I LOWER AROUSAL

MY EMERGENCY THRESHOLD AND ACTION

The Work Protection Plan

Keep the job intact while concentration is temporarily reduced.

WHEN AND WHY

Relationship crisis can impair attention, memory, sleep, and judgment. You do not need to tell your employer the whole story. You may need a temporary operating plan.

EXAMPLE

David tells his manager there is an acute family matter, names three priorities, and asks for a second check on one risky task.

RUN THE TOOL

- Name three outcomes.
- Add a second check to one risky task.
- Set personal-message windows.
- Choose the level of disclosure you need.

Next: use the worksheet while the trigger is still specific.

The Work Protection Plan

Date: _____ Time: _____

OUTCOME 1 THAT MUST BE PROTECTED

OUTCOME 2 THAT MUST BE PROTECTED

OUTCOME 3 THAT MUST BE PROTECTED

TASK REQUIRING A SECOND CHECK

PERSON WHO KNOWS MY CAPACITY IS REDUCED

PERSONAL MESSAGE REVIEW TIMES

FORMAL SUPPORT I MAY NEED

The Home Reset

Turn the place you live into an operating base, not a shrine or a waiting room.

WHEN AND WHY

An empty or half-empty home can keep the crisis physically present. Begin with function: bed, food, laundry, medicine, documents, keys, security, internet, and a usable child space if needed.

EXAMPLE

David stops sleeping on the couch, clears the kitchen table, and stores high-trigger objects in one labeled box.

RUN THE TOOL

- Make the home operational first.
- Store high-trigger items safely.
- Create one evening routine.
- Prepare a child space if children stay with you.

Next: use the worksheet while the trigger is still specific.

The Home Reset

Date: _____ Time: _____

FUNCTIONAL FIXES: BED / FOOD / LAUNDRY / MEDICATION / DOCUMENTS / KEYS

TRIGGER ITEMS I STORE SAFELY

ONE EVENING ROUTINE

CHILD SPACE OR VISITOR SPACE IF NEEDED

Separate Thinking From Rumination

Score the last seven days by behavior. A lower score is not failure; it is information.

Area	0	1	2	Score
Safety	unsafe	partial	safe plan	
Sleep	none	uneven	usable	
Food/basic care	absent	partial	regular	
Work/money	unprotected	minimum	protected	
Contact/checking	impulsive	mixed	protocol	
People	isolated	sporadic	planned	
Children/obligations	unreliable	partial	predictable	
Direction	reacting	some action	building	

LOWEST AREA AND NEXT PROTECTIVE ACTION

What happened. What changes next.

WHAT BECAME MORE RELIABLE?

WHICH BEHAVIOR CREATED THE GREATEST DELAYED COST?

WHAT TRIGGER IS APPROACHING?

WHAT MUST BE IN PLACE BEFORE IT ARRIVES?

WHICH DECISION OR CONVERSATION BELONGS WITH A PROFESSIONAL?

WHAT IS THE SMALLEST MEANINGFUL COMMITMENT FOR NEXT WEEK?

WHO KNOWS THE TRUTH ABOUT HOW I AM DOING?

ONE SENTENCE I WILL CARRY INTO NEXT WEEK

Become Predictable Again

Score the last seven days by behavior. A lower score is not failure; it is information.

Area	0	1	2	Score
Safety	unsafe	partial	safe plan	
Sleep	none	uneven	usable	
Food/basic care	absent	partial	regular	
Work/money	unprotected	minimum	protected	
Contact/checking	impulsive	mixed	protocol	
People	isolated	sporadic	planned	
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LOWEST AREA AND NEXT PROTECTIVE ACTION

What happened. What changes next.

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WHAT TRIGGER IS APPROACHING?

WHAT MUST BE IN PLACE BEFORE IT ARRIVES?

WHICH DECISION OR CONVERSATION BELONGS WITH A PROFESSIONAL?

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WHO KNOWS THE TRUTH ABOUT HOW I AM DOING?

ONE SENTENCE I WILL CARRY INTO NEXT WEEK

Make the Home Operational

Score the last seven days by behavior. A lower score is not failure; it is information.

Area	0	1	2	Score
Safety	unsafe	partial	safe plan	
Sleep	none	uneven	usable	
Food/basic care	absent	partial	regular	
Work/money	unprotected	minimum	protected	
Contact/checking	impulsive	mixed	protocol	
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WHO KNOWS THE TRUTH ABOUT HOW I AM DOING?

ONE SENTENCE I WILL CARRY INTO NEXT WEEK

Recover the Self Beyond the Couple

Score the last seven days by behavior. A lower score is not failure; it is information.

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WHAT IS THE SMALLEST MEANINGFUL COMMITMENT FOR NEXT WEEK?

WHO KNOWS THE TRUTH ABOUT HOW I AM DOING?

ONE SENTENCE I WILL CARRY INTO NEXT WEEK

Thirty ready-to-use sentences.

Use scripts to lower the temperature. Copy, adapt, send only when necessary. A script is not a courtroom speech.

SCRIPT BANK

Scripts 1–3

TO HER – NO NIGHT CONVERSATION

I am not able to discuss the relationship productively tonight. Please send any urgent practical information here. I will respond to non-urgent matters tomorrow.

TO HER – CHILD LOGISTICS

I will keep this thread for child logistics. Please send times, locations, school items, medical information, and urgent changes here.

TO HER – ENDING AN ARGUMENT

This is no longer practical or productive. I am going to stop here and respond to logistics at the next scheduled time.

SCRIPT BANK

Scripts 4–6

TO HER – INFORMATION GATE

I am willing to discuss information that changes health, children, money, legal issues, or a structured decision. I am not going to ask for details that only create more harm.

TO HER – SHARED PROPERTY

Please list the items and proposed time in writing. I will not discuss the relationship during the exchange.

TO HER – BOUNDARY WITHOUT PUNISHMENT

I am not using this boundary to punish you. I am using it because contact is currently making me less stable.

SCRIPT BANK

Scripts 7–9

TO CHILDREN – BASIC MESSAGE

Mom and Dad are having adult problems. This is not your fault. You do not have to choose between us. We will tell you what changes when we know.

TO CHILDREN – NO ADULT CASE FILE

That is an adult issue. You do not have to carry it. What you need to know is what changes for you this week.

TO CHILDREN – REASSURANCE

You are allowed to love both parents. My feelings are not your job.

SCRIPT BANK

Scripts 10–12

TO EMPLOYER – MINIMAL

I am dealing with an acute family matter. I am safe, but my concentration is temporarily affected. I want to confirm the three priorities that cannot move.

TO EMPLOYER – FLEXIBILITY

I may need short-term flexibility while I stabilize a family situation. I can still protect these specific outcomes.

TO COWORKER

I am under pressure outside work. Could you give a second check to this one task before it goes out?

SCRIPT BANK

Scripts 13–15

TO FRIEND — CHECK-IN

I am not looking for advice tonight. I need a check-in and help not sending a message.

TO FRIEND — PRACTICAL HELP

Can you help me with one practical task today: food, documents, or getting out of the apartment?

TO FAMILY

I will explain more later. For now, please do not contact her or post anything. I need calm support.

SCRIPT BANK

Scripts 16–18

TO LAWYER

I need to understand deadlines, what not to change, and how to protect children, housing, accounts, and communication in this state.

TO BANK/CARD ISSUER

I need to understand the account status, authorized users, joint-holder rules, payment obligations, and identity-theft or fraud steps available to me.

TO DOCTOR

Since the separation, sleep/appetite/anxiety has changed enough that I need medical advice and a safe plan.

SCRIPT BANK

Scripts 19–21

TO THERAPIST

I need help with acute relationship loss, rumination, contact boundaries, and functioning at work and home.

TO MEDIATOR/PROFESSIONAL

I want communication structured around logistics and decisions, not emotional escalation.

TO MUTUAL FRIENDS

I am not asking you to take sides. Please do not carry messages between us.

SCRIPT BANK

Scripts 22–24

TO SOCIAL MEDIA

No post is required. Silence protects future options.

TO YOURSELF – URGE

This urge is real. It is not an instruction.

TO YOURSELF – LONELINESS

Loneliness is not evidence that the wrong decision is the right one.

SCRIPT BANK

Scripts 25–27

TO YOURSELF – CHECKING

Checking gives me a hit of certainty and a delayed cost. I choose the lower-cost replacement.

TO YOURSELF – ANGER

I will lower the heat before I decide what the anger means.

TO YOURSELF – RELAPSE

A relapse is data. The next safe action starts now.

SCRIPT BANK

Scripts 28–30

TO NEW DATE

I am separated/recently out of a serious relationship and taking this slowly. I do not want to use dating as anesthesia.

TO FORMER PARTNER — RECONCILIATION FRAME

I will not make a decision about rebuilding from panic. If we discuss it, it needs truth, accountability, boundaries, and professional structure.

TO FORMER PARTNER — PAUSE

I am pausing this conversation. If there is urgent child or safety information, send it in writing. Otherwise I will respond later.

Rebuild

Build roles, people, body, home, and fatherhood that do not depend on her answer.

Weeks 7-10: longing, accountability, identity, support, body, and child-safe routines.

- Tools 22-28: longing, accountability, identity, support, body, and children. Child tools run from Day 1 when needed.

NO REVENGE. NO RED PILL. NO THERAPY-SPEAK. FUNCTION FIRST.

Use the tool that matches the next decision. Do not turn the whole phase into a self-improvement performance.

Longing Versus Evidence

Honor what you miss without letting it decide for you.

WHEN AND WHY

Longing may be for her, the children under one roof, the house, sex, status, routine, financial security, or the future you expected. Those losses do not automatically answer whether the current relationship is safe, mutual, honest, and workable.

EXAMPLE

Ben writes that he misses bedtime with the children, not the actual pattern of secrecy and panic. That distinction changes the decision.

RUN THE TOOL

- List exactly what you miss.
- Record current evidence, not old promises.
- Name the need beneath the urge.
- Meet one part of that need without contacting her.

Use the worksheet for one real situation, not a theory.

Longing Versus Evidence

Date: _____ Time: _____

WHAT I MISS

CURRENT EVIDENCE ABOUT SAFETY, HONESTY, MUTUALITY, AND CHANGE

THE NEED BENEATH THE URGE

WHICH LOSS IS NOT SOLVED BY CONTACTING HER?

HOW I MEET PART OF THAT NEED TODAY

The Responsibility Map

Own your part without erasing hers or inventing false symmetry.

WHEN AND WHY

A mature account can hold several truths at once. You may have been betrayed and still have neglected the relationship. You may have caused serious harm and still have a right to grieve. Keep separate categories separate.

EXAMPLE

Andre writes what he did, what she did, what was shared, and what cannot be blurred. The repair he chooses does not require her to return.

RUN THE TOOL

- Use concrete verbs.
- Keep separate responsibility separate.
- Do not average away violence or coercion.
- Choose one change that can begin without her.

Use the worksheet for one real situation, not a theory.

The Responsibility Map

Date: _____ Time: _____

WHAT I DID

WHAT SHE DID

THE SHARED DYNAMIC

WHAT MUST NOT BE BLURRED

REPAIR OR STRUCTURAL CHANGE THAT DOES NOT REQUIRE HER COOPERATION

The Identity Map

Build a self larger than the role you lost.

WHEN AND WHY

The end of a long relationship can change your social role, home, fatherhood routine, friendships, finances, and imagined future. Do not answer “Who am I?” with one grand statement. Map roles and test behavior.

EXAMPLE

David lists roles that remain, a neglected role as a friend, and a two-week experiment: one Sunday meal with an old friend.

RUN THE TOOL

- Map changed and remaining roles.
- Recover one neglected role.
- Choose one value.
- Run a two-week behavioral experiment.

Use the worksheet for one real situation, not a theory.

The Identity Map

Date: _____ Time: _____

ROLES LOST OR CHANGED

ROLES REMAINING

ROLES NEGLECTED

ROLES TO EXPLORE

VALUES BENEATH THE ROLES

TWO-WEEK IDENTITY EXPERIMENT

The Support Architecture

Create recurring connection instead of waiting until you are in crisis.

WHEN AND WHY

One friend cannot carry safety, practical help, emotional processing, ordinary life, and professional advice. Build several points of support, including a recurring activity and one contribution.

EXAMPLE

Marcus schedules a weekly dinner with Daniel, books therapy intake, and returns to a Sunday group activity.

RUN THE TOOL

- Fill each support role.
- Schedule one weekly contact.
- Join one recurring activity.
- Choose one form of contribution.

Use the worksheet for one real situation, not a theory.

The Support Architecture

Date: _____ Time: _____

CRISIS CONTACT

PRACTICAL CONTACT

EMOTIONAL CONTACT

PROFESSIONAL

RECURRING ACTIVITY

CONTRIBUTION

WEEKLY CONTACT ALREADY SCHEDULED

GROUP OR ACTIVITY ALREADY SCHEDULED

The Body Covenant

Use the body to carry recovery, not to perform revenge.

WHEN AND WHY

Training, food, sleep, and medical care can restore structure and capacity. They can also become punishment, proof, or a message aimed at her. Sign a ninety-day covenant: no starving, overtraining, risky substances, or training for confrontation.

EXAMPLE

Marcus loses twenty pounds quickly and calls it discipline. The covenant reframes food and training as function, not revenge.

RUN THE TOOL

- Write a two-week minimum plan.
- Set food, sleep, and movement floors.
- Name behaviors you will not use.
- Book medical help for concerning symptoms.

Use the worksheet for one real situation, not a theory.

The Body Covenant

Date: _____ Time: _____

FOOD FLOOR FOR THE NEXT TWO WEEKS

SLEEP FLOOR

MOVEMENT PLAN

BEHAVIORS I WILL NOT USE AS REVENGE OR PUNISHMENT

MEDICAL ACTION IF REQUIRED

SIGNED / DATE

The Child-Safe Communication Plan

Give children truth they can carry without the adult case file.

WHEN AND WHY

Children need simple, age-appropriate information about what changes, repeated reassurance that the breakup is not their fault, and permission to love both parents. They do not need sexual details, financial accusations, legal strategy, or jobs as spies.

EXAMPLE

Ben says: “Mom and Dad are having adult problems. This is not your fault. You do not have to choose between us.”

RUN THE TOOL

- Write the message.
- List changes the child must know now.
- List topics adults handle elsewhere.
- Name support if the child struggles.

Use the worksheet for one real situation, not a theory.

The Child-Safe Communication Plan

Date: _____ Time: _____

MESSAGE THE CHILD CAN CARRY

WHAT CHANGES NOW

WHAT I WILL NOT TELL OR ASK THE CHILD

ROUTINES I PROTECT

SUPPORT IF THE CHILD STRUGGLES

The Child Exchange Plan

Make exchanges predictable, short, and child-centered.

WHEN AND WHY

Child exchanges can become emotional ambushes. A plan protects the child from adult conflict and protects you from using the exchange to seek information or closeness.

EXAMPLE

Ben confirms time, place, school items, and the first thirty minutes after drop-off before the exchange begins.

RUN THE TOOL

- Set time, place, and items.
- Keep the conversation practical.
- Plan the first thirty minutes after the exchange.
- Do not ask the child adult questions.

Use the worksheet for one real situation, not a theory.

The Child Exchange Plan

Date: _____ Time: _____

TIME, PLACE, ITEMS, AND INFORMATION PREPARED

MAXIMUM PRACTICAL CONVERSATION

THIRD PARTY OR NEUTRAL PLACE IF REQUIRED

MY FIRST THIRTY MINUTES AFTER THE EXCHANGE

ADULT CONTACT AFTER THE EXCHANGE

QUESTIONS I WILL NOT ASK THE CHILD

Build Brotherhood by Design

Score the last seven days by behavior. A lower score is not failure; it is information.

Area	0	1	2	Score
Safety	unsafe	partial	safe plan	
Sleep	none	uneven	usable	
Food/basic care	absent	partial	regular	
Work/money	unprotected	minimum	protected	
Contact/checking	impulsive	mixed	protocol	
People	isolated	sporadic	planned	
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Direction	reacting	some action	building	

LOWEST AREA AND NEXT PROTECTIVE ACTION

What happened. What changes next.

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WHICH BEHAVIOR CREATED THE GREATEST DELAYED COST?

WHAT TRIGGER IS APPROACHING?

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WHICH DECISION OR CONVERSATION BELONGS WITH A PROFESSIONAL?

WHAT IS THE SMALLEST MEANINGFUL COMMITMENT FOR NEXT WEEK?

WHO KNOWS THE TRUTH ABOUT HOW I AM DOING?

ONE SENTENCE I WILL CARRY INTO NEXT WEEK

Reclaim the Body Without Recruiting It Into Revenge

Score the last seven days by behavior. A lower score is not failure; it is information.

Area	0	1	2	Score
Safety	unsafe	partial	safe plan	
Sleep	none	uneven	usable	
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WHO KNOWS THE TRUTH ABOUT HOW I AM DOING?

ONE SENTENCE I WILL CARRY INTO NEXT WEEK

Review Money, Work, and the Adult Future

Score the last seven days by behavior. A lower score is not failure; it is information.

Area	0	1	2	Score
Safety	unsafe	partial	safe plan	
Sleep	none	uneven	usable	
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Work/money	unprotected	minimum	protected	
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WHO KNOWS THE TRUTH ABOUT HOW I AM DOING?

ONE SENTENCE I WILL CARRY INTO NEXT WEEK

Practice the Future Before Declaring It

Score the last seven days by behavior. A lower score is not failure; it is information.

Area	0	1	2	Score
Safety	unsafe	partial	safe plan	
Sleep	none	uneven	usable	
Food/basic care	absent	partial	regular	
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Decide

Decide from evidence: relationship, dating, relapse plan, and the next ninety days.

Weeks 11-13: discernment, future practice, and relapse preparation.

- Tools 29-31: relationship decision, dating readiness, relapse planning, Day 90, and next ninety days.

NO REVENGE. NO RED PILL. NO THERAPY-SPEAK. FUNCTION FIRST.

Use the tool that matches the next decision. Do not turn the whole phase into a self-improvement performance.

PHASE NOTES

Prepare for Decide

Use this page to preload the next block before the first worksheet. The following writing pages are set on right-hand pages for easier handwriting in print.

ONE THING THIS PHASE MUST PROTECT

THE TRIGGER MOST LIKELY TO SHOW UP

THE PERSON OR PROFESSIONAL I MAY NEED

The Relationship Decision Grid

Decide from evidence, not from the need to stop pain.

WHEN AND WHY

Reconciliation, separation, and divorce decisions require more than longing. This grid looks at safety, truth, responsibility, change, mutuality, compatibility beyond crisis, children, professional help, costs of staying, and costs of leaving.

EXAMPLE

Ben sees real accountability but no compatibility beyond crisis. That is not a verdict by itself; it is evidence he cannot ignore.

RUN THE TOOL

- Score each area 0-2.
- Write evidence, not hopes.
- Name what must change.
- Discuss the result with the appropriate professional if stakes are high.

Write the evidence first. Decide only what the page can support.

The Relationship Decision Grid

Date: _____ Time: _____

Area	Score	Evidence / what must change
Safety	0 1 2	
Truth	0 1 2	
Responsibility	0 1 2	
Changed behavior	0 1 2	
Mutuality	0 1 2	
Compatibility beyond crisis	0 1 2	
Children / family impact	0 1 2	
Professional support	0 1 2	
Cost of staying	0 1 2	
Cost of leaving	0 1 2	

THE AREA THAT CANNOT BE SKIPPED

WHAT MUST CHANGE BEFORE A DECISION IS RELIABLE

The Dating Readiness Check

Do not ask a new woman to prove the last one was wrong about you.

WHEN AND WHY

Dating can be honest exploration or anesthesia. You do not need perfect healing. You do need enough honesty, boundaries, and stability not to use another person as medication.

EXAMPLE

Marcus delays the app because he wants a date to make her jealous. He chooses a support call and a Saturday plan instead.

RUN THE TOOL

- Name the job dating is meant to perform.
- Write the material truth the other person should know.
- Set app, alcohol, time, and child boundaries.
- Choose whether to pause or proceed.

Write the evidence first. Decide only what the page can support.

The Dating Readiness Check

Date: _____ Time: _____

THE JOB I WANT DATING TO PERFORM

MATERIAL TRUTH THE OTHER PERSON MUST KNOW

MY APP, ALCOHOL, AND TIME BOUNDARIES

CHILDREN / INTRODUCTION BOUNDARY IF APPLICABLE

DECISION: PAUSE / PROCEED SLOWLY / GET SUPPORT FIRST

The Day 90 and Relapse Plan

Day 90 is a checkpoint, not a cure.

WHEN AND WHY

Pain may still appear, especially at birthdays, holidays, legal letters, new relationships, or child exchanges. The question is whether you have a safer response ready.

EXAMPLE

David knows the first holiday alone will trigger checking. He preloads a plan with a friend, a meal, and no social media after 8 p.m.

RUN THE TOOL

- Record function at Day 90.
- List predictable triggers.
- Name the likely response and high-risk behavior.
- Write the person, boundary, and plan already in place.
- Complete the full Day 90 Review and Next Ninety Days pages.

Write the evidence first. Decide only what the page can support.

The Day 90 and Relapse Plan

Date: _____ Time: _____

FUNCTION AT DAY 90

PREDICTABLE TRIGGER / LIKELY RESPONSE / HIGH-RISK BEHAVIOR

PERSON, BOUNDARY, AND PLAN ALREADY IN PLACE

FULL DAY 90 REVIEW AND NEXT NINETY DAYS

See the Day 90 Review and Next Ninety Days section near the end of this workbook.

Decide Whether Discernment Is Possible

Score the last seven days by behavior. A lower score is not failure; it is information.

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WHO KNOWS THE TRUTH ABOUT HOW I AM DOING?

ONE SENTENCE I WILL CARRY INTO NEXT WEEK

Assess Dating Without Using Another Person as Medicine

Score the last seven days by behavior. A lower score is not failure; it is information.

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ONE SENTENCE I WILL CARRY INTO NEXT WEEK

Build the Relapse Plan and the Next Ninety Days

Score the last seven days by behavior. A lower score is not failure; it is information.

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WHICH DECISION OR CONVERSATION BELONGS WITH A PROFESSIONAL?

WHAT IS THE SMALLEST MEANINGFUL COMMITMENT FOR NEXT WEEK?

WHO KNOWS THE TRUTH ABOUT HOW I AM DOING?

ONE SENTENCE I WILL CARRY INTO NEXT WEEK

DAY 90 REVIEW

What is more reliable now?

Do not measure only pain. Measure behavior, protection, people, and decisions.

SAFETY AND HEALTH

SLEEP AND BASIC CARE

WORK AND MONEY

CONTACT AND CHECKING

FATHERHOOD AND FAMILY

HOME AND FRIENDSHIP

IDENTITY AND DIRECTION

RELATIONSHIP DECISION

Keep the structure that worked.

THREE BEHAVIORS I KEEP

ONE BEHAVIOR I STOP FEEDING

THREE DATES OR TRIGGERS I PRELOAD

PEOPLE AND PROFESSIONALS WHO REMAIN ACTIVE

HOME, WORK, AND MONEY PRIORITIES

FATHERHOOD AND FAMILY PRIORITIES

BODY AND HEALTH PRIORITIES

ONE EXPERIMENT THAT EXPANDS MY LIFE

Prepare before the trigger arrives.

Triggers do not become safer because you are surprised by them. Preload the first move.

Trigger	First move	Support / boundary
First weekend alone		
First night without the children		
A child mentions a new adult		
You see a photograph		
New relationship news		
Anniversary		
Birthday or holiday		
Legal letter		
Court or mediation day		
Sale of the family home		
Packing her things		
Empty home after exchange		
Unexpected warm message		
Unexpected hostile message		
Reconciliation begins/ends		
Sex with former partner		
First date		
Checking relapse		
Drank again / sent the message		

Escalate support when the plan is not enough.

TRIGGER THAT OVERRODE THE PLAN

BEHAVIOR THAT CREATED DELAYED COST

WHO NOW NEEDS TO KNOW?

PROFESSIONAL OR EMERGENCY SUPPORT REQUIRED

WHEN THIS WORKBOOK IS NOT ENOUGH

Use immediate help for suicidal thoughts, threats, stalking, violence, inability to sleep or eat, heavy substance use, hallucinations, mania, chest pain, fainting, or any situation where children or adults are unsafe.

CONTINUE WITH THE SYSTEM

Use the main book when you need the full explanation.

This workbook is designed to stand alone. The main book adds the full operating system behind the pages.

- The four composite stories — Ben, Marcus, David, and Andre — in full context.
- Sixty-three communication scripts, including more child, work, support, and contact examples.
- Full research notes and the editorial integrity statement.
- Appendix G for the person supporting a man through the first ninety days.
- A deeper explanation of the AFTER Method and the Relief Trap.

NEXT STEP

Continue with the main book under the exact title: The Day After She Left: A 90-Day Breakup Recovery Plan for Men.

Resources and Practical Sources

988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline: call or text 988, or use 988lifeline.org.

Immediate danger: call 911 or go to the nearest emergency department.

National Domestic Violence Hotline: 1-800-799-SAFE and thehotline.org.

Local practical help: 211.org can help locate local food, housing, utility, and community resources in many U.S. areas.

Credit reports: AnnualCreditReport.com is the official federally authorized site for free credit reports.

Credit freezes: use the official pages for [Equifax](https://equifax.com), [Experian](https://experian.com), and [TransUnion](https://transunion.com).

Family-law preparation: state court self-help pages, local bar associations, and licensed family-law attorneys are the proper sources for local procedure.

What this workbook is built on

This workbook is research-informed and practice-oriented. The tools are not clinical tests and have not been validated as a ninety-day treatment program. They translate findings from relationship dissolution, suicidality, contact with former partners, rumination, anger, exercise, alcohol risk, sleep, and family functioning into practical worksheets.

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- O'Hara, K. L., Grinberg, A. M., Tackman, A. M., Mehl, M. R., & Sbarra, D. A. (2020). Contact With an Ex-Partner Is Associated With Psychological Distress After Marital Separation. *Clinical Psychological Science*, 8(3), 450–463.
- Sbarra, D. A., Boals, A., Mason, A. E., Larson, G. M., & Mehl, M. R. (2013). Expressive Writing Can Impede Emotional Recovery Following Marital Separation. *Clinical Psychological Science*, 1(2), 120–134.
- Kjærvik, S. L., & Bushman, B. J. (2024). A meta-analytic review of anger management activities that increase or decrease arousal: What fuels or douses rage? *Clinical Psychology Review*, 109, 102414.
- Noetel, M., et al. (2024). Effect of exercise for depression: systematic review and network meta-analysis of randomised controlled trials. *BMJ*, 384, e075847.
- Salvatore, J. E., Larsson Lönn, S., Sundquist, J., Lichtenstein, P., Sundquist, K., & Kendler, K. S. (2017). Alcohol use disorder and divorce: evidence for a genetic correlation in a population-based Swedish sample. *Addiction*, 112(4), 586–593.
- Ongoing relationship-dissolution and family-transition research supports the central distinction between pain, contact, rumination, and functional recovery; the workbook uses conservative language where evidence is correlational.
- The financial and legal modules are educational triage tools only. Local professional advice controls over any general workbook language.

Workbook numbers and main-book references

WB	Main	Tool
01	Tool 1	The Tonight Card
02	Tool 2	The Decision Freeze
03	Tool 4	The Two-Person Protocol
04	Tool 5	The Life Triage Map
05	Tool 7	The Urge Ladder
06	Tool 13	The Night Parking Page
07	Tool 14	The Seven-Night Sleep Record
08	Tool 15	The Minimum Viable Day
09	New	Money Triage
10	New	The Joint Account Protocol
11	New	The First Legal Consult
12	Tool 3	The Digital Perimeter
13	Tool 6	The Relief Trap Log
14	Tool 8	The Contact Protocol
15	Tool 9	The Twenty-Minute Message Filter
16	Tool 10	The Information Gate

Workbook numbers and main-book references

WB	Main	Tool
17	Tool 11	Fact – Story – Question – Action
18	Tool 12	The One Lesson Rule
19	Tool 16	The Cooling Plan
20	Tool 21	The Work Protection Plan
21	Tool 22	The Home Reset
22	Tool 17	Longing Versus Evidence
23	Tool 18	The Responsibility Map
24	Tool 23	The Identity Map
25	Tool 24	The Support Architecture
26	Tool 25	The Body Covenant
27	Tool 19	The Child-Safe Communication Plan
28	Tool 20	The Child Exchange Plan
29	Tool 26	The Relationship Decision Grid
30	Tool 27	The Dating Readiness Check
31	Tool 28	The Day 90 and Relapse Plan

ABOUT

About the Author

Adam Sergeant writes practical systems for people facing high-pressure personal decisions. His work is built around one premise: when life is unstable, people need clear tools, safer defaults, and words they can actually use under pressure.

He is not presenting this workbook as therapy, medical care, legal advice, or financial advice. The workbook is designed to be reviewed with appropriate professionals where the facts require it.

Also available: *The Day After She Left: A 90-Day Breakup Recovery Plan for Men*.

REVIEW + NEXT SAFE ACTION

Help the next man find it.

If this workbook helped you get through one night, protect one decision, send one safer message, or remain more reliable to your children, a short review helps the next man find it before he makes the worst hour worse.

THE NEXT SAFE ACTION

THE TIME

THE PERSON WHO KNOWS

WHAT THIS ACTION PROTECTS