

Stay Because You Choose To

You decided to stay. Okay. You want this relationship, you want to make it work, and you want to be happy in it.

This chapter is not about secretly preparing to leave. It is not about living with one foot out the door. It is about making sure you are still standing on your own two feet while you stay.



*Keep some independence.
Not because you are
planning an escape.
Because independence
feels good.*

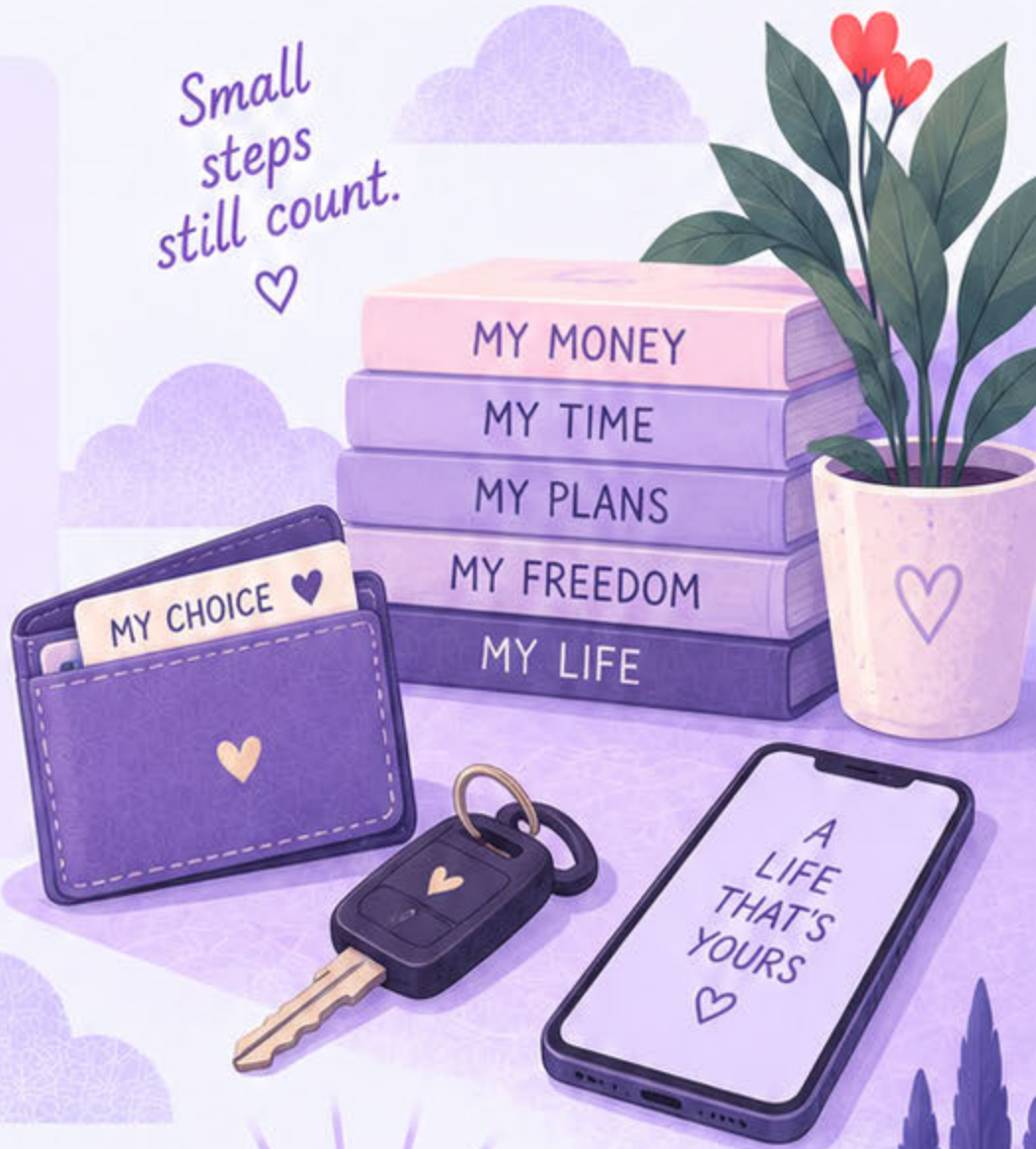
- ♥ Have your own bank account if you can.
- ♥ Have some money that is yours.
- ♥ Keep your friends.
- ♥ Keep people around you who support you.



Keep Some Independence

- ♥ Have a job or some form of your own income if that is possible for you.
- ♥ Have your own way to get around.
- ♥ Keep parts of your life that are still completely yours.

Small steps still count.
♥



You may not have every single one of these things. That is fine. This is not another list you need to be perfect at. Just keep as much of your own life, identity, money, support, and freedom as realistically possible.



**STAY BECAUSE YOU
CHOOSE TO STAY, NOT
BECAUSE YOU HAVE NO CHOICE.**



That Feeling Changes Everything

When you know you have your own money, your own people, your own identity, your own way of getting around, and the ability to stand on your own feet, something changes inside you. You breathe differently. You feel less trapped. Every fight does not feel like your entire life is hanging in the balance.

And that can actually make you happier while you stay. You are not clinging to the relationship because you have nowhere else to stand. You are there because you want to be there. That is a completely different feeling.

This Is Not a Backup Plan

I really want you to get this part. Independence is not an exit strategy. It is part of having a life that still belongs to you. You can love him, choose him, build a life with him, and still know that you are your own person.



*Keep your life.
Keep your independence.
Keep the choice in
your own hands.*

