

A FREE INDEED COMPANION

Walking It Out

The free companion pack for
Done with This Cycle

The eight extended workbooks, the thirty-day challenge, and a discussion guide for the people who live with you.

Suzanne D. Burns

suzannedburns.com

A note before you start

The book walks you through the Restoration Roadmap once. This pack is for the second time through, and the third, which is when it actually takes.

Two things in here are worth saying out loud. The workbooks go deeper than the chapter exercises did, and they are designed to be answered in writing rather than in your head, because your head will let you off the hook and a blank line will not.

And the Family Discussion Guide at the back is for the people around you. A cycle is never one person's, and the person trying to break one inside a family that has not changed is carrying twice the weight. Eight sessions, one an evening, no expertise required to lead it.

Suzanne

About the audio and the video

If you are holding an older printed copy, it promised eight audio prayers and a video testimony series as well.

The audio is still being recorded. When it is finished it will appear on this same page and I will email you. The videos I decided against, and I want to tell you why rather than let them quietly disappear. Putting a recovering mother's face on a permanent public playlist is a risk she carries for the rest of her life and I carry none of. Part Four is what replaced them: five stories, in writing, protected the way they should have been in the first place.

Part One: The Eight Extended Workbooks

Work one step a week, not one a day. The Roadmap is not information you are trying to absorb. It is ground you are trying to hold, and holding ground takes longer than reading about it.

Each step has the same four parts: where you are, the questions, the practice, and the verse to carry.

Step 1: Understanding the Trap

Where you are

You are learning to see the loop from outside it. Trigger, relief, crash, shame, hiding, repeat. Most people have never once drawn their own cycle on paper, and seeing it drawn is the first thing that weakens it.

The questions

1. Draw your loop. Trigger, what you reach for, what it gives you, what it costs, what you tell yourself afterward. Use the whole page if you need it.

2. What does the thing actually do for you? Not what it costs. What it delivers. Nobody keeps a habit that gives them nothing.

3. Which of the twelve reasons for self-sabotage in Chapter 1 is most true of you right now, and why that one?

4. Where did you first learn that this was how a person gets relief? Who taught it, even without meaning to?

The practice this week

For seven days, write down every time the trigger fires, whether or not you act on it. Time, place, feeling, what happened just before. Do not try to change anything this week. You are gathering evidence, not fighting.

The verse to carry

"So the Lord God said to the serpent... I will put enmity between you and the woman." Genesis 3:14-15

Date I finished this step:

Step 2: The Root of Shame

Where you are

Shame is the fuel. Guilt says you did something bad. Shame says you are something bad, and a person who believes that has no reason to protect themselves.

The questions

1. Write the sentence shame says to you. The actual words, in the actual voice. Most people find it is someone else's voice.

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2. Who taught you that sentence? You do not have to forgive them on this line. Just name them.

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3. What is the thing you would be most afraid for a safe person to know? You do not have to write it here. Write only whether you have ever told anyone.

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4. Where does this shame show up in your family, in people who never did the thing you did?

The practice this week

Tell one safe person one true thing this week. Not everything. One thing. Shame dies in the light and survives indefinitely in the dark, and the size of what you confess matters far less than the fact that you said it to a face.

The verse to carry

| *"Those who look to him are radiant; their faces are never covered with shame." Psalm 34:5*

Date I finished this step:

Step 3: Renewing the Mind

Where you are

The mind is where the cycle is argued and won or lost. You are replacing the soil, not pulling one weed.

The questions

1. List the five lies you hear most often. Write them as they actually sound, not as you would tidy them up.

2. Next to each one, write the truth that contradicts it and where you found it.

3. Which lie have you believed the longest?

4. Which one would be hardest to give up, and what would you lose if it were not true?

The practice this week

Speak all five truths out loud every morning for thirty days. Out loud, not read silently. There is a reason Scripture keeps saying declare. You will feel ridiculous for about nine days and then something shifts.

The verse to carry

"Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind." Romans 12:2

Date I finished this step:

Step 4: The Power of the Cross

Where you are

This is the legal step, and it is the one people skip because it feels abstract. It is not. It is the difference between fighting for a victory and standing on one.

The questions

1. What do you still feel you owe? To God, to a person, to yourself?

2. What agreements have you made that you have never revoked? Vows, oaths, sentences that started with I will never or I will always.

3. Who do you need to forgive, including yourself?

4. What pattern runs in your family that you have accepted as simply how we are?

The practice this week

Write the renunciation out and pray it out loud, by name, over each item above. Then date the page and keep it. On the day the accusation comes back, and it will, you hold a dated document saying it was already dealt with.

The verse to carry

"Having canceled the charge of our legal indebtedness... he has taken it away, nailing it to the cross." Colossians 2:14

Date I finished this step:

Step 5: Walking in the Spirit

Where you are

Daily tactics. This is the least glamorous step and the one that decides whether any of the rest holds.

The questions

1. Map your three strongest triggers. When, where, who, and what feeling comes first.

2. For each one, what will you do in the first sixty seconds? Write the actual action, not a principle.

3. What boundary have you known you needed to set and have not set? What has it cost you to avoid that conversation?

4. What are you going to do instead? A craving that has no replacement is a vacuum, and vacuums fill themselves.

The practice this week

Practice one replacement this week, deliberately, before you need it. Rehearsed responses hold under pressure. Improvised ones do not.

The verse to carry

| *"Walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh."* **Galatians 5:16**

Date I finished this step:

Step 6: Healing the Wounds

Where you are

Underneath the cycle there is almost always an injury. Not an excuse. An injury. You can manage behavior without touching it, but you cannot be free while it is still bleeding.

The questions

1. Name the wound. One sentence. What happened, and how old were you.

2. What did you decide about yourself because of it?

3. What did you decide about God because of it?

4. What would you say to a child that age who told you the same thing happened to them?

The practice this week

This is the step to do with somebody. A counselor, a pastor, a trained lay minister. Not because the work is beyond you, but because wounds heal better witnessed. If cost is the barrier, ask your church. Many have funds nobody advertises.

The verse to carry

| *"He heals the brokenhearted and binds up their wounds."* **Psalm 147:3**

Date I finished this step:

Step 7: Guarding Your Freedom

Where you are

You are moving from barely holding on to actually growing. Most relapses happen here, in the quiet, when things are going well and the guard comes down.

The questions

1. What are your personal red flags? Body, soul, spirit. Be specific enough that someone else could spot them.

2. Who is allowed to tell you when they see one? Have you actually given them permission, in words?

3. What does your week look like when you are doing well? Write the rhythm, then compare it to this week.

4. Where are you still rescuing or being rescued in a way that keeps the cycle fed?

The practice this week

Give one person this list of red flags and permission to name them out loud. That conversation is uncomfortable for about four minutes and it is worth years.

The verse to carry

| *"Above all else, guard your heart, for everything you do flows from it." Proverbs 4:23*

Date I finished this step:

Step 8: Living Free

Where you are

Identity. You stop being someone managing a problem and start being someone with a life that has a problem in its history.

The questions

1. Write the label you have worn. Then write it again with the word was in front of it.

2. What are you for? Not what you are recovering from. What is the thing you would do if the cycle were fully behind you?

3. Who is one step behind you on this road?

4. What part of your story is safe to tell now, and who needs to hear it?

The practice this week

Do the mirror practice from Chapter 8 daily for a month. Then tell one person one piece of your story. Freedom that stays private tends not to stay.

The verse to carry

"Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here!" 2 Corinthians 5:17

Date I finished this step:

Part Two: The 30-Day Freedom Challenge

The book gave you the first seven days. Here are all thirty, with the body, soul and spirit check-in beside each one, because the whole Roadmap rests on the idea that freedom is not only a soul problem.

Rate each of the three from 1 to 5 at the end of the day. One is struggling, five is strong. It takes fifteen seconds and it is the part that turns a list of assignments into a picture of a month.

If you miss a day, do that day next. Do not start over and do not double up. Starting over is how shame gets back in through the side door.

Day	The assignment	Body	Soul	Spirit
1	Draw your cycle on one page.			
2	Name what the thing actually gives you.			
3	Write the sentence shame says, in its own words.			
4	Tell one safe person one true thing.			
5	List five lies. Leave the truths blank for now.			
6	Find one verse for each lie.			
7	Rest. Read back over the week.			
8	Speak all five truths out loud before you speak to anyone else.			
9	Write what you still feel you owe.			
10	Renounce one agreement out loud and date it.			
11	Forgive one person out loud, alone.			
12	Forgive yourself the same way, out loud.			
13	Map your strongest trigger.			
14	Rest. Notice what rest does to you.			
15	Write your sixty-second plan for that trigger.			
16	Use the plan. Tell someone whether it worked.			
17	Set one boundary. One sentence, kindly.			
18	Fast one meal and pray for the person your cycle has cost the most.			
19	Name one wound and how old you were.			
20	Write what you would say to a child that age.			
21	Rest.			
22	Write your red flags. Body, soul, spirit.			

Day	The assignment	Body	Soul	Spirit
23	Give the list to one person and give them permission.			
24	Write what your week looks like when you are well.			
25	Compare it honestly to this week.			
26	Write your label with the word was in front of it.			
27	Write what you are for.			
28	Rest. Take stock of the month.			
29	Name one person one step behind you.			
30	Tell one person one piece of your story.			

The weekly progress tracker

Sunday night, five minutes. Average your three numbers for the week, then answer the two questions. The averages matter less than the direction they move in.

Week	Body avg	Soul avg	Spirit avg	What moved	What I am carrying into next week
1					
2					
3					
4					

Family conversation prompts, one per week

If anyone is walking this alongside you, use one of these at a meal. They are deliberately small. A cycle does not get discussed into the open in one sitting and it does not need to be.

- Week one. What is one thing about this month you would like me to understand?
- Week two. What have you been carrying that you have not told anyone?
- Week three. What do you need from me that you have stopped asking for?
- Week four. What has changed, and what has not changed yet?

At the end of thirty days, what is different:

Part Three: The Family Discussion Guide

Eight sessions for the people who live with this alongside you. A spouse, a parent, adult children, a small group, or two friends at a kitchen table. No expertise required to lead it. Whoever is reading the questions is the leader.

Four rules, read aloud at the start of session one

1. What is said here stays here. No exceptions and no reporting back to relatives.
2. Nobody fixes anybody. You are here to understand, not to solve.
3. Anyone can pass on any question without explaining why.
4. One hour, and you stop on time even if it is going well. Ending on time is what makes people come back.

Each session takes about an hour: read the passage, answer the three questions around the circle, and pray the closing line together.

Session 1: The loop we are all in

Read Romans 7:15-20 together.

Icebreaker: everyone names one thing they did this week that they meant not to do. Keep it small and keep it light. A burnt dinner counts.

1. What does the cycle look like from where you sit? Not what you think it looks like from the inside.
From your chair.
2. When did you first notice it?
3. What have you been doing to cope that nobody has asked you about?

Activity: each person draws the loop as they see it, on their own paper, without looking at anybody else's. Then compare. The differences are the conversation.

Close together: Lord, show each of us our own part of this, not just each other's. Amen.

Session 2: The shame nobody names

Read Psalm 32:3-5 together.

Icebreaker: name one thing your family is good at. Start there on purpose, because tonight is the heaviest session.

1. What have we not said out loud in this family?
2. What do you carry that you think is yours alone?
3. What would change if it were said?

Activity: everyone writes one sentence on a slip of paper, unsigned, naming something carried in secret. Read them aloud unattributed, then burn them or tear them up together.

Close together: Father, bring what is hidden into the light gently, and keep us kind while it comes. Amen.

Session 3: What we tell ourselves

Read Romans 12:2 together.

Icebreaker: what is the family saying, the phrase somebody in this family always says? Every family has one.

1. What is the story this family tells about itself?
2. Which part of it is not true?
3. What would a truer sentence be?

Activity: write the old sentence on one side of a card and the truer one on the other. Put it on the refrigerator with the true side out.

Close together: Lord, renew how we think about ourselves and about each other. Amen.

Session 4: Forgiveness, and what it is not

Read Colossians 3:13 together.

Icebreaker: name a time somebody let something go for you. It does not have to be big.

1. What does forgiveness mean here, and what does it not mean?
2. What are you still owed?
3. What would it cost you to release it, and what is it costing you to hold it?

Activity: each person writes one thing they are releasing, privately. Nobody reads them out. Keep them until session eight.

Close together: Jesus, You forgave from the cross before anyone apologized. Teach us how. Amen.

Session 5: Boundaries are not punishment

Read Proverbs 4:23 together.

Icebreaker: what is one rule in this house that actually works, and why does it work?

1. Where has helping become rescuing?
2. What boundary would actually help, rather than only protect?
3. What are you afraid will happen if you set it?

Activity: write one boundary as a single kind sentence, then say it out loud to the person it concerns, in the room, tonight.

Close together: Father, give us the wisdom to know love from control. Amen.

Session 6: The wound under it

Read Psalm 34:18 together.

Icebreaker: pass on the icebreaker tonight. Start with two minutes of quiet instead.

1. What happened to this family that we have never really discussed?
2. Who was youngest when it happened?
3. What would care look like now, this late?

Activity: each person says one sentence to the youngest person in the story, whether or not they are in the room. Say it out loud anyway.

Close together: Lord, You are close to the brokenhearted. Be close to this room. Amen.

Session 7: Warning signs and what we do

Read Galatians 6:2 together.

Icebreaker: what is your personal tell when you are not doing well? The thing you do that somebody else might notice first.

1. What are the signs that things are sliding, for each of us?
2. Who is allowed to say so out loud?
3. What do we agree to do in the first week, not the first crisis?

Activity: write the agreement down, all of it, and everyone signs it. Put it somewhere you will all see it.

Close together: Holy Spirit, make us quick to notice and slow to panic. Amen.

Session 8: What we are for

Read Jeremiah 29:11 together.

Icebreaker: what is one thing you are looking forward to?

1. What do we want this family to be known for in five years?
2. What is one thing we will change starting this week?
3. What do we want to thank God for tonight?

Activity: bring out the slips from session four and get rid of them together. Then eat something good. End this on a table, not in a circle of chairs.

Close together: Father, thank You for what You have already done here. Finish it. Amen.

Part Four: Five Women Who Walked It

Read this first

These five are composites. Every one of them is built from more than one life, every identifying detail has been changed, and no woman here is a person you could find. That is deliberate and it is permanent.

I have spent two decades with women whose stories were told without their permission, usually by people who meant well. I am not adding to that. What is true in these pages is the shape of the thing, and the shape is what you came for.

If you are somewhere in the middle of the Roadmap and it is not working yet, these are for you. Not because the endings are tidy. Two of them are not.

The one who was already clean

Step 1, Understanding the Trap

She had eleven months when she came to us, and she could not understand why she felt worse than she had at four.

Nobody had told her that clean and free are two different things. The substance was gone and everything the substance had been covering was still there, on schedule, at the same hour every evening. She had swapped one ritual for four: scrolling, a bag of candy after her daughter went down, a phone call to a man she knew better than to call, and the particular way she cleaned the kitchen when she was angry.

The night it turned, she drew the loop on the back of an envelope while I sat there. Trigger, reach, relief, crash, hide, repeat. Then she looked at it for a long time and said, I have never once seen it written down.

She had been fighting a thing she could not see the shape of. That is most of the first step. Not willpower. Eyesight.

The one who could not say it out loud

Step 2, The Root of Shame

She had been in the house four months before anyone learned what she had done, and it was not what any of us had guessed.

It was small. That is the part I want you to hear. It was a small, ordinary, entirely forgivable thing from nine years earlier, and she had built a whole architecture of hiding around it, and the architecture had cost her more than the thing ever did.

Shame is not proportional. It does not scale to the size of what happened. It scales to how long it has been kept.

When she finally said it, out loud, to one person, in a kitchen, she cried for about ninety seconds and then said, that is it? That is the whole thing I have been carrying?

Yes. That was the whole thing.

The one who kept relapsing on a Tuesday

Step 5, Walking in the Spirit

Four times in seven months, and every single one on a Tuesday afternoon.

She thought it meant something was wrong with her. It meant her daughter had a supervised visit on Tuesday mornings and she had ninety minutes afterward with nothing in them and nobody in the room.

We did not treat the craving. We treated the ninety minutes. She started walking to the library straight from the visit, and she texted one person from the steps outside before she went in, every week, whether or not she wanted to.

That is the whole intervention. It is not spiritual enough to preach and it worked.

She is four years out now. She still walks to the library on Tuesdays, and she still texts from the steps.

The one whose mother never changed

Step 6, Healing the Wounds

I want one story in here that does not end the way you want it to.

She did the work. All of it, honestly, for two years. She named the wound, she forgave her mother out loud in a room with two witnesses, and she meant it.

Her mother did not change. Her mother is not going to change. There was no phone call, no apology, no scene at a kitchen table where it all came right.

What changed was that she stopped organizing her life around waiting for it.

Forgiveness is not a transaction with another person. It is something you do about what you are carrying, and it works whether or not the other party ever participates. She is raising two children who will not inherit this, and she did that without ever getting the thing she was owed.

That is not a consolation prize. That is the harder version of the miracle.

The one who went back

Step 7, Guarding Your Freedom

She graduated. She had an apartment, a job she liked, her son back, eighteen months.

Then her grandmother died, and she was on a couch in the old neighborhood inside a week.

Here is why she is in this book. She called. Nine days in, at two in the morning, she called the house and said the sentence she had promised herself she would say, which was I am not okay and I have not been for nine days.

Nine days is not a failure. Nine days is a woman using the one tool that matters, at the worst moment of her life, when every instinct she had was telling her to disappear instead.

She is back out now. She would tell you her freedom did not survive her grandmother's funeral. I would tell you it obviously did, because the thing that saved her was something she built before she needed it.

Build it before you need it. That is the entire seventh step.

If you are the woman in one of these, you are not. I promise you that. You are one of a great many, which is the most hopeful sentence in this entire pack.

Before you close this

These pages are yours. Print them, write on them, lose them and print them again. Give them to somebody who needs them more than you do. There is no license and no catch.

Read this next

Soul Fight Club.

You broke it. Holding it is a different skill and it is a daily one. Soul Fight Club is about the tug of war that starts the morning after the cycle ends, and how the Holy Spirit takes the rope.

The rest of the Free Indeed books

- Fear to Faith. Biblical tools for overcoming anxiety and walking in lasting freedom.
- Done with This Cycle. Break old patterns of addiction, bad habits and heartache.
- Soul Fight Club. Win the tug of war for your soul.
- The Fast That Breaks Chains. Practical biblical fasting for real-life miracles.
- Turning Toward Freedom. From arranged faith to a daily love match.

If you carry this work for other people as well as yourself, in a church, a shelter, a recovery ministry or a home, the other half of my books was written for you. Start with Rescue, Rebuild, Restore.

Where to find everything

Every free companion pack, the What's in the House devotional, and whatever I publish next lives at suzannedburns.com/cycle and at suzannedburns.com.

At least a tithe of the author royalties from the Free Indeed books goes to Foundation House Ministries. Foundation House is my own ministry, and it is a maternity home for pregnant and parenting mothers in crisis. Your reading paid for something real before you ever finished this page.