

A WORKBOOK FOR WOMEN

# Finding Your *Way Back*

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A trauma-informed, psychology-based guide to making clear decisions after betrayal, disappointment, and loss of direction.

"You didn't lose your dream. You just need to find your way back to it - in the right place, at the right time."

## This Is Your Story

Maybe you made a clear decision. You believed in it. You put your hope, your trust, your whole self into it. And then - things went entirely wrong. Not because your judgment was poor. Not because you were foolish. But because somewhere in the background, decisions were being made around you, without you, against your interests. An institution. A system. A leadership that had gaps you couldn't see from where you were standing.

And now? Making any decision at all feels dangerous. Because last time you were certain - and look what happened.

### THE KEY INSIGHT

The problem was not your judgment. The problem was a gap in leadership - in the institution, the system, or the people around you. You were let down from above. That is not the same as being wrong.

This workbook is not about forgetting what happened. It's about detaching from the weight of it long enough to see clearly again - so you can make your next decision from purpose, not from pain.

***Your dream is not gone. You just need to find your way back to it.***

### HOW TO USE THIS WORKBOOK

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Work through each section slowly. There is no rush. Answer the questions honestly - not the way you think you should answer them, but the way that is actually true for you right now. You may want to use this workbook multiple times as you face different decisions.

## Seven Areas to Examine Before You Decide

When we have been through trauma, disappointment, or betrayal, our decisions get made from the wrong place - from pain, from self-protection, from fear of repeating the past. This framework helps you slow down and examine each area so your next decision comes from clarity.

### STEP 01 List Your Options

Write down every possible direction - even the ones that seem unlikely. When we're in confusion, we often can't see our options clearly. Getting them on paper is the first act of clarity.

### STEP 02 Discover the Meanings

What does each option mean to you? Is it escape from pain - or movement toward purpose? These are very different motivations, and they lead to very different futures.

### STEP 03 Name the Outcomes & Consequences

What are the real outcomes of each path? Not just what you hope - but what the likely consequences are. Be honest. Both directions have a cost.

### STEP 04 Check Your Intentions & Agenda

Why do you really want this option? What is driving you underneath the surface? What are the variables you haven't named yet?

### STEP 05 Uncover the Excuses & Stories

What are the reasons you haven't moved yet? "I trusted before and it didn't work." "I asked for help and no one came." These are your blockages - the stories that protect you from disappointment but also keep you stuck.

### STEP 06 Recognise What's Past Experience vs. Present Reality

Which of your fears are based on what happened then - and which ones are real signals about right now? Trauma conflates the past and the present. Separating them is the work.

### STEP 07 Decide from Purpose, Not Pain

Once you have examined all of the above - what does your original dream tell you? Not what's easiest. Not what's safest. What was on your heart before the hurt got loud?

## List Your Options

Start here. Write down every option in front of you - even the ones that feel impossible or unlikely right now. When we're stuck, we often convince ourselves there are only one or two paths. There are always more.

What are all the possible directions I could take right now?

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Which option am I most drawn to - and which am I most afraid of?

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Is there an option I've been dismissing without fully examining? What is it?

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## Discover the Meanings

This is where most decision-making frameworks stop short. It's not just about what the options are - it's about what they mean to you. A decision made to escape pain leads somewhere very different from a decision made to move toward purpose.

For each option, what does choosing it mean to me? Write one meaning per option.

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Am I moving TOWARD something - or AWAY from something? Which is driving me more?

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If I remove the pain from this situation entirely, what would I still want?

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## Name the Outcomes & Consequences

Not just what you hope will happen - but what will realistically happen. Every decision has consequences in both directions. Naming them honestly is not pessimism. It is wisdom.

If I choose Option A, what is the likely outcome in 3 months? In 1 year?

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What are the consequences I've been avoiding thinking about?

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Which consequences am I willing to live with? Which are non-negotiable?

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## Check Your Intentions & Agenda

Be honest with yourself here. What is actually driving this decision? What do you want to prove, protect, or preserve? There is no wrong answer - but there is an honest one.

What are my true intentions in making this decision?

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What is my hidden agenda - the thing I haven't said out loud?

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What variables am I not accounting for? What am I choosing to ignore?

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What is driving me - and is that driver aligned with my values and purpose?

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## Uncover the Excuses & Stories

These are the reasons why it hasn't happened yet. They feel like facts, but they're often stories we tell ourselves to avoid the risk of disappointment again. Name them. They lose power when they're written down.

What are the excuses I've been using? The stories you've been replaying. ("I can't because...", "It's not the right time because...", "Last time I tried...")

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Which of these is a genuine obstacle - and which is a fear dressed up as a reason?

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What would I do if I knew I could not fail?

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## Separate Past Experience from Present Reality

Trauma teaches us to expect the past to repeat. But the gap in leadership that betrayed you then is not necessarily present in every institution, relationship, or opportunity now. Learning to tell the difference is one of the most powerful skills you can develop.

What happened in the past that I am carrying into this decision?

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Is that same dynamic present right now - or am I projecting it onto a new situation?

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What are the actual signs of healthy leadership or trustworthy people in this new context?

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## Decide from Purpose, Not Pain

You've done the work. Now return to what was on your heart before the hurt got loud. Your dream didn't die. It may need a different vessel, a different place, a different time. But it is still yours.

What was the original dream or purpose behind this decision?

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Is that dream still alive in me? Where do I feel it?

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What is one step I can take this week that moves me toward that purpose?

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My commitment to myself is:

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## You Found Your Way Back

The decision you are facing right now is not the same as the one that hurt you. You are not the same woman who went through that. You have healed, you have grown, and you have done the honest work of examining what is really driving you.

The dream that was on your heart before all of this - it is still there. It may look different now. It may find a different home. But it belongs to you. It always has. And no institution, no betrayal, no gap in someone else's leadership can take what was placed inside you.

"You didn't get this far by giving up. You got this far by surviving, healing, and still believing that something better is possible. Now it's time to lead."

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This workbook is part of the Heart & Soul Worx™ coaching program at Dream Again Coaching. If you'd like support working through this process with a coach, reach out at [enquiries@dreamagaincoaching.com](mailto:enquiries@dreamagaincoaching.com)

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