

ROT.

EAT.

MOVE.

*For the In Between Chapter
of Burnout & Action*



by Mel Tru

*For the girl who left with
nothing*



& needed a method that
let her rot, let her eat, let her move,
when her bones said it was time.

You don't need to figure it all out

You just need a safe place to breathe.

This is your companion guide- a place to pause, soften, and begin again.

Three small steps: **Rot. Eat. Move.** Enough to carry you from survival back into strength.

Prompt: *What's one small thing you can do today to remind yourself you're still here?*

The Girl Who Gave Herself Permission to Rot

*This is the rhythm you return to when
everything else stops working.*

Not because you're broken.

Not because you failed.

Because there are moments- maybe this is one of them-
where you can't push through anymore.

Where everything hurts and nothing makes sense.

Rot.

Let it die. Let it unravel.

Let it fall apart.

You're not failing. *You're composting.*

Eat.

Feed the fire that's still flickering.

Even if it's toast. Even if it's tea.

Even if you're crying on the kitchen floor.

This is a ritual.

A quiet act of coming back to yourself.

MOVE.

When the energy stirs, follow it.

Move like you remember who you are.

****You'll come back to this again. And that's the point.**

This isn't the ladder- it's a cycle.

A sanctuary. A soft place to return.

If you stopped
pretending to be okay,
what would collapse
first?

Put it on the page before it eats you from the inside.

Step 1: *Rot*

(*Yes, This is Necessary*)

Go where the light can't reach. That's
where the truest things take root.

Why Rotting is a Sacred Step:

Your body knew before your mind did—this wasn't safe anymore.
Rotting is not weakness. It's the system shutting down so you can
come back alive.

You can't bloom while you're still bracing.
You can't rise while you're still bleeding.

If wild things rest after the storm, so can you.

What's Normal After a Breakdown:

- Feeling hollow, heavy, or like nothing at all
- Crying in waves—or not crying at all
- Questioning everything you thought you knew
- Grieving the girl who always held it together
- Needing stillness like it's oxygen
- Forgetting things. Zoning out. Googling what day it is.
- Needing silence like it's oxygen

What NOT to Do:

- Don't text your ex. Not even once.
- Don't make a permanent choice from temporary pain.
 - Don't force a smile to make others comfortable.
 - Don't power through—this is not that season.
 - Don't rush the ruin. It's doing something holy.
- Don't treat the quiet like failure. It's a beginning.

Checklist:

How to Rot Responsibly

*Because the girl who held it all together deserves
to fall apart with care.*

Set a Timeframe

Give yourself a limit. 24–48 hours where survival is enough.
You don't owe the world progress. You owe yourself pause.

Make a Nest

Blankets, dim lights, background noise.

Let the space soften around you. Make it safe to come undone.

Wear what comforts you. Cry into something that won't flinch.

Stock the Bare Minimums

Water. Easy food. Tissues. Something warm to hold.

Dehydration isn't a spiritual lesson—drink the damn water.

Choose a Rotation

- Cry
- Journal
- Watch the same show for the fifth time
- Stare at the ceiling and let it ache

You don't need to be productive. You just need to be present.

Be Gentle with the Narrative

If your mind starts spiraling, interrupt it with truth:

“This is a cycle, not a collapse.”

“This is part of healing, not proof I'm broken.”

“I am allowed to rest without apology.”



Protect the Quiet

Turn off the world. Put up the away message.

Not everything needs to be answered right now—not even yourself.

[Note] This is not laziness, this is survival.

You wouldn't yell at a bear for hibernating.

What are you pretending
doesn't hurt anymore—
but still bleeds
when you're alone?

Write it down.

Let it sting.

Step 2: *Eat*

(Even If You Don't Want To)

This is not about nutrition. This is about staying.

When your body's been bracing too long, food stops making sense.

Everything feels too heavy. But you are still human.

Still sacred.

Still here.

And she needs to eat.

What Counts Right Now:

- Beige, soft, silent food (toast, crackers, plain noodles)
- Cold and easy things (apple slices, cheese, yogurt)
- That sad little freezer meal you meant to save for a worse day
 - Food that takes under two minutes
 - Snacks that don't need a plate, a plan, or a reason
 - Pick your favorite food and put it on repeat.
(Yes—even if it's dumb. Even if it's childish.
Even if it's just plain bread with butter.)

Whatever your body says yes to- let that be enough.

Checklist: How to Eat Without Spiraling

- Don't try to "eat clean." Just eat.
- Pick one thing and commit to one bite. That's enough.
- No guilt. You don't owe anyone "health" right now.
- Drink something with it—even if it's just water.
- Say "this is keeping me alive" out loud if it helps.
- You can cry while you eat. That's allowed here.

What part of you
still believes you
have to earn the
right to be fed?

Trace it.

Name it.

Burn the contract.

Step 3: *Move*

(*Barely. Slowly. Just Enough.*)

*You don't have to reinvent yourself overnight.
You just have to move **a little**.*

When you're in survival mode, movement isn't about "fitness"-
it's about proving to your brain that you still exist.

Start Soft:

- **Get out of bed and change your shirt**

(Even if it's just swapping one hoodie for another. *Rituals matter.*)

- **Walk to the kitchen. Open the fridge. Close it.**

(Congrats, you moved. Now eat something.)

- **Eat something with protein.**

(Coffee is not breakfast. I checked.)

- **Open a window.** Let the air hit your face.

(You're an indoor cat remembering the sun exists.)

- **Touch grass. Literally.**

(Or just step outside for 30 seconds
and pretend you're a woman in a music video.)

Reminder: If you do nothing else today, pick one thing from this list
and *repeat* it tomorrow.

Routines aren't about discipline - they're about telling your brain,
'Hey, we do this now.'

Start small.'

Checklist: *How to Start Moving*

(Without Overthinking It)

*aka, how to trick your brain into functioning
when you'd rather melt into the floor*

The '1-Minute Rule' Hack:

(If it takes less than a minute, do it now.

Stand up. Stretch. Take one deep breath.)

-This isn't a full commitment. It's a soft reset.

Romanticize The Hell Out of Tiny Actions.

Drink your coffee like it's a potion.

Tie your hair up like you're about to ruin someone's life.

-Moving feels easier when it has main character energy.

Lie to Yourself If You Have To:

(Tell yourself you're 'just standing up for a second.' Then walk to the next room. Trickery works.)

-Manipulate your brain before it manipulates you.

The 5-Second Rule for 'Ugh' Tasks:

(Count down from 5 and move before your brain realizes
what's happening.)

-It works on toddlers, it works on you.

Set a Timer & Just Exist Near the Task

(Stand next to the sink before washing the dishes.

Sit on the yoga mat before stretching.)

-Proximity = Momentum

[Note] You don't have to move your whole life forward.

Just your body. Barely. Slowly. Enough.

What have you been
calling “lazy”
that’s actually grief?

What have you shamed yourself for
not doing- that
your body was too wise to force?

Write it. Name it.

Step 4:

Trick Your Brain Into Functioning Again

*Your brain is stubborn. It will believe what
you repeatedly tell it.*

CHECKLIST:

Gentle Ways to Rewire Your Brain Out of Panic Mode

-**Stop** doomscrolling first thing in the morning.

Your brain wasn't built for that much garbage before breakfast.

-**Move** for 5 minutes

Dance, stretch, lay on the floor dramatically- it still counts.

-**Change** your environment

Sit outside. Drive somewhere quiet. Aggressively decorate.)

-**Drink** an absurd amount of water

You're not actually tired, you're chronically dehydrated.

-**Write** down 'proof' that you've survived worse.

Read it back. Then say out loud, "Still here."

-**Complete** a small, satisfying task.

Respond to an email. Make the bed.

Tiny momentum rewires belief.

-**Wear** a 'functional human' disguise.

Get dressed, even if you're going nowhere it tricks your brain.

-**Find** one low-stakes, slightly ridiculous hobby.

Crochet, candle-making, rage journaling.

Write the script.
Then rewrite the ending.

Your brain believes what it hears the most-
what are you ready to say louder?

Step 5: Soft-Launch Your Comeback

You've been in survival mode long enough.

It's time for a *soft* comeback-no pressure, no perfection, just a little re-entry into life.

Aesthetic Emphasis

Picture this: you, staring dramatically out the window with a playlist that screams 'main character energy.'

A comeback doesn't have to be loud-sometimes, it's just about shifting the energy. Small, cinematic, intentional.

Small Ways to Soft-Launch

- Go outside wearing something that makes you feel like *her* (even if you're only going to the grocery store)
- Post something that makes you feel seen (a song lyric, a moody pic, an 'I'm still standing' moment)
- Romanticize a routine task (clean your room with a candlelit glow-up vibe)
- Go somewhere new alone (coffee shop, bookstore, park.

Soft Rebuild Checklist

- One tiny habit that signals 'I take care of myself' (drink water, stretch, set a bedtime)
- One 'outside' moment per day (because fresh air is free medicine)
- One commitment to yourself (start a hobby, set a boundary, write something down)

[Note] Your soft comeback doesn't have to be perfect- it just has to be yours.

Who would you be if
you stopped
auditioning for your
own life?

Write like she already exists.

You're not coming back.

You're becoming.

Step 6:

Try Not to Self-Sabotage

You're doing great-so don't let self-sabotage pull you back into the mess.

Watch for the warning signs.

The “Oh No, I’m Spiraling” Checklist

- If you suddenly want to text him-STOP.
(Drink water, phone a friend, touch grass.)
- If you're craving chaos-pause.
(Boredom isn't a crisis-it's a sign of healing.)
- If you feel 'all or nothing' thinking creeping in-breathe.
(It's okay to rebuild slowly.)
- If you start romanticizing the past-replay the *full* memory.
(Not just the highlight reel.)



[Warning] Signs You're About to Self-Sabotage

- You suddenly want to 'check in' on someone toxic
- You're telling yourself 'I'll start fresh Monday' (aka, procrastination)
- You feel the urge to burn it all down-relationships, progress, habits
- You convince yourself that 'just one little spiral' won't hurt

[Stop] Emergency Self-Sabotage Prevention Plan

- **Pause.** Give yourself 24 hours before acting on an impulse.
- **Tell someone.**
A friend, a journal, a voice memo-just don't keep it in your head.
- **Redirect the chaos.**
Clean a drawer. Go for a drive. Dance dramatically in your kitchen.
- **Remind yourself of the pattern.**
(You know how this ends-choose differently.)

What do you keep
destroying the
moment it starts to
feel good?

Who taught you love had to hurt?

That success had to cost?

Or peace had to be earned?

You Made It *(Sort Of)*

Look at you—
Still standing, still soft, still trying.

That's not weakness. That's resilience.

This wasn't about doing it perfectly.
It was about surviving the wreckage,
pulling yourself out piece by piece
and building something new.

Where You Go From Here

- Keep building. (Small habits, small wins—they stack up.)
- Expect setbacks. (One spiral does not erase progress.)
- Romanticize your effort. (Healing is just a series of main character moments.)

FINAL WORDS

You're not starting over.
You're starting from experience.

And that changes everything.

What would it look
like to live like you've
already survived?

Write as if you trust yourself now.

Not the girl who was breaking-
but the woman who returned.