



Tiny Buddha's

Best You, Best Life

TOOLKIT

Tiny Steps to Shift Out of Survival Mode

A Workbook for Stress, Burnout, and Emotional Fatigue

Dear You,

If you're reading this, you might feel like you've been holding your breath through life—running on autopilot, doing what needs to get done, but feeling disconnected from yourself, others, and anything that brings joy or meaning.

Maybe you're burnt out. Maybe you've been holding it together for far too long. Maybe you've even forgotten what "okay" feels like.

That's survival mode. And it isn't a personal failure. It's a natural response to sustained stress, trauma, or emotional exhaustion. But you don't have to stay there forever.

This workbook is a gentle invitation to come home to yourself.

You don't have to push harder. You don't have to "fix" everything. You just have to pause for a moment. Breathe. Notice where you are. And give yourself permission to soften—right here, right now.



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Reflection Questions

Take a few moments to journal or simply sit with these questions:

1. What does survival mode look and feel like for you right now?
2. What do you tend to ignore or override when you're in this state?
3. What are your personal warning signs that you're close to burnout?
4. What's one thing you need right now that you're not allowing yourself to receive?
5. When was the last time you felt calm or okay? What was different about that moment?
6. Who or what helps you feel safe, seen, or grounded?
7. What do you want more of in your life—emotionally, physically, spiritually?
8. What would you need to do or stop doing to bring more of this into your daily life, and what kind of boundaries or support might help with this?
9. What's one belief about yourself or your worth that survival mode reinforces?
10. What's one truth you want to start believing instead—and what's one small way you could live like it's true today?

by Lori Deschene, Tiny Buddha founder, tinybuddha.com/bundle



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Gentle Tools to Shift Out of Survival Mode

1. The 5% Shift

Ask yourself: What would 5% more care look like right now?

Not 100%. Not a total transformation. Just one micro-step toward relief.

- Drink a glass of water.
- Move your body for two minutes.
- Cancel one thing.
- Say "no" once.

2. Name + Normalize

When you catch yourself spiraling or shutting down, say:

"I'm in survival mode right now. That's okay. I'm doing what I know to do."

Naming your state brings in compassion. Survival mode is a nervous system response—not a moral failing.

3. Self-Soothe in 30 Seconds

Place your hand on your chest or cheek. Take a slow breath. Say:

"This is hard. I am doing my best."

"I am safe in this moment."

"I am allowed to slow down."

Repeat as needed. This can calm your stress response more than you'd expect.



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Gentle Tools to Shift Out of Survival Mode

(cont'd)

4. The "Still Standing" List

Write down 3-5 hard things you've made it through. Any size.

Then reflect: How did I survive that? What got me through? What did I learn about myself?

Remind yourself: You're still standing. That means something.

Survival mode convinces us we're powerless. This list is a reminder that you've been strong before—and you still carry that strength now.

5. Create a "Soft Spot" Ritual

Designate 5-10 minutes a day for a tiny ritual that brings softness:

- Light a candle and breathe
- Listen to one comforting song
- Sit with tea and no phone
- Step outside and feel the air on your skin

This is not a reward for productivity. It's a basic emotional need.



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5 Permission Slips for the Days You're Just Getting Through

- 1. I give myself permission to rest, even if I feel behind.**
- 2. I give myself permission to not have all the answers.**
- 3. I give myself permission to do less and still be enough.**
- 4. I give myself permission to ask for help, even if I don't know exactly what I need.**
- 5. I give myself permission to be exactly where I am—with compassion, not criticism.**

Pause for a moment.

How are you feeling after reading/reflecting on all of this? What do you need right now—mentally, emotionally, and physically? Checking in with yourself and honoring your needs is a powerful step toward relief when you've been living in survival mode for too long.



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Want to Go Deeper?

If you've been living in survival mode for too long and want real, trauma-informed support to begin your healing, check out these two powerful resources from trauma-certified psychotherapist Janice Holland:

Beyond Survival

A transformational workshop to help you understand how trauma keeps you stuck—and how to gently move forward with clarity and courage.

The Courageous Living Membership

An ongoing space for deep healing, emotional resilience, and nervous system repair—without spiritual bypassing or toxic positivity.

You don't have to figure it all out alone. You don't have to keep pushing through. These tools are here to support your next step, whatever that looks like.

Want Both of These Tools in One Place?

Get both Janice's offerings (and much more) in the Best You, Best Life Bundle. If you're ready for deeper support, the Best You, Best Life bundle includes 14+ powerful tools to help you reduce stress, heal from the past, improve your relationships, and more.

You'll get:

- Janice Holland's Beyond Survival workshop
- Two months in her Courageous Living membership
- Powerful eCourses such as Ditch the Food Drama, Secrets of Happy Couples, and The Basics of Mindfulness Meditation
- A 21-day email series to help you find light and laughter when life feels heavy (from me!)

And other powerful online tools designed to support your growth and healing. Through Tuesday, May 21st, you can get all these tools for the price of one—95% off.

[Click here to explore the full bundle](#)