

What Comes After Survival?

A guided worksheet for moving from protection toward participation

How to use this worksheet

Work through this slowly. You do not need to complete it in one sitting. Choose an experience or period that feels manageable, pause if you become overwhelmed, and use support when needed.

1. What helped me survive?

Begin by recognising the people, routines, boundaries, and coping strategies that helped you get through a difficult period.

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|---|---|
| ☐ Support from family or friends | ☐ Therapy or treatment |
| ☐ Recovery meetings or peer support | ☐ Medication as prescribed |
| ☐ Daily structure or routines | ☐ Work or practical responsibilities |
| ☐ Exercise, sleep, or regular meals | ☐ Spiritual or cultural practices |
| ☐ Avoiding certain people, places, or situations | ☐ Other |

What helped me most, and how did it help?

Which supports still protect me in a healthy way?

2. What protected me then - and what may limit me now?

A strategy can be understandable and useful at one stage, then become restrictive later. The goal is not to judge it, but to notice whether it still fits.

Strategy or response	How it helped me	How it may limit me now
Isolation	Reduced conflict or overwhelm	Keeps me disconnected
Strict control	Created predictability	Makes change feel unsafe
Avoidance	Reduced immediate distress	Keeps my life small
Staying constantly busy	Kept difficult feelings away	Makes rest or reflection difficult

Add only the strategies that feel relevant to you. A strategy does not have to be wrong for it to have become too small for the life you now want.

3. What do I want to protect?

Growth should build outward from stability, not dismantle it. Mark the foundations you want to continue protecting.

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|---|--|
| ☐ Safety | ☐ Recovery or sobriety |
| ☐ Sleep | ☐ Medication or treatment |
| ☐ Supportive relationships | ☐ Physical health |
| ☐ Daily routines | ☐ Financial stability |
| ☐ Boundaries | ☐ Time for rest |
| ☐ Other | |

The foundations I most need to protect are:

4. What do I want more of?

Rate each area from 0 to 10, where 0 means almost absent and 10 means present as much as you currently want.

Area	Current (0-10)	What one point higher might look like
Connection	—	
Calm	—	
Choice	—	
Health	—	
Learning	—	
Creativity	—	
Meaningful work	—	
Contribution	—	
Rest	—	
Enjoyment	—	
Belonging	—	
Purpose	—	

Which area would make the greatest difference to an ordinary week?

5. Moving toward, not only away

Complete the table by naming what you want to move away from and the positive direction you want to move toward.

I am trying to move away from...	I want to move toward...
Isolation	Honest connection
Relapse or crisis	A stable and meaningful life
Constant anxiety	Greater trust in myself
Harmful relationships	Mutual and respectful relationships

6. One small expansion

Choose one action that is small enough to complete and meaningful enough to matter. Think of it as an experiment, not a test of your worth.

The direction I want to explore:

Why this matters to me:

One manageable action:

When and where I will do it:

Who could support me:

What might get in the way:

How I will adjust if the first plan does not work:

My commitment

One way I am ready to move from protection toward participation is:

7. Review after trying the step

Return to these questions after you have tried the action. The aim is to learn and adjust, not to grade yourself.

What did I notice?

Did the action create interest, connection, calm, usefulness, belonging, or meaning?

Was the step manageable?

What helped me follow through?

What got in the way?

What would I repeat, reduce, or change next time?

8. My next chapter

Survival kept the story going. This section helps you name what you want to begin building next.

An old identity or role that no longer tells my whole story is:

A quality or value I want to carry forward is:

Something I want more of in my ordinary life is:

A person, group, or place where I could belong or participate is:

The next small step I want to practise is:

Remember

Growth does not mean constant expansion. Sometimes it means doing more. Sometimes it means resting, asking for help, setting a boundary, maintaining what already works, or returning after a difficult day.

A note about support

If getting through the day feels unsafe, or you are having thoughts of harming yourself or someone else, focus on immediate support rather than personal-growth exercises. Contact local emergency services, an appropriate crisis service, or a trusted qualified professional. Jenora is not a crisis service and is not a substitute for professional mental health care, crisis intervention, or emergency support.