

Important Safety Information

This workbook is intended as a supportive educational resource.

It is not a substitute for psychotherapy, medical care, crisis intervention, or emergency services.

If you are experiencing thoughts of harming yourself or others, are unable to maintain your safety, or are experiencing a mental health emergency, please seek immediate assistance.

Emergency resources include:

- Call or text 988 (Suicide & Crisis Lifeline)
- Call 911 or your local emergency services
- Go to the nearest emergency room
- Contact your therapist, psychiatrist, physician, or crisis support provider

Please use this workbook within your personal limits.

If an exercise feels overwhelming, stop and return to a Lighthouse Practice focused on orientation, grounding, or support.

Healing does not require pushing beyond your capacity.

Going slowly is often the fastest way forward.

Please remember:

You do not have to do this alone.

Support is available.

Chapter 4: Listening to Sensation

The Wisdom of the Body

Many of us have learned to live primarily in our thoughts.

When something difficult happens, we often try to think our way through it, analyze it, explain it, or solve it.

While insight can be valuable, healing often involves more than understanding.

It also involves learning to listen.

Your body is constantly communicating through sensations.

These sensations are not problems to solve. They are information.

The body often notices things before the thinking mind does.

When we learn to pay attention to sensation with curiosity rather than judgment, we begin building a different relationship with ourselves.

The goal is not to change what you feel.

The goal is to become aware of what is already here.

What Is a Sensation?

A sensation is something you physically experience in your body.

Sensations are different from thoughts and emotions.

For example:

Thought:

"I can't handle this."

Emotion:

Fear

Sensation:

Tightness in my chest

Thought:

"Something bad is going to happen."

Emotion:

Anxiety

Sensation:

Butterflies in my stomach

Thought:

"I feel alone."

Emotion:

Sadness

Sensation:

Heaviness behind my eyes

Learning to identify sensations helps create space between what we feel and the stories we tell ourselves about what we feel.

 Lighthouse Practice

Pause and Notice

Take a moment to stop reading.

Close your eyes if that feels comfortable.

Notice your body.

Without changing anything, ask:

What do I notice right now?

Where do I notice it?

Is the sensation:

- ☐ Warm
 - ☐ Cool
 - ☐ Tight
 - ☐ Loose
 - ☐ Heavy
 - ☐ Light
 - ☐ Tingling
 - ☐ Numb
 - ☐ Moving
 - ☐ Still
 - ☐ Expanding
 - ☐ Contracting
 - ☐ Other _____
-

Sensation Mapping

Imagine your body as a map.

You are not trying to fix anything.

You are simply becoming aware of what is present.

Head and Face

What do I notice?

Neck and Shoulders

What do I notice?

Chest and Heart Area

What do I notice?

Abdomen and Stomach

What do I notice?

Arms and Hands

What do I notice?

Hips and Pelvis

What do I notice?

Legs and Feet

What do I notice?

Following Instead of Fixing

Many of us immediately want uncomfortable sensations to go away.

What happens if we become curious instead?

Choose one sensation that feels manageable to notice.

Not the most intense sensation.

Not the most overwhelming sensation.

Just one sensation you can stay with comfortably.

What sensation did I choose?

Where is it located?

Does it have a shape?

Does it have a size?

Does it have a texture?

Does it have a color?

Does it stay the same or change?

Tracking Change

One of the most important things to remember:

Sensations are rarely static.

When we slow down and observe, we often notice subtle shifts.

Choose a sensation and observe it for one minute.

What happens as I pay attention?

Does it become stronger?

☐ Yes

☐ No

Does it become softer?

☐ Yes

☐ No

Does it move?

☐ Yes

☐ No

Does something else emerge?

☐ Yes

☐ No

If yes, what?

 Lighthouse Practice

Pendulation

Pendulation is the practice of gently moving awareness between something difficult and something supportive.

Begin by noticing a mildly uncomfortable sensation.

Write what you notice:

Now shift your attention to something that feels neutral, pleasant, or supportive.

This might be:

- Your feet on the floor

- A blanket
- A chair
- Your breath
- A pet nearby
- A memory of a safe place

What did you choose?

Now gently move your awareness back and forth between the two experiences.

Notice what happens.

What did I observe?

What Is My Body Trying to Tell Me?

Sometimes sensations carry information.

Not a message you must decode.

Not a mystery you must solve.

Simply information.

If this sensation could speak, what might it say?

What might it need?

A Moment of Appreciation

Take a moment to place a hand on your body wherever that feels supportive.

Notice the sensation beneath your hand.

Consider this possibility:

My body has been working hard on my behalf for a very long time.

Even when I have not understood it.

Even when I have felt frustrated by it.

Even when I have wished it would do something different.

My body has been trying to help me survive.

Take a breath and notice what happens when you read those words.

Resource Check

What feels supportive right now?

What feels neutral?

What feels difficult?

Is there anything that feels even 1% easier than when I began this chapter?

Before Moving On

Your body does not need to be fixed.

It needs to be heard.

Each time you pause and listen to sensation with curiosity, you strengthen your ability to stay connected to yourself.

You are learning a new language.

The language of your own experience.

When you are ready, continue to Chapter 5: Regulation Practices.

Chapter 5: Regulation Practices

Returning to Stability

There may be times when your nervous system feels overwhelmed, activated, disconnected, exhausted, or simply unsettled.

When this happens, it is natural to want the discomfort to stop immediately.

Regulation is not about forcing yourself to feel calm.

Regulation is about creating enough safety and support for your nervous system to become more flexible.

Some practices will work better than others.

Some days one practice may help while another does not.

That is normal.

Think of these exercises as tools rather than solutions.

You do not need to use every tool.

You only need to find the ones that support you.

Lighthouse Practice

Grounding Through the Feet

Grounding helps reconnect you with the support of the present moment.

If possible, place both feet on the floor.

Notice:

- The pressure beneath your feet
- The temperature of the floor
- The contact between your feet and the surface beneath you

Take your time.

You do not need to change anything.

Simply notice.

Reflection

What do I notice in my feet?

What happens as I bring my attention to this area?

Lighthouse Practice

Orientation Practice

Slowly look around the room.

Allow your eyes to move naturally.

Notice:

- Colors
- Shapes
- Light
- Movement
- Objects that feel familiar

You are not searching.

You are simply gathering information.

Reflection

What caught my attention?

Did I notice anything pleasant, neutral, or comforting?

 Lighthouse Practice

Self-Holding

Place one hand on your chest and one hand on your abdomen.

Alternatively, place a hand wherever your body naturally wants support.

Notice the contact of your hand against your body.

Notice the warmth.

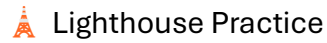
Notice the pressure.

Allow yourself to receive that support.

Reflection

What do I notice?

Does anything shift?



Constructive Rest

Constructive Rest is a gentle position that allows the body to settle and receive support.

If possible:

- Lie on your back
- Bend your knees
- Place your feet flat on the floor or bed
- Allow your arms to rest comfortably

You do not need to relax.

You do not need to meditate.

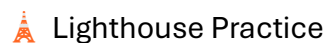
You do not need to accomplish anything.

Simply notice support.

Stay for 5–15 minutes if available.

Reflection

What did I notice while resting?



Voo Breathing

This exercise may help when you feel anxious, activated, or disconnected.

Take a comfortable breath in.

As you exhale, make a long, low "vooooo" sound.

Allow the vibration to travel through your chest, throat, and body.

Repeat several times.

There is no need to force the sound.

Allow it to be natural.

Reflection

What did I notice before the exercise?

What do I notice now?

Lighthouse Practice

Resource Tracking

A resource is anything that helps you feel even slightly more supported, connected, grounded, capable, or alive.

Resources can include:

- People
- Places
- Animals
- Memories
- Spiritual practices
- Nature
- Music
- Objects
- Activities

Take a moment to identify several resources.

My Resources

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

Which resource feels most available right now?

What happens in my body when I think about it?

 Lighthouse Practice

Pendulation

Choose one mildly uncomfortable sensation.

Notice it for a few moments.

Then shift your attention to something supportive, pleasant, or neutral.

Move back and forth slowly between the two experiences.

Allow your nervous system to discover that both experiences can exist at the same time.

Reflection

What happened when I moved between the two experiences?

Lighthouse Practice

The 60-Second Reset

If you only have one minute:

1. Place both feet on the floor.
2. Look around the room.
3. Name five things you can see.
4. Notice one thing that feels supportive.
5. Take one slow breath.
6. Feel the support beneath your body.

That is enough.

Small moments of regulation matter.

Building My Personal Regulation Toolkit

Not every practice will work equally well for every person.

Over time, begin noticing which practices support you most.

Most Helpful Practices

- ☐ Grounding Through the Feet
- ☐ Orientation
- ☐ Self-Holding
- ☐ Constructive Rest
- ☐ Voo Breathing
- ☐ Resource Tracking
- ☐ Pendulation
- ☐ Other _____

My Top Three Regulation Practices

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Signs I May Need Regulation

Signs Regulation Is Helping

When Nothing Seems to Help

There may be moments when you try several practices and still feel overwhelmed.

This does not mean you are failing.

It does not mean you are doing the exercises incorrectly.

It may simply mean your nervous system needs additional support.

When this happens:

- Return to orientation
- Reduce expectations
- Focus on small moments of support
- Reach out to trusted resources
- Follow your personal support plan
- Utilize crisis resources when necessary

Sometimes the most supportive thing we can do is stop trying so hard and allow ourselves to receive support.

Resource Check

What feels supportive right now?

What feels neutral?

What feels difficult?

Which regulation practice felt most helpful?

Is there anything that feels even 1% easier than when I began this chapter?

Before Moving On

Regulation is not a destination.

It is a relationship.

Each time you practice returning to your body, your environment, and your resources, you strengthen your capacity to meet life's challenges with greater flexibility.

You do not need to do this perfectly.

You only need to keep practicing.

When you are ready, continue to Chapter 6: When Activation Feels Too Big.

Chapter 6: When Activation Feels Too Big

When Everything Feels Like Too Much

There may be times when your nervous system feels overwhelmed.

You may feel flooded by emotion.

You may feel trapped in thoughts.

You may feel panicked, frozen, disconnected, or unable to access the tools that normally help.

This is not a failure.

This is not a sign that your healing has disappeared.

This is often a sign that your nervous system has moved beyond its current capacity to process what is happening.

When activation becomes intense, the goal is not insight.

The goal is stabilization.

You do not need to understand everything right now.

You do not need to solve the problem.

You only need to help your nervous system find enough support to get through this moment.

First Things First

When activation feels too big, begin with one simple question:

Am I Safe Right Now?

Take a moment to answer honestly.

☐ Yes

☐ No

☐ I'm Not Sure

If the answer is no, or if you are in immediate danger, stop here and follow your emergency support plan.

If the answer is yes, continue.

Your nervous system may feel unsafe.

That is different from actually being unsafe.

This distinction matters.

Lighthouse Practice

The Pause

Before doing anything else:

Stop.

Place both feet on the floor.

Look around the room.

Notice five things you can see.

Notice one thing supporting your body.

Take one breath.

Not a deep breath.

Just one breath.

That is enough.

Understanding Activation

High activation often includes:

☐ Racing thoughts

☐ Panic

☐ Fear

☐ Urgency

☐ Overwhelm

☐ Anger

- ☐ Restlessness
- ☐ Dissociation
- ☐ Numbness
- ☐ Feeling trapped
- ☐ Feeling out of control
- ☐ Difficulty thinking clearly
- ☐ Difficulty accessing tools

When activation increases, your nervous system becomes focused on survival.

This means that reasoning, insight, and problem-solving often become more difficult.

Nothing has gone wrong.

Your nervous system is doing exactly what it was designed to do.

Lighthouse Practice

The 3-Minute Stabilization Sequence

Step 1

Look around the room.

Name:

5 things you see

4 things you feel

3 things you hear

2 things you smell

1 thing you taste

Step 2

Feel your feet.

Notice:

- Pressure
- Contact
- Support

Stay here for thirty seconds.

Step 3

Find one neutral object.

A chair.

A lamp.

A wall.

A tree outside.

Allow your attention to rest there.

Step 4

Place a hand on your body.

Notice contact.

Notice support.

Stay with that experience for one minute.

Step 5

Ask yourself:

What do I need in the next ten minutes?

Not tomorrow.

Not next week.

The next ten minutes.

Write your answer.

Reducing the Size of the Problem

Activation often makes everything feel urgent.

When this happens, try narrowing your focus.

Instead of asking:

"How do I fix this?"

Ask:

"What is one small step I can take right now?"

My One Small Step

Examples:

- Drink water
- Sit outside
- Text a friend
- Eat something nourishing
- Lie down
- Walk around the block
- Practice Constructive Rest

- Listen to calming music

Small steps matter.

Lighthouse Practice

The Containment Exercise

Imagine placing the issue, memory, emotion, or concern into a container.

The container might be:

- A box
- A vault
- A chest
- A safe
- A jar
- Any image that feels supportive

The goal is not to get rid of the experience.

The goal is to temporarily set it aside.

You can return to it later.

You do not need to carry everything all at once.

Reflection

What container did I imagine?

How did that feel?

When My Thoughts Won't Stop

If your thoughts are racing:

Try completing the following sentence:

Right now, my mind is trying to help me by:

What might my nervous system actually need?

Remember:

Thoughts are often attempts to create safety.

They are not always accurate predictions.

When I Feel Frozen

If you feel shut down, numb, stuck, or disconnected:

Avoid forcing yourself into action.

Instead:

- Wiggle your fingers
- Wiggle your toes
- Turn your head slowly
- Look around the room
- Stand up and stretch
- Walk to another room
- Hold a warm drink

Focus on gentle movement.

Not big movement.

Just enough movement to remind your nervous system that you are here.

When Emotions Feel Too Big

You do not need to process everything right now.

Try asking:

Can I make room for 5% of this feeling?

Not all of it.

Just 5%.

What do I notice?

Sometimes healing begins when we stop trying to eliminate emotions and start allowing small amounts of them to exist safely.

 Lighthouse Practice

The Support Inventory

When activation is high, we often forget what supports us.

Take a moment to list available supports.

People

Places

Practices

Resources

If Nothing Is Working

If you have tried several tools and continue to feel highly activated:

Please remember:

You do not have to do this alone.

Consider:

- ☐ Contacting a trusted support person
- ☐ Following your personal support plan
- ☐ Utilizing crisis resources
- ☐ Calling 988 if needed
- ☐ Seeking immediate professional support

Asking for help is a form of strength.

Resource Check

My activation level before this chapter:

____ /10

My activation level now:

____ /10

What helped most?

What feels supportive right now?

What feels even slightly easier?

Before Moving On

There will be times when your nervous system feels overwhelmed.

That does not mean you are back at the beginning.

It does not mean you are broken.

It does not mean your healing has disappeared.

It simply means your nervous system is asking for support.

Even in your most activated moments, there are still resources available to you.

Even in difficult moments, there are still choices available to you.

Even in overwhelming moments, you can take one small step.

And sometimes one small step is enough.

When you are ready, continue to Chapter 7: Meeting Protective Parts.