

7 Small Ways to Feel More Like Yourself Again

A gentle guide for women in seasons of stress, burnout, and change.

You haven't disappeared. You're just buried under too much. Let's start here.

The Season You're In

There's a particular kind of loss that doesn't have a name — the feeling of going through the motions of your own life without really inhabiting it. Stress, burnout, grief, change, and hormonal shifts can all contribute to a quiet drifting from yourself.

You may not feel like yourself. You may not even remember exactly who that is. This guide doesn't try to fix you — because you aren't broken. It offers seven small doorways back to the version of you that's still there, waiting.

“Coming back to yourself isn't a dramatic event. It's a hundred small moments of choosing you.”

1. Name What You're Actually Feeling

Not 'fine.' Not 'tired.' What is actually true right now? Overwhelmed. Lonely. Angry. Relieved. Naming emotions with precision genuinely reduces their intensity. Try this: *'Right now I feel ____.'*

Why it helps: Naming emotions activates the prefrontal cortex and interrupts the stress response. It is one of the simplest, most evidence-backed tools available.

2. Reclaim One Small Thing That's Just Yours

What did you love before you were responsible for so much? A kind of music. A creative hobby. A long walk alone. A genre of books. Re-introducing one small thing into your week sends a powerful message: *I still matter to myself.*

Why it helps: Reclaiming identity is foundational to recovery from chronic stress and midlife transition.

3. Let Your Body Lead for 10 Minutes

Not exercise goals. Not productivity. Put on music and stretch, or sit in your garden, or take a slow bath. Let your body tell you what it needs. Women in high-stress phases often become deeply disconnected from physical sensation — this practice rebuilds that bridge.

Why it helps: Somatic awareness is a clinically supported approach to stress recovery and identity reconnection.

4. Say No to One Thing This Week

Not because you're lazy — because your bandwidth is not unlimited, and an honest 'no' is one of the bravest acts of self-respect. Start small. Decline one optional obligation and notice how your nervous system responds to that boundary.

Why it helps: Boundary-setting reduces cortisol load and restores a sense of personal agency.

5. Talk to Someone Who Sees You

Not to vent endlessly — but to be witnessed. A friend who gets it. A therapist. A community of women in similar seasons. Being truly seen is one of the most powerful regulators of the nervous system we have.

Why it helps: Social co-regulation is foundational to emotional resilience during stress and transition.

6. Reduce One Source of Noise

Identify one thing that consistently depletes you — a social media account, a news cycle, a group chat — and reduce your exposure, even slightly. Protecting your attention is protecting your energy.

Why it helps: Chronic low-grade stress inputs keep the nervous system in a sustained stress response.

7. Ask: What Would Feel Like Care Right Now?

Not what *should* you do. Not what would look good. What would actually feel like care for the woman inside you? Then do that — even if it's small, even if it's imperfect, even if no one else notices. **You will notice.**

Why it helps: Self-compassion is the foundation beneath every other healing practice.

What This Guide Is For

These seven practices were designed for women navigating:

- Burnout — emotional, physical, or both
- The invisible weight of chronic stress and caregiving
- Hormonal changes affecting mood, clarity, and energy
- Major life transitions: empty nest, career shifts, relationship changes, loss
- A quiet sense of having lost yourself beneath your responsibilities
- The exhaustion of always being 'on' for everyone else

You are allowed to come back to yourself.

Start with whichever of the seven feels most possible today. You don't have to navigate this season alone.

More support, resources, and community are available when you're ready.