

WORKSHEET 2 · CHAPTER TWO · WHEN MORTALITY BECOMES REAL

Sitting With the Reality of Mortality

You don't have to answer the question all at once. You simply have to begin to sit with it.

Most of us aren't prepared to face our mortality. I had to learn to do it slowly. A cancer diagnosis forced me to look directly at the question I spent most of my life avoiding:

What if I don't have as much time as I thought?

You don't have to answer that question all at once. You simply have to begin to sit with it.

STEP 1

Name the Fear Beneath the Fear

When you think about your diagnosis, what is the fear that sits underneath everything else?

The thing I'm most afraid of is...

Often, the deepest fear is not dying, but something connected to it — leaving people behind, losing control, or not finishing what matters most.

STEP 2

What Would It Mean?

Now gently ask yourself: if that fear were true, what would it mean?

If that happened, it would mean...

This step helps uncover what matters most to you — your relationships, your values, and the life you care deeply about.

STEP 3

What Still Matters — Right Now?

Even with that fear present, what still matters to you today?

Today, what matters most is...

One thing I still want to show up for is...

This is where fear and meaning exist together. You don't have to resolve the fear to recognize what still matters.

STEP 4

One Small Way to Live What Matters Today

You don't have to change your whole life. Just choose one small way to live in alignment with what matters.

Today, I will...

This could be a conversation, a moment of rest, a boundary you set, or simply being present with someone you love.

A Gentle Reflection

Facing mortality doesn't mean eliminating fear. It means allowing fear to point you toward what matters most.

When we acknowledge what we're afraid of losing, we often discover what we value most deeply. And when we live according to those values — even in small ways — we reclaim a sense of purpose and presence.

You do not overcome mortality by pretending it isn't there. You move through it by choosing what matters today.

This worksheet accompanies Chapter Two of *Reluctant Warrior: A Memoir & Breast Cancer Emotional Survival Guide* by Dr. Christina Hibbert. It is a reflective exercise, not therapy or medical care. If it brings up more than you expected, that makes sense — please consider bringing it to someone who can sit with you in it.