

WORKSHEET 11 · CHAPTER ELEVEN · HEALING IS POSSIBLE

The Healing Compass

Time, work and grace — noticing where healing may already be unfolding.

Throughout this chapter, I kept trying to measure healing by whether I felt “better.” I wanted proof that all the work was paying off. But healing often happened in ways I couldn’t immediately see.

As you move through this reflection, use the word *grace* in whatever way feels most fitting to you — divine help, mercy, compassion, love, support, or allowing yourself to be imperfect.

This exercise is meant to help you notice the places where healing may already be unfolding in your life, even if your circumstances still feel painful or unfinished.

PART 1

Time

Healing rarely happens all at once. Often it unfolds slowly through seasons, setbacks, repetition, and small moments that only make sense in retrospect.

What wounds or struggles have softened over time, even slightly?

Where have I become more patient, honest, gentle or self-aware than I used to be?

What pain still resurfaces in cycles or spirals?

What expectations have I had to release about how quickly healing should happen?

Write about a time you realized healing was happening slowly rather than suddenly.

PART 2

Work

Healing usually asks something of us. It often requires effort, honesty, vulnerability, boundaries, support, therapy, grieving, rest, or difficult conversations.

What healing work have I done that no one else fully sees?

What coping patterns, defenses or survival habits have I had to confront?

Where am I still trying to push through instead of listening to my body, emotions or needs?

What relationships need honesty, repair, or deeper conversation?

List the kinds of work your healing has required — emotionally, physically, spiritually and relationally.

PART 3

Grace

Some parts of healing cannot be forced. There are moments when effort alone is not enough. Grace is what carries us when we are exhausted, disappointed, grieving, or unable to fix what hurts.

What does grace mean to me?

Where do I most struggle to give myself grace?

What would it look like to stop treating myself like a problem to solve?

Who has offered me grace during difficult seasons?

What would change if I believed healing did not require perfection?

Finish these sentences:

Right now, grace for me looks like...

One thing I need to stop hiding is...

One thing I need to accept about myself is...

One way I can care for myself more gently this week is...

The Spiral Check-In

Healing isn't linear. It circles. It spirals. Think of something related to healing that has resurfaced recently — anger, depression, a memory of trauma.

What did this bring up?

Is this truly backsliding, or is it deeper integration?

What did I know this time that I didn't know before?

“Even though this resurfaced, I now understand that...”

A Gentle Reflection

Healing is not always dramatic. Sometimes it looks like surviving another day. Sometimes it looks like asking for help, telling the truth, resting, grieving honestly, or allowing yourself to be loved exactly as you are.

What if healing is not about becoming who I used to be, but learning how to care for the person I am now?

Healing may be private work, but it's not meant to happen in isolation. We reach out to each other — sometimes quietly, sometimes desperately — and in that reaching, something shifts.

So if you're hurting, still waiting to feel better, still aching for "the end" of all this, please know you're not failing. You're not behind. Healing isn't something we manufacture. It's something we allow. Warrior-like, we show up, and we do the work.

This worksheet accompanies Chapter Eleven 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.