

KARLA MARIE REED

the
Edit

A Reset for Work, Wellness & Life

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INK & SEALED

THE EDIT

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Dedicated to my North Star.

THE EDIT

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WELCOME

the Edit

An *edit* is a curated selection—the good things, chosen with care, with everything unnecessary left out. That is exactly what this book is. Not everything I tried on the way back from burnout made the cut. This is what did.

Think of it as my edit of what actually helped: the practices, the mindset shifts, and the small rituals that pulled me out of exhaustion and back into my life. It is part memoir, part guide, and entirely honest.

Here is how to use it. Read start to finish, or open to whatever chapter your week needs. At the end of each one you will find two things—a *Reflect* page with a few questions and room to write (don't skip these; the writing is where the shift happens), and *The Edit*, a short list of curated picks to try, read, play, or savor. Take what serves you. Leave the rest. That is the whole philosophy.

There is no timeline here, and no way to fall behind. Some chapters you will move through quickly; others you will sit with for a while. Both are exactly right.

So pour something warm, find a quiet corner, and let's begin. This is your reset—curated, gentle, and entirely yours.

— Kay

INTRODUCTION

My Reset



Balance isn't a place you arrive at. It's a point you keep returning to.

THEY SAY BALANCE DOESN'T EXIST. I think differently. I don't believe there's one balance that works for everyone—I believe each of us has a balance that's best for ourselves. The catch is that it isn't a fixed place you finally reach. It's a living thing, a point you keep coming back to. Once I understood that, my whole relationship with wellness began to change.

We live at a relentless pace, and burnout creeps in quietly. Our bodies come with a built-in alarm—the fight-or-flight response—

that helps us cope with stress. But when the stress never lets up, that alarm stops being a help and starts becoming the problem.

Let me start with my own story. My burnout arrived tangled up with grief, anxiety, and a habit of getting in my own way. For years I'd been driven by perfectionism and a need to please everyone around me, until the pressure—my own and everyone else's—finally outgrew me. The stressors in my life far outran my boundaries, and over time they built into a crisis. I had functioned through hard things before. This time was different. Everything arrived at once, and it was a wake-up call I couldn't ignore.

I wrote this book to make something out of that season—to share my story in case it helps even one person who feels the way I felt. What I found on the other side wasn't a tidier life. It was a truer one. By learning to release limiting thoughts and to face my fears with faith, I found my way back to myself—and these are the set points I used to reset, reignite, and begin to thrive again.

A LITTLE ABOUT HOW I GOT HERE

I started playing tennis when I was four. My mother wanted me to try it, and as a child I loved it. I played through childhood and stopped in high school, when my interests changed. It would be years before I picked up a racket again—and longer still before I understood that somewhere along the way I'd absorbed a limited idea of what I was capable of.

I grew up feeling loved and supported, and I also learned perseverance the hard way. My father wasn't in the household, and for most of my adult life we weren't close. A few years ago, that

changed. We restored our relationship, and now I treasure our conversations—I learn something about who he is, and who I am, every time we talk. The work I did to live unoffended, to have grace for both of my parents, gave me back something I didn't know I was missing.

Every day I grow, learn, and work my way back to the woman I'm meant to be.

I won't pretend the turning point felt like wisdom at the time. It felt like falling apart. But it was the moment I decided to look inward and ask why I'd never built the boundaries that could protect my peace. This book is the map I drew on the way back. I hope it helps you draw yours.

MY RESET • REFLECT

Before you turn the page

*Sit with these. There are no wrong answers—only
honest ones.*

- 1 What does balance actually look like for you—not
for anyone else?

- 2 Where have you been outrunning your own
boundaries?

- 3 What would “becoming yourself again” mean for
you right now?

YOUR RESET BEGINS HERE

CHAPTER ONE

Nudges

Recognizing burnout before it becomes a crisis



RECOGNIZING BURNOUT BEGINS WITH A STEP BACK. Before you can heal it, you have to see it—to understand how it's shaping your days and name the toll it's taking. That awareness is its own kind of courage. It's the quiet admission that you don't have to carry everything alone, and that reaching for help is a sign of strength, not weakness.

There's real power in vulnerability. When we let ourselves be seen—when we say out loud that we're struggling—we find our deepest connections, with others and with ourselves. Taking responsibility for our choices is what lets us steer back toward

growth. Admitting it, even just to yourself, is where everything turns.

Burnout isn't simply being tired or stressed. It's a complex, layered thing that slowly erodes your physical, mental, and emotional well-being if you leave it unattended. It's the cumulative weight of prolonged stress—the kind that builds from the steady demands of work, family, and the responsibilities we never quite put down.

THE CHALLENGES OF BURNOUT

Recovery can feel especially daunting if you're somewhere between thirty-five and fifty-five, juggling more roles than you can count. Burnout has a cruel logic: the more depleted you feel, the harder you work to fix it, which depletes you further. Left unchecked, that cycle can pull you toward exhaustion, withdrawal, depression, and anxiety—and, for some, toward alcohol or other ways of numbing.

For many of us in this stretch of life, it feels like treading water, arms tired, shore nowhere in sight. Recognizing that you're in it is the first real step toward breaking the cycle and taking back your well-being.

So as we begin, remember this: you are not alone in what you're feeling. Naming burnout is an act of self-awareness and self-compassion, and you've already taken it. In the chapters ahead, we'll move through this with grace and patience—out of the shadows and back toward purpose.

The Edit

NOTICE · A sixty-second body scan when you wake—where are you clenched?

READ · *Burnout* by Emily and Amelia Nagoski

RITUAL · One honest sentence in your notes app each night

PERMISSION · Cancel the one thing you're dreading this week

NUDGES · REFLECT

Before you turn the page

*Sit with these. There are no wrong answers—only
honest ones.*

- 1 What signs of burnout do you recognize in yourself right now?

- 2 Where are you “working harder to fix it” in ways that drain you more?

- 3 What would it mean to treat noticing as strength, not failure?

AWARENESS IS THE FIRST STEP

CHAPTER TWO

Pause



Out of difficulties grow miracles.

JEAN DE LA BRUYÈRE

THAT LINE HAS STAYED WITH ME. Even when burnout feels immovable, change is still possible—and sometimes the most difficult seasons are exactly where the next version of you begins. This chapter is about the first real step, and it's the one most of us resist: asking for help.

I want you to know that I understand the weight that may have brought you here. Burnout can feel like a burden you have to carry alone, and carrying it quietly only makes it heavier. So let me say it plainly—there is a path forward. Not a perfect one, and not a fast

one, but a real one. The glow up isn't a straight line; it begins the moment you stop pretending you're fine.

When you do reach out, reach out with hope. I know that's hard on the days when your mind won't slow down. But the way you ask shapes what comes back to you. Instead of dwelling on everything that's wrong, name what you want to change. Positivity is contagious, and it keeps the conversation pointed toward solutions instead of spiraling.

Be specific, too. Sometimes you don't even know what's wrong—you just feel off, like nothing is connecting. Naming the thing you need help with, whether it's managing stress, setting boundaries, or finding some kind of balance, gives the people around you something real to hold onto.

*Asking was not weakness.
It was the bravest thing I did.*

For me, it started with a racing mind I couldn't quiet and a flood of emotions I couldn't stop. Eventually something in me knew this was bigger than I could think my way out of, and I reached for professional support—medical, psychological, therapeutic. I'm not a doctor, and nothing in this book is a substitute for one. Please, if you need that help, go and get it.

If recovery feels overwhelming, make it smaller. Break it into steps, into single questions. The more specific you can be, the more support you can actually receive—and the more capable you'll feel taking the next step. Surround yourself with people who lift you, and look for the ones who have walked through burnout and come out the other side. Their stories are proof that recovery is real.

Learning to be vulnerable—to simply ask—was one of the turning points in my healing. It loosened the grip of my anxiety. And like grief, this work is slow. I stayed in denial for months, partly because I had written off my symptoms as nothing more than being a forty-year-old, perimenopausal woman. It wasn't until the shock wore off that I let myself see it for what it was. With the care of someone who loved me, I finally went inward—and began the work of becoming myself again.

The Edit

DO · Send the text you've been drafting in your head

LISTEN · A slow playlist that lets you exhale

READ · *Maybe You Should Talk to Someone* by Lori Gottlieb

ASK · One person “how are you, really?”—then answer it yourself

PAUSE · REFLECT

Before you turn the page

*Sit with these. There are no wrong answers—only
honest ones.*

- 1 Where in your life are you quietly carrying something you could ask for help with?

- 2 What is one specific kind of support you need this week—and who could you ask?

- 3 When has asking for help changed something for you before?

ASKING IS STRENGTH — NOT WEAKNESS

CHAPTER THREE

Release

Grace, self-compassion & forgiveness



ONE OF THE MOST TRANSFORMATIVE steps in this journey is also one of the gentlest: learning to extend grace to yourself. Being hard on yourself is its own kind of limited thinking, and it hits hardest exactly when you're already worn down. So let's talk about the healing power of kindness—turned outward, and, harder still, inward.

Grace gets overlooked in a world that prizes achievement above almost everything. But it's essential. Grace means letting yourself be imperfect. It means accepting that you're human and that you're doing the best you can with what you know right now.

When was the last time you gave yourself permission to be imperfect? To not have all the answers, to make a mistake without putting your whole character on trial? Grace is letting go of impossible standards, forgiving yourself for past missteps, and allowing a fresh start.

Recovery also means recognizing how your struggle has touched the people you love. Burnout doesn't stay contained; it reaches our relationships too. Asking for forgiveness—and offering it—can be profoundly healing on both sides.

*Self-compassion is the bridge to
self-forgiveness, and to healing.*

Self-compassion is the foundation. It's treating yourself with the same warmth you'd offer a dear friend in pain. If a close friend came to you exhausted and unraveling, you'd meet her with comfort and encouragement. You deserve that same care. Look at your own struggle and say, simply: I see you. I understand. I'm here.

You're not alone in this. Many have walked this path before you, and many will after. By choosing grace, self-compassion, and forgiveness, you're already moving—step by step—back toward the fire in you.

The Edit

PRACTICE · Hand on your heart: “I’m doing my best”

WATCH · Kristin Neff on self-compassion

WRITE · The apology you owe yourself

UNFOLLOW · One account that makes you feel behind

RELEASE · REFLECT

Before you turn the page

*Sit with these. There are no wrong answers—only
honest ones.*

- 1 Where are you holding yourself to a standard
you'd never hold a friend to?

- 2 What past misstep are you ready to forgive
yourself for?

- 3 Who might you offer—or ask for—forgiveness?

GRACE IS WHERE HEALING BEGINS

CHAPTER FOUR

Soft Power

Turning grief into fuel



ON THE WAY BACK FROM burnout, you'll meet grief, sorrow, and emotional turmoil. These aren't signs of weakness. They're proof of how deeply you're capable of feeling—and they carry their own strange power. This chapter is about meeting grief honestly and letting it become fuel rather than a wall.

Grief is layered. It can come from lost opportunities, from expectations that went unmet, from mourning a version of your life that no longer exists. In the aftermath of burnout it's natural to feel sadness, frustration, even anger. Instead of suppressing those feelings, let yourself notice them without judgment. It's okay to

grieve what was lost. Your emotions are valid; they're signposts on the way through.

Our greatest growth often happens in our hardest moments. In grief, you can discover reserves of resilience you didn't know you had, and learn to channel that energy toward something true. Think back to other times you faced adversity—didn't you come out the other side with more wisdom than you went in with?

Throughout history, people have turned pain into something that matters—artists into work, dreamers into second acts, ordinary people into quiet heroes. Adversity doesn't have to define you. It can refine you.

YOUR MANTRAS

When grief feels heavy, I come back to a handful of phrases—small mantras that keep me moving. If any of these are yours, let them carry you too:

“Follow your heart.”

“Live your dreams.”

“Happiness is yours to have.”

“Your energy is limitless.”

“Never give up. Love your life.”

Hold the ones that are yours. In your hardest moments, let them remind you that even inside grief, your inner fire can burn brighter than before.

The Edit

FEEL · Let one song make you cry, on purpose

MOVE · A walk with no destination

READ · *The Wild Edge of Sorrow* by Francis Weller

KEEP · Your mantra where you'll see it daily

SOFT POWER • REFLECT

*Before you turn the
page*

*Sit with these. There are no wrong answers—only
honest ones.*

- 1 What are you grieving right now—even if it feels
hard to name?

- 2 Which mantra do you most need today, and
why?

- 3 When has adversity refined you rather than
defined you?

EVEN GRIEF CAN BECOME FUEL

CHAPTER FIVE

The Reset

Shifting your mindset & perception



SLOWING DOWN ENOUGH to hear what your body has been trying to tell you—that's where the reset begins. Your mindset is the lens you see everything through. Adjust the lens, and a challenge can become an opportunity, a setback a stepping stone.

Have you noticed how two people can face the same situation and walk away with completely different outcomes? So much of it comes down to perception. Our beliefs shape our reality—which means that when you change how you interpret what happens to you, you change what's possible.

TRACK YOUR STRESS, AND JOURNAL

One of the simplest ways to start shifting is to pay attention. Notice your stress; name your patterns and triggers. Write things down, no matter how small they seem. I'm partial to journals with prompts—and when I was always on the go, voice notes did the same work. Journaling is a quiet, powerful way to understand what's really happening underneath.

BOUNDARIES & COMPASSION

Burnout often starts with too many yeses. Shifting your mindset means learning to set boundaries and to say no when you need to. That's not selfishness; it's self-compassion—protecting your energy so it isn't endlessly spent.

REST, NOURISH, MOVE

A rested body and mind handle life better. Reset your sleep, nourish yourself, drink the water, pay attention to what you actually need. Move in ways that feel good—walking, stretching, yoga, dancing—and let the endorphins do their quiet work. Add deep breathing or meditation to settle your mind. Even on the days you don't feel like it, especially then, the new routine is the point.

Your energy is not as finite as burnout made it feel. Setbacks aren't roadblocks; they're detours toward something you couldn't see before. Every small step is taking you somewhere brighter.

The Edit

TRACK · Your stress on a 1–10 scale for a week

JOURNAL · A prompted journal—voice notes count

SHIFT · Bedtime thirty minutes earlier

SIP · Something warm and caffeine-free before bed

THE RESET · REFLECT

Before you turn the page

*Sit with these. There are no wrong answers—only
honest ones.*

- 1 What has your body been trying to tell you that
you've been overriding?

- 2 Where do you most need to practice saying
“no”?

- 3 What one small routine could you begin this
week?

CHANGE THE LENS, CHANGE THE VIEW

CHAPTER SIX

Glow

Hope without bypassing the hard parts



AS YOU BEGIN TO REIGNITE your life, the goal isn't relentless positivity. It's staying hopeful without pretending the hard parts didn't happen. Honoring what you've been through is part of healing, not a detour from it.

Recovery isn't painting over your struggles with a coat of forced cheer. It's the steadier work of holding hope in one hand and honesty in the other. Walk that line, and you get to honor your experience without letting it write your future.

Practice daily grace. Not every day will be good, and that's allowed. On the hard days, offer yourself the kindness you'd give a friend—rest, softness, room to be imperfect. Celebrate small

victories, because every step forward, however modest, is proof of your resilience.

Build yourself an inner sanctuary—a safe place inside you to retreat to when things get loud. And when you stumble, treat the setback as information, not failure. Each one is a chance to recalibrate and move forward a little wiser.

*Your journey is yours.
Comparison only steals from it.*

Lean on the people who get it. Share the hard days and the wins both; let their encouragement carry you, and offer yours in return. The more open I let myself be, the easier staying open became.

Your ability to stay hopeful in the face of difficulty is its own quiet strength. The path back is paved with sunlight and shadow alike—walk it with grace, and a renewed sense of purpose will meet you there.

The Edit

PRACTICE · Name one small win before sleep

BUILD · Your “inner sanctuary” playlist

ALLOW · A “good enough” day, on purpose

RELEASE · The urge to compare, in all its forms

GLOW · REFLECT

Before you turn the page

*Sit with these. There are no wrong answers—only
honest ones.*

- 1 Where have you been forcing positivity instead of honoring the truth?

- 2 What does your “inner sanctuary” look like?

- 3 What small victory can you celebrate today?

HOPE AND HONESTY, TOGETHER

CHAPTER SEVEN

Bliss

Boundaries. Love. Inner work. Sleep. Soul.



AS YOU KEEP REIGNITING your life, it helps to have practices to reach for—real, physical, doable things that move healing out of your head and into your days. After you've been cleared of any medical concern and you're resting and eating well, these are the activities that brought me back to myself.

YOGA & MEDITATION

Yoga is the union of mind and body—and far more than the poses. Through movement, breath, and attention, it brings a deep kind of relaxation, and it meets you exactly where you are. Alongside it, I leaned into meditation, sound therapy, and breathwork to soften old patterns and build new ones. These

practices remind you that mind and body are one conversation—and that you can change what it says.

SOMATIC RELEASE

We store stress in the body—knots, aches, stiffness we stop noticing. Somatic floor exercises are a gentle, mindful way to find that tension and let it go. Practiced regularly, they ease the physical residue of burnout and teach you to listen to your body's signals again.

WARMTH, NATURE & MAKING THINGS

Red-light sauna sessions became a sanctuary—warmth that loosens the body and invites stillness. Hiking gave me the rest. I'm lucky to have water, earth, and open trails close by, and there's something about birdsong and rustling leaves that quiets the inner noise and hands you back your perspective.

Then there's making things. For me it's modern lettering and design—my happy place and my solitude. In hard seasons, channeling emotion into each stroke of the pen became a kind of meditation, a therapy, a way home. Art says what words can't. So does dancing in your kitchen like no one's watching, and so does a change of scenery—even a small trip can widen your whole sky.

A few years ago, when the world itself went on pause, I picked up tennis again—something I hadn't loved in years. It reminded me not to take everything so seriously. That's the real point of these practices: not just to outrun burnout, but to rediscover the joy that was always yours.

The Edit

MOVE · Ten minutes of yoga or somatic stretching

WARM · Sauna, bath, or sun on your face

MAKE · Something with your hands—no outcome required

GO · Outside; near water or trees if you can

BLISS · REFLECT

Before you turn the page

*Sit with these. There are no wrong answers—only
honest ones.*

- 1 Which practice here are you most drawn to try first?

- 2 What's an old joy you've set down that you could pick back up?

- 3 Where could you make a little more room for stillness?

HEAL IN BODY, NOT JUST IN MIND

CHAPTER EIGHT

Heal

Self-care as your foundation



SELF-CARE IS ONE OF the most essential practices for reclaiming your flow—and it's not a luxury. It's a necessity.

It isn't always the spa or the shopping trip; more often it's whatever genuinely renews you. Sometimes self-care is rest. Sometimes it's building the business you've always wanted and the income that comes with it. It's okay to have drive and vision. Just know the sweet spot lives in the ebb and flow.

At its heart, self-care is love turned toward yourself. It's prioritizing your needs, recognizing your worth, and making choices that nurture your body, mind, and spirit. When you care for

yourself, you're saying that you matter—and you're taking responsibility for your own well-being.

Part of that is boundaries. Knowing when to say no to demands that would overwhelm you is how you keep your energy from being drained dry. Boundaries make room for everything else.

*There's no timetable on your recovery.
But doing nothing is not an option.*

Self-care isn't selfish, either—it ripples outward. When you're nourished and steady, you become a source of calm for the people you love. They feel it; they gravitate toward someone who clearly loves herself.

So treat self-care as a lifestyle, not an occasional indulgence. Weave small practices into your days until they're non-negotiable—reading, gardening, a long bath, a quiet hobby, a few still minutes of reflection. These aren't just pastimes. They're how you keep your own spark lit.

Nurturing yourself is what equips you to meet everything else with resilience and even enthusiasm. From here, we go deeper into what that looks like.

The Edit

PROTECT · One boundary you keep all week

RESERVE · Twenty minutes that are only yours

READ · *Real Self-Care* by Pooja Lakshmin

SIP · Water first, coffee second

HEAL · REFLECT

Before you turn the page

*Sit with these. There are no wrong answers—only
honest ones.*

- 1 What actually renews you—not what's supposed to?

- 2 What boundary would protect your energy this week?

- 3 What's one self-care practice you could make non-negotiable?

SELF-CARE IS YOUR FOUNDATION

CHAPTER NINE

Radiate

Your core values & soul-driven goals



ILLUMINATING YOUR CORE values is one of the most meaningful steps toward a life that feels like yours. Your values are the beliefs that guide your decisions and define what truly matters to you. When you name them, you understand yourself more clearly—and you start making choices that line up with who you really are.

Your values are the foundation of your character. When your actions match them, you feel a kind of internal integrity, and your self-respect grows. They're a lens for evaluating opportunities and a compass for setting goals. They even make hard conversations

easier, because you know what you stand for and where your lines are.

Begin with honest reflection. What matters most to you? What energizes you? Think about the moments you've felt most fulfilled, and notice which values were present. Make a list of the ones that resonate, and revisit it—values evolve as you do, and that's exactly as it should be.

When I finally sat still and named my own values, the word that kept rising wasn't *success*. It was *peace*. That stopped me. For years I'd been chasing a version of achievement that cost me the one thing I most wanted, and I'd never once said it out loud. Naming it changed which opportunities I said yes to—and which I finally let go.

GOALS WITH A SOUL

Once your values are clear, build your goals on top of them. Soul-driven goals carry deeper meaning, and reaching them becomes a reflection of who you are rather than a box checked. When your goals align with your values, motivation and persistence come more naturally.

Make them clear and specific enough to measure, realistic enough to believe, and tied to a timeframe so they stay honest. Break big goals into small, doable steps. Schedule check-ins to see whether your choices still match your values, and adjust without guilt when life shifts. Share them with people who'll encourage you and hold you accountable.

*Anchored in your values, your goals stop
being a to-do list and start being a life.*

This is lifelong work—an evolving conversation between who you’ve been and who you’re becoming. Keep returning to it, and you’ll navigate even the complicated seasons with clarity and authenticity.

The Edit

DO · List five values; circle the one you live most

ASK · “What would honor that value this month?”

RITUAL · A monthly check-in with yourself

READ · *The Top Five Regrets of the Dying* by Bronnie Ware

A GUIDED PAGE

Your Core Values

*Name the values that feel most true. Then give each one
a single action that would honor it this season.*

MY CORE VALUES

ONE VALUE I'VE BEEN NEGLECTING

A GOAL THAT HONORS WHAT MATTERS MOST

RADIATE · REFLECT

Before you turn the page

*Sit with these. There are no wrong answers—only
honest ones.*

- 1 Name three to five core values. Which one are you living most fully?

- 2 Which value have you been neglecting?

- 3 What's one goal that would honor what matters most to you?

LIVE FROM YOUR VALUES

CHAPTER TEN

The CORE Plan

Daily habits & a well-being regimen that lasts



HABITS ARE THE BUILDING BLOCKS OF A LIFE. They shape your character, fill your days, and quietly determine where you end up. When your habits line up with your values, your actions start to reflect your truest self—and the power of it is all in the consistency. Small, intentional things done repeatedly become big changes over time.

I call my approach the CORE plan: a handful of daily well-being principles that, practiced together, keep me steady. It's built around

inner and outer excellence—mindfulness and self-reflection mattering just as much as movement and nutrition. The goal is balance, and balance is personal. What works for me may not work for you, and that's the point: this is yours to tailor.

BUILDING THE PLAN

Start by noticing the habits you already have, and which ones serve you. Then change a few—not everything at once. Pick the ones that will matter most, and begin small enough that you won't feel overwhelmed. Track your progress in a journal or an app; seeing your own growth is its own motivation.

My first 21/90 wasn't glamorous. It was making my bed and drinking a glass of water before coffee. That was it. But those two small promises, kept daily, became the proof I needed that I could keep a promise to myself at all—and everything bigger I've built since has stood on that tiny foundation.

Fold in mindfulness so you're choosing your habits consciously rather than running on autopilot. Revisit them as life changes, because your needs will. Celebrate the wins, however small. Share your goals with someone who'll cheer you on. And be patient with yourself—habits take time to form, and setbacks are part of the process, not proof you've failed.

A REGIMEN THAT LASTS

A well-being regimen is simply a plan that fits your real life—physical fitness, nutrition, mental health, and stress management woven into something sustainable. Be flexible; let it evolve with your schedule and circumstances. If you have specific health concerns,

bring in professionals who can make sure your plan is safe as well as good.

*Consistency is the quiet ingredient.
Devote the time, and the benefits
compound.*

Done this way, your habits stop being chores and become the natural rhythm of your days—an honest, sustainable path to vitality, built around the life you actually live.

The Edit

START · One habit, twenty-one days, tracked

TOOL · A tracker you'll actually see

STACK · Attach the new habit to one you already do

GRACE · A missed day is data, not failure

A GUIDED PAGE

The 21 / 90 Reset

Commit to one habit for 21 days and it becomes a routine. Keep it for 90, and it becomes a lifestyle. Name your habit, then mark the days.

THE HABIT I'M BUILDING

MY FIRST 21 DAYS

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21

THEN NINETY MORE, UNTIL IT'S SIMPLY WHO YOU ARE.

THE CORE PLAN · REFLECT

*Before you turn the
page*

*Sit with these. There are no wrong answers—only
honest ones.*

- 1 Which existing habit serves you most? Which one
needs to go?

- 2 What is the one habit you'll start small with this
week?

- 3 What will help you stay patient through the
setbacks?

SMALL HABITS, REPEATED, CHANGE
EVERYTHING

CHAPTER ELEVEN

Self-Care

A lifestyle, not a luxury



AT ITS CORE, SELF-CARE is a profound act of love directed toward yourself. It's more than a checklist—it's a statement of your own worth and a commitment to your body, mind, and spirit. On my journey, this is where I learned to claim responsibility for my own well-being instead of waiting for someone to hand it to me.

What resonates most for me is boundaries. A boundary is a sacred space where you say no to whatever threatens to overwhelm your sense of self. It isn't just a line in the sand—it's a protective moat around everything you're trying to keep whole.

And here's the part people miss: self-care isn't selfish. It ripples. When you're well-nurtured, your energy becomes a kind of magnet; the people you love feel the self-respect radiating off you. As Rumi wrote, "If everything around seems dark, look again; you may be the light." You become the lighthouse in the storm.

*Self-care is the oxygen mask.
Secure yours first.*

I'm drawn to self-care as a lifestyle rather than a sporadic treat—rituals woven in so seamlessly they're non-negotiable. There's no fixed timetable for recovery, but one thing is certain: doing nothing is not an option.

For me, that looked like solitary walks, writing to clear my head, meditation to quiet my mind, and carving out space to pour back into myself. More than pastimes, they were embers I kept fanning into flame—small acts that reconnected me to the simple joy of being alive.

Self-care restores balance and brings your spirit back to color. It's the ultimate act of self-love and empowerment—and from that steadier place, you have so much more to give.

The Edit

RULE · Oxygen mask first—you, then everyone

PRACTICE · Say no to one thing, guilt-free

READ · Rumi—anything

LIGHT · A candle to mark the start of your time

SELF-CARE · REFLECT

Before you turn the page

*Sit with these. There are no wrong answers—only
honest ones.*

- 1 What's one boundary—your “protective moat”—
you need to build or defend?

- 2 Where in your life do you need to secure your
own oxygen mask first?

- 3 What ritual could you make non-negotiable?

YOU ARE THE LIGHTHOUSE

CHAPTER TWELVE

Celebrate

Growth mindset & positive self-talk



A GROWTH MINDSET IS THE ENGINE OF ALL OF THIS. It's the belief that failure isn't a destination but a stepping stone—that your abilities can stretch, and that challenges are invitations to improve. For a long time I saw setbacks as roadblocks. Learning to see them as openings changed everything.

At first it was deliberate. I had to keep reminding myself that I could grow, that discomfort was something to lean into rather than escape. Slowly it became instinct, and the ability to persevere turned into one of my defining strengths—armor against the demoralizing pull of failure.

THE POWER OF POSITIVE SELF-TALK

With that foundation, I turned to my inner voice. I'd been my own harshest critic—dissecting my failures, magnifying my flaws, waving off my wins. That running commentary had quietly become the loudest voice in the room. So I started to rewrite it, with simple affirmations and honest acknowledgment of my own progress, trading self-doubt for self-compassion.

A daily gratitude practice did more than I expected. It moved my attention from what I lacked to what I had, from my failures to my steps forward. Notice how often we deflect a compliment to make someone else comfortable—how many of us were taught to play small. Receiving kindness, even from yourself, is a practice worth building.

SELF-ACCEPTANCE

The deepest shift was accepting my imperfections as part of me—seeing the beauty in the broken pieces of the mosaic. Meeting my own flaws with understanding made me more at peace than chasing some flawless version of myself ever could.

*A kind word from yourself is a breeze
that keeps the sailboat moving.*

None of this happened overnight. But a kinder inner voice built an environment where growth could actually take root—and that, more than any single victory, is what kept me moving forward.

The Edit

CATCH · One unkind thought; rewrite it

SPEAK · Three gratitudes, out loud

RECEIVE · A compliment with only “thank you”

KEEP · A “done” list, not just a to-do list

CELEBRATE · REFLECT

Before you turn the page

*Sit with these. There are no wrong answers—only
honest ones.*

- 1 What does your inner critic say most often—and
what's the truer version?

- 2 What are three things you're genuinely grateful
for today?

- 3 Which imperfection could you begin to accept
with kindness?

CELEBRATE THE SMALLEST WINS

CHAPTER THIRTEEN

Flow

Finding your flow state



SOMEWHERE ALONG THE way I stumbled into a state of being that captivated me: flow. You've felt it—"in the zone," fully immersed, energized and focused, enjoying the doing without fixating on the outcome. Time seems to disappear, and creativity and productivity open all the way up.

Flow doesn't arrive by force. It emerges when the conditions are right—and those conditions are built from the two things we just practiced: a growth mindset to welcome the challenge, and positive self-talk to meet it without fear. Paradoxically, it also asks for a certain calm, a willingness to wait for the wave instead of chasing it.

It begins with knowing your strengths and your passions, and finding where they overlap—the place where what you love meets what you're good at. From there it's a matter of setting clear goals and gently pushing your edges. A growth mindset lets you approach those edges with curiosity instead of dread; you stop fearing failure and start treating it as part of the ride.

In flow, there's no room for self-doubt. The kinder inner voice you've been building keeps your confidence steady and your attention whole. It's a state of pure presence—no past regrets, no future worries, just full engagement with the moment in front of you.

For me, flow shows up with a pen in my hand. When I'm lettering—music on, the world gone quiet—I look up and an hour has vanished, and I feel more like myself than I have all week. For the longest time I treated that as a break from my real work. Now I know it *is* the work; it's where I refill.

Growth mindset + a calm mind = flow.

In tennis, players talk about a routine between points—a way to release the last point and meet the next one with full focus and energy. Life rewards the same practice: let the last point go, and give yourself completely to the one you're playing now.

Moving from a growth mindset to positive self-talk to flow has been the throughline of my whole transformation. It's proof that by tending the seeds of growth and changing the voice in our heads, we can reach the most alive and creative states we're capable of.

The Edit

FIND · The task where you lose track of time

BREATHE · A reset breath before hard things

PROTECT · One distraction-free hour

MOVE · Dance in your kitchen—yes, again

FLOW · REFLECT

*Before you turn the
page*

*Sit with these. There are no wrong answers—only
honest ones.*

- 1 When did you last feel true flow? What were you doing?

- 2 Where do your strengths and passions overlap?

- 3 What would help you “release the last point” and be present?

FIND THE PLACE WHERE TIME DISAPPEARS

CHAPTER FOURTEEN

Self-Love Notes

A letter to your future self



WRITING TO YOUR FUTURE SELF IS A SMALL, POWERFUL ACT. It's a letter full of compassion and hope, sent forward to the woman you're becoming—so that on some future hard day, she opens it and remembers who she is and how far she's come.

As you write, you touch the deepest part of yourself. You gain clarity, comfort, and motivation. You get to offer yourself kindness and forgiveness for everything you've faced. Remember: you are not

writing as a victim, but as the artist of your own life. Here's mine, as a place to start.

Dear future me,

I'm writing from a place of love, understanding, and hope. You are a remarkable and resilient soul. As I put these words down, I picture you wiser and more fully yourself, and I hope this reaches you exactly when you need it.

Life is a series of ebbs and flows. In the joyful moments, cherish every laugh and every shared hour—these are the ones that make your heart sing. In the hard ones, draw your strength from within. You have faced difficulty before and always come through stronger; it's in adversity that your true character shows. Keep your faith, stay resilient, and trust yourself to navigate the storms. Keep going. You are an eagle—soar.

Hold onto your principles; they're the compass that keeps you grounded and true. Be kind to yourself the way you'd be kind to a dear friend—forgive your mistakes, learn from them, and grow. Nurture your relationships; they're the pillars that hold you up. And know that healing isn't a destination but a continuous walk home to yourself.

Most of all: I believe in you. You have a beautiful soul, and the world is better with you in it. You've got this.

With all my love and hope,
Karla

A GUIDED PAGE

Your Letter

*Now it's your turn. There are no wrong words—only
honest ones.*

Dear future me,

CHAPTER FIFTEEN

Match Point

Femininity, action & the reset



YOU GET TO CHOOSE HOW YOU SHOW UP EACH DAY—EVEN NOW, EVEN HERE. You can choose resilience and growth in the face of everything. My story is proof of what self-awareness, a reprogrammed mind, and a little courage can do. And it's why I want to hand it forward to you.

There's a beautiful analogy in tennis—the relationship between tension and power. Loosen the strings of a racket and the ball sinks deeper into the bed, springing back with more force; that's the trampoline effect. Loosen your own grip—stay flexible, open, adaptable—and you often find a surprising reservoir of strength. Tighten the strings and you trade some of that power for control

and precision. Life asks for both. The art is knowing when to unleash power and when to steer.

I've spent real time resetting my life for what I think of as a match point—the moment when potential and purpose finally line up. Getting there meant facing my fears instead of avoiding them. Leaning into fear, it turns out, is where the energy is; confront it head-on and you start to see it for what it really is—a stepping stone.

*Action is the bridge from the life
you imagine to the life you live.*

Dreams stay fantasies until you move. Action pulls you out of regret over the past and fear of the future and sets you squarely in the present—the only place you actually have power. Every step, however small, is a declaration: I believe in this, and I'm building it.

Part of my reset was deciding to take up space—to let my voice be heard and to stop shrinking my femininity to fit anyone's expectations. I've come to see it as a source of strength, not a softness to apologize for. It lets me meet challenges with both compassion and determination, and it's connected me to a long line of women who've proven the same thing.

And there you have it, glow-getter. You made it to the end without quitting, combusting, or throwing this book across the

room. Whether you've fully reset or just cracked a window to let a little soul-breeze in, I hope you feel lighter, brighter, and a whole lot more you. Glowing up was never about being perfect. It's about being present, hydrated, and gently resisting chaos. So go on—put on the face mask, dance in your kitchen, whisper to your vision board. The world doesn't need a newer version of you. It just needs the real one, with a little more rest and a lot more radiance.

The Edit

DO · The smallest possible first step, today

CLAIM · Take up space—literally, in a room

RESET · A “match point” breath before big moments

CELEBRATE · You finished the Edit. That counts.

MATCH POINT · REFLECT

*Before you turn the
page*

*Sit with these. There are no wrong answers—only
honest ones.*

- 1 Where do you need to loosen your grip—and
where do you need control?

- 2 What's the fear you're ready to lean into?

- 3 What's the first action—however small—you'll
take toward your match point?

THIS IS YOUR MATCH POINT

THE GLOW UP

Affirmations



*Speak them until you believe them.
Then speak them because you do.*

SELF-WORTH & OPENNESS

“I am confident in my ability to create and nurture genuine connections.”

“I approach relationships with an open heart and an open mind.”

“I am worthy of love, respect, and supportive friendships.”

“I am patient, knowing genuine connections take time to grow.”

COMMUNICATION & UNDERSTANDING

“I communicate openly, honestly, and with empathy.”

“I am a good listener, genuinely interested in others’ well-being.”

“I let go of judgment and focus on understanding.”

“I am grateful for the growth each relationship brings.”

POSITIVITY & GROWTH

“I see challenges as opportunities for growth and understanding.”

*“I release any fear of rejection and embrace deep
connection.”*

*“I embrace change and adapt to the ebb and flow of
life.”*

ATTRACTING WHAT I DESERVE

*“I am surrounded by love, trust, and positive
connections.”*

*“I radiate positivity and kindness, and it returns to
me.”*

“I am a magnet for people who uplift and inspire me.”

“I attract those who value me for exactly who I am.”

BEFORE YOU GO

If You Need More Support

This book is a companion, not a substitute for care. If you are struggling, please reach out. Asking for help is the bravest thing you can do—and you are worth it, every time.

IN CRISIS (U.S.) · Call or text **988**, the Suicide & Crisis Lifeline—free and confidential, 24/7.

FIND A THERAPIST · Psychology Today ([psychologytoday.com](https://www.psychologytoday.com)) · Therapy for Black Girls ([therapyforblackgirls.com](https://www.therapyforblackgirls.com)) · Open Path Collective ([openpathcollective.org](https://www.openpathcollective.org)) for lower-cost care.

BURNOUT & YOUR BODY · Talk to your doctor about what you are feeling. Burnout is real, it is physical, and it deserves care.

You do not have to do this alone.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Karla Marie Reed

Karla Marie Reed is a wellness founder, designer, and modern letterer—the creator of Ink & Sealed and the RL Edit, where creativity meets calm.

After her own season of burnout, she began writing down the practices that became this book. She believes glowing up was never about becoming someone new—it is about coming back to who you already are.



She writes for women ready to reset, reignite, and glow.

GRATITUDE

Acknowledgments

To my North Star—everything is for you.

To my family, who stood in the gap and loved me into who I am. To my father, for the wisdom in every conversation we have rebuilt. And to the one whose caring concern helped me go inward when I could not do it alone—thank you.

To the mentors, friends, and strangers whose stories reminded me that recovery is real: I carry you in these pages.

And to you, holding this book—thank you for trusting me with your reset. This was always for one person. Maybe it is you.

STAY CLOSE

Continue the Edit

The Edit doesn't end here. For more of the practices, rituals, and curated finds in this book—plus new ones each week—come find me.

READ · The Edit journal at inkandsealed.com

FOLLOW · @reedlockridge on Instagram, Pinterest & TikTok

WORK WITH ME · Ink & Sealed Studio — inkandsealed.com

Come reset with me. — Kay

Notes

Space for your own reset.

the Edit

*A lifestyle and a wellness movement, born
from one woman's reset—and written for
yours.*

*With love,
Karla Marie Reed*

INK & SEALED

*This isn't just a book.
It's your reset.*

the Edit is a radiant roadmap for women ready to move from exhaustion to empowerment. Part memoir, part guide, it's rooted in gentle healing, deep self-awareness, and soulful strategy.

Written from Karla Marie Reed's own journey through burnout—grief, perimenopause, and the slow work of coming home to herself—this is a book you don't just read. With reflection prompts and guided pages in every chapter, it's a book you *use*.

*"Glowing up was never about being perfect.
It's about being present—and a lot more radiant."*



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Karla Marie Reed is a designer, modern letterer, and the founder of Ink & Sealed. After her own season of burnout, she found her way back through faith, creativity, and a return to what made her feel alive—and now writes for women ready to reset, reignite, and glow.

Ink & Sealed

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