

Appendix

Practices in One Place

Sometimes you just want the tools in one place. This recap pulls everything together. Use it like a field guide.

Prefer audio + quick one-pagers?

You can find the guided audios and summaries here: herstwellness.com/book-bonus.

SENSE

SENSE is how you slow down when the trap gets triggered, not to make it go away, but to restore contact. It brings you back to the signal system you learned to override: breath, tightening, urgency, the impulse to please, the quiet *no*. The point is not relief. The point is accuracy.

SENSE also matters because you cannot do deep work while your body is in threat mode. When you're activated, your system narrows and you start time traveling. SENSE widens your container again, so you can feel what's true without getting dragged straight into the old reflex.

S. Slow the Breath: Slowing the breath is the entry point. It is the brake where you pause the old reflex to argue, fix, please, disappear, or push through as if nothing is wrong. This is your anchor. You aren't trying to relax. You're giving your nervous system enough safety to pause.

Try This: Use the straw breath method. Inhale through your nose for a count of five. Purse your lips like you're blowing through a straw and exhale slowly for a count of seven. Do this for two minutes. If you are in a meeting or caught in a spiral, just take three deliberate breaths. You are just creating a split second of space between you and the voice in your head.

E. Enter the Body: We don't try to silence the mind. Racing thoughts are a mirror reflecting something your body is already holding. Make a U-turn out of the story and back into the physical sensation. Don't analyze why it's there. Just locate where it lives.

Try This: Ask yourself: *Where do I feel this thought reflected in my body right now? Throat? Chest? Belly?* That is it. You are not analyzing. You are just locating where you feel the strongest sensation. Then ask: *Is it pleasant, unpleasant, or neutral?*

N. Name the Quality: Use simple, direct words to describe the sensations. Naming creates a little distance. Not to get rid of what's here, but so you can notice it without getting swept up in it. We don't ask it to leave. We simply acknowledge it.

Try This: Tight. Heavy. Numb. Blank. Buzzing. Knot in the stomach. If a protector is running the show or your mind is racing, name that too: the inner critic, the overthinker, the shutdown. You aren't looking for relief. You're looking for accuracy.

S. Stay: When something hurts, the reflex is to fix it, explain it, or shove it away. Staying asks you to do something different. Turn toward the sensation without fixing it. Let it exist. Keep it company, like finally turning toward a friend who has been trying to get your attention and internally saying, *I see you.*

Try This: Touch the sensation with your attention for ten seconds, then come back to the breath. Go back and forth. You aren't forcing it to change. You're letting it know it's not alone. You might drop a question into the body: *What are you trying to prevent? What are you worried might happen?* Wait for the body to respond. When an insight arrives, drop right back into the body.

E. Equanimity: If S. Stay is making contact, E. Equanimity is learning to remain with what you've touched. Equanimity isn't calm. It's capacity. Let the sensation be there without pushing it away or getting swallowed by it.

Instead of treating this like a pass-or-fail test, you stop trying to solve the feeling. You stop bracing and demanding a timeline. Your mind will jump in with questions like, *How long is this going to last?* Equanimity means you do not answer. If the heat or shaking intensifies, that's not failure. It's the work.

Try This: Remind yourself: *I can stay. I don't have to fix this to be okay.* Let it peak, let it settle, let it move, and let it stay. If you are shaking, practice shaking without trying to stop. Let it move in its own time.

STEP

STEP comes after SENSE. If SENSE brings you back into contact with yourself when you're triggered, STEP is where you use that contact to find the third option. It's how you take what you felt and start revising the old contract you never chose.

The order matters. You restore inner contact first, then you renegotiate outer terms. Otherwise, you're just acting out the performance trap with better language.

S. Still: Under pressure, you usually either push harder or abandon yourself. Still is the pause that comes before action to interrupt that reflex. It is a condensed SENSE, just enough to slow down, feel what is happening in your body, and stop the reflex from driving.

This is not the moment to fix, explain, or react yet. You aren't stepping away from the relationship. You're stepping out of the reflex. Let the urgency drop so you aren't riding the wave straight into action.

Try This: Say to yourself: *I don't have to decide right now. I can wait until I'm back online.*

T. Tune in to the Trade: This is where the double bind shows up. Something in you wants to remain connected, but something else knows you're about to lose yourself to maintain that connection. Ask what the old pattern is costing you. What are you giving up to stay safe, approved of, or in control?

Try This: Notice the compromise forming. Ask: *What part of me is about to go quiet so the connection stays intact? What feeling am I about to bury to keep the peace? What am I about to trade away right now? My honesty? My time? My need? My dignity? My rest?* Name the trade.

E. Expand Options: Stress makes you think you only have two choices. Either you say it in a way that escalates tension, or you don't say it at all. The double bind says it is one or the other. When you tune in, the view widens, and you discover it is both.

Try This: Look for the third option. You don't have to fix it instantly, and you don't have to cave. You do not have to attack, and you do not have to abandon yourself. You can pause. You can ask a question. You can name what's true without escalating.

P. Practice: The double bind taught you to tune yourself out and avoid contact. Practice is the moment you reverse that. You put into words what your body has been sensing all along. Take one small step that breaks the old contract in real life.

Try This: Say one honest sentence. Set one boundary. Make one request. Name the breakdown. Take one action that is true rather than strategic. Repeat. This is how your system learns a new way.

The Big Picture

- SENSE is about contact. It interrupts the reflex, brings you into the body, and helps you name what's true. It restores access to the signals you learned to override.

- STEP is about change. It takes what you discovered through contact and turns it into a lived response. It is how the contract actually gets broken. You stop obeying it internally, and then you stop enacting it externally.

The Two-Minute Version

SENSE

1. **S. Slow the Breath:** Straw Breath (5 in, 7 out) to interrupt the spiral.
2. **E. Enter the Body:** Drop the story. Locate the sensation.
3. **N. Name the Quality:** Tight, heavy, buzzing. Name the protector if it's there.
4. **S. Stay:** Keep it company for a few breaths without fixing it.
5. **E. Equanimity:** Widen the container. Let it move in its own time. Stay with it without trying to solve it.

STEP

1. **S. Still: Pause.** Wait for the urgency to drop.
2. **T. Tune in to the Trade:** What am I about to give up to stay safe or approved?
3. **E. Expand Options:** Find the third option that does not attack or collapse.
4. **P. Practice:** One honest action. One boundary. One sentence. Repeat.