

# 72-HOUR EXIT PLAN FOR TOXIC RELATIONSHIPS

## A Step-by-Step Guide to Your Safe Exit and New Beginning

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Version 1.0

*Your Safety. Your Freedom. Your Future.*

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# **Introduction: You're Not Alone**

If you're reading this, you've already taken the bravest step—acknowledging that you deserve better.

### **This guide is for you if:**

- You feel unsafe in your relationship
- You've thought about leaving but don't know how
- You worry about your children's safety
- You have no money or nowhere to go
- You're afraid of what happens if you leave
- You've tried to leave before but went back

**What This Guide Will Do:** This isn't about judgment or telling you what you should feel. This is a practical roadmap that gives you:

- A clear 72-hour timeline to safety
- Exact words to use in difficult conversations
- Real options for money and shelter
- Steps that protect you and your children
- A plan that works even with \$0 in your pocket

### **Three Important Truths:**

1. **You are not crazy.** If you feel unsafe, trust that feeling.
2. **You are not alone.** Millions have walked this path and made it to safety.

3. **You can do this.** With a plan, leaving is possible.

## How to Use This Guide

**Read in Safety:** Delete your browser history. Use incognito mode. Read at work, the library, or a friend's house if needed.

**Take What Applies:** Every situation is different. Use what helps, skip what doesn't apply.

**Move at Your Pace:** The 72-hour timeline is a framework. Adjust based on your safety needs.

**Trust Yourself:** You know your situation best. If something feels unsafe, don't do it.

Remember: The most dangerous time in an abusive relationship is when leaving. This guide prioritizes your safety above all else.

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## Part 1: Safety First

Your safety is the foundation of everything. This section helps you prepare without raising suspicion.

### Discreet Preparation

#### Start Small and Secret

##### Digital Safety:

- Clear your browser history daily
- Use incognito/private browsing mode
- Create a new email account they don't know about (use a library computer if needed)
- Turn off location sharing on your phone
- Document abuse secretly: Email photos to your new account, keep a hidden journal

##### Physical Safety:

- Memorize important phone numbers (don't just save them)
- Keep this guide hidden or read it only in safe spaces
- Have a code word with trusted friends that means "call 911"
- Identify safe rooms in your home (with locks, windows, no weapons)
- Know all exits from your home

### Your Safety Network

#### Identify 3 Safe People:

1. **Emergency Contact:** Someone who can call 911 if you use your code word
2. **Shelter Contact:** Someone whose home you can go to immediately
3. **Support Contact:** Someone who can store important items for you

*If you have no one, that's okay. Domestic violence hotlines become your safety network.*

## **Essential Documents to Gather**

### **Priority Documents (Get These First)**

#### **For You:**

- Driver's license or ID
- Social Security card
- Birth certificate
- Passport
- Immigration papers/green card
- Health insurance cards
- Bank account information
- Credit cards in your name

#### **For Your Children:**

- Birth certificates
- Social Security cards
- School records
- Medical records
- Custody papers
- Photos for ID purposes

#### **Financial/Legal:**

- Marriage certificate
- Lease/rental agreement or deed
- Car registration and insurance
- Tax returns (last 2 years)
- Pay stubs or proof of income
- Any court orders or police reports

## **How to Gather Documents Safely**

## **The Gradual Method:**

- Take photos of all documents with your phone
- Email photos to your secret email account
- Make copies one at a time at work or the library
- Store originals/copies at a trusted friend's house
- If you can't take originals, copies or photos will help

## **The Emergency Method:**

- Take photos of everything you can in one session
- Focus on ID and financial documents first
- Don't risk your safety for paperwork—you can replace documents later

## **Packing Without Suspicion**

### **The Hidden Bag Strategy**

#### **Where to Hide Your Bag:**

- At work in your locker or desk
- At a friend's or family member's house
- In your car trunk under work supplies
- In a rarely-used closet in a gym bag
- Behind holiday decorations in storage

#### **What to Pack:**

##### **Essentials (Pack These First):**

- 3 days of medications
- 3 changes of clothes (comfortable, weather-appropriate)
- Toiletries (travel-sized)
- Phone charger
- Cash (even small amounts help)
- Important documents or copies
- Comfort item (small)
- Emergency snacks and water

#### **For Children:**

- Formula/diapers if needed

- 3 changes of clothes per child
- One comfort toy (small)
- Medications
- Snacks they'll eat
- School items if leaving during school week

**The Decoy Explanation:** If asked about missing items:

- "I donated some old clothes"
- "I'm organizing for spring cleaning"
- "Taking things to the dry cleaner"
- "Lending things to [friend's name]"

## Creating Your Safe Exit Plan

**Choose Your Leaving Time:**

- When they're at work
- During their regular activities (gym, bar, friends)
- When they're sleeping (if safe to do so)
- During a planned trip they're taking

**Your Exit Checklist:**

- ☐ Documents gathered
  - ☐ Bag packed and hidden
  - ☐ Safe destination identified
  - ☐ Transportation arranged
  - ☐ Safety network notified (if safe)
  - ☐ Phone fully charged
  - ☐ Cash available (any amount)
  - ☐ Children's needs prepared
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## Part 2: Money & Shelter Options

You can leave even with no money. Here are your options.

### Emergency Cash Sources

#### Immediate Money (Within 24 Hours)

## **Sell What You Can:**

- Jewelry at pawn shops (even broken pieces)
- Electronics on Facebook Marketplace or Craigslist (meet in public)
- Clothes at consignment stores
- Books at used bookstores
- Gift cards online at CardCash or Raise

## **Ask for Help:**

- Churches often have emergency funds (you don't need to be a member)
- Salvation Army emergency assistance
- Local community action agencies
- 211 (dial or text) for local emergency funds
- Crowdfunding from friends (GoFundMe with privacy settings)

## **Work Options:**

- Plasma donation (\$50-100 first visit)
- Same-day pay apps: Wonolo, Instawork
- Food delivery with instant pay: DoorDash, Uber Eats
- Task work: TaskRabbit, Handy

## **Banking Safety**

### **Opening a Secret Account:**

#### **Step 1: Choose a Different Bank**

- Never use the same bank as your joint accounts
- Online banks are harder to track: Chime, Ally, Capital One 360
- Credit unions often have free accounts

#### **Step 2: Use a Safe Address**

- Work address
- PO Box (\$30-60 for 3 months)
- Friend's address
- Domestic violence shelter address

#### **Step 3: Go Paperless**

- Opt for email statements only

- Use your secret email address
- Turn off all mail correspondence

### **Protecting Your Finances:**

- Remove your name from joint accounts after you leave
- Freeze your credit (free at all 3 bureaus)
- Change all passwords
- Get a new phone number if on a shared plan
- Apply for emergency SNAP/food stamps immediately

## **Finding Immediate Shelter**

### **Emergency Housing Options (First 72 Hours)**

#### **Domestic Violence Shelters:**

- Call National Hotline: 1-800-799-7233
- Most provide free transportation to pick you up
- Average stay: 30-60 days free
- Include meals, clothes, toiletries
- Help with jobs, housing, legal aid
- Accept you with children
- Keep your location confidential

#### **If Shelters Are Full:**

- Churches (many have emergency rooms)
- Salvation Army
- YWCA
- Homeless shelters (say you're fleeing abuse for priority)
- Hospital emergency rooms (safe place to sleep while deciding)
- 24-hour locations: Walmart parking lot, airport, laundromat

#### **Motel Vouchers:**

- Red Cross sometimes provides
- Churches often have voucher programs
- Police departments may have victim assistance vouchers
- Catholic Charities



- United Way

## **Longer-Term Housing (After 72 Hours)**

### **Rapid Rehousing Programs:**

- Pays first month rent and deposit
- Call 211 for local programs
- Domestic violence victims get priority

### **Transitional Housing:**

- 6-24 months of subsidized housing
- Includes case management
- Helps you save and stabilize

### **Creative Options:**

- House-sitting through TrustedHousesitters
- Live-in caregiver positions
- Monastery or convent guest programs
- Work exchange: WWOOF, Workaway
- University family housing (if you can enroll in one class)

## **Legal Protections Available**

### **Protection Orders (Get Within First 48 Hours)**

#### **Temporary Restraining Order (TRO):**

- Free to file
- Granted same day in emergency
- Lasts 2-3 weeks
- No lawyer needed
- Court clerk helps with forms

#### **What Protection Orders Do:**

- Keep them away from you
- Remove them from shared home
- Temporary custody of children
- Temporary financial support
- Keep them from contacting you

## **How to Get One:**

1. Go to courthouse (domestic violence advocate can come with you)
2. Fill out forms (be specific about abuse)
3. See judge same day
4. Police serve the papers
5. Court date set within 2-3 weeks

## **Your Legal Rights**

### **You Have the Right To:**

- Take your children (without custody papers, both parents have rights)
- Take personal belongings
- Half of all joint bank accounts
- Break your lease due to domestic violence
- Victim compensation funds
- Free legal aid
- Keep your location confidential
- Get emergency custody orders

### **Free Legal Help:**

- Legal Aid (based on income)
  - Law school clinics
  - Courthouse self-help centers
  - Domestic violence agency lawyers
  - State Bar pro bono programs
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## **Part 3: Communication Cut-Off Scripts**

Having the right words ready makes leaving easier. Use these exact scripts.

### **Text Message Templates**

#### **The Initial Boundary Text**

##### **Option 1: Direct and Clear**

"I need space to think about our relationship.  
Please don't contact me for the next few days.  
I'll reach out when I'm ready to talk."

## **Option 2: Safety-Focused**

"I'm taking some time to focus on my health  
and wellbeing. I've arranged to stay elsewhere.  
Please respect my need for no contact right now."

## **Option 3: Through a Third Party**

"[Your name] has asked me to let you know they  
need space and will contact you when ready.  
Please direct any urgent matters to [lawyer/mediator]."

## **Response to Manipulation Texts**

### **If they say "I'll change":**

"I need to focus on my own wellbeing right now.  
Please respect my request for space."

### **If they threaten self-harm:**

"If you're in crisis, please call 988 or 911.  
I'm not able to help with this."

### **If they use the children:**

"Custody arrangements will be handled through  
proper channels. My lawyer will be in touch."

## **Phone Call Scripts**

### **If They Call Despite Your Boundary**

#### **Answer Only If Necessary:**

"I asked for space. I'm hanging up now.  
Please don't call again."

[Then hang up immediately]

## **If You Must Coordinate (Children/Belongings)**

### **Keep It Brief:**

You: "I'm calling about [specific issue only]."

[State the issue]

You: "What works for you?"

[Get answer]

You: "Okay. That's all. Goodbye."

[Hang up]

## **Emergency Script (If They Find You)**

### **Loud and Clear:**

"I DO NOT WANT YOU HERE. LEAVE NOW.

I'M CALLING 911."

[Call 911 immediately]

## **In-Person Boundaries**

### **If They Show Up At Your Work**

#### **To Them:**

"This is my workplace. You need to leave now  
or I'll have security escort you out."

#### **To Security/Boss:**

"This person is harassing me and I have a  
protection order. Please call security/police."

### **If They Show Up At Your Shelter/Home**

#### **Don't Open the Door. Through the Door:**

"I'm calling 911 now. Leave immediately."

#### **To 911:**

"My ex is at my door violating a protection order.  
I'm afraid for my safety. My address is [address]."

## Public Encounter Script

### If You Run Into Them:

"I have nothing to say to you."

[Walk away immediately toward other people]

### If They Follow:

[Loudly] "STOP FOLLOWING ME. I DON'T KNOW YOU."

[Enter nearest store and ask for help]

## Social Media & Mutual Friends

### Social Media Announcement

#### Simple Post (If Needed):

"I'm taking a break from social media to focus  
on personal matters. Will be back when ready.  
Thanks for understanding. ❤️"

### Script for Mutual Friends

#### When They Ask What Happened:

"I'm focusing on my safety and wellbeing right now.  
I'd appreciate if you didn't share any information  
about me with [ex's name]. Thanks for understanding."

#### If They Pressure You:

"This is what's best for me. I need friends who  
can support my decision without questioning it.  
Can you do that?"

## Email Auto-Response

### Set This Up:

"I'm currently unavailable and checking email intermittently. For urgent matters, please contact [trusted friend/lawyer]. I'll respond to non-urgent emails when able."

## The Gray Rock Method

When you must communicate (co-parenting, etc.), become boring:

- Give one-word answers when possible
- No emotion in your voice
- Don't share personal information
- Only discuss necessary business
- Be polite but completely uninteresting
- Never argue or defend yourself

**Example:** Them: "You look nice today. New outfit?" You: "No." Them: "What have you been up to?" You: "Nothing much." Them: "Can we talk about us?" You: "The children need to be picked up at 3."

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## Part 4: Social Cover Strategies

Leaving safely means leaving smart. Here's how to exit without raising alarms.

### Leaving Without Alerting

#### The Normal Day Strategy

##### Morning of Leaving:

- Follow your exact normal routine
- Make the same breakfast
- Say the same goodbye
- Leave at the same time
- Take only what you normally would

##### After You're Out:

- Go to work/school as normal
- Leave from there to your safe destination

- Have your hidden bag already there
- Don't return home

## **Creating Your Window**

### **Best Times to Leave:**

#### **The Work Window:**

- They leave at 8 AM, return at 6 PM
- You leave at 10 AM
- 8-hour safety window

#### **The Sleep Window:**

- They sleep until 10 AM on weekends
- You leave at 6 AM
- 4-hour safety window

#### **The Activity Window:**

- They go to gym/bar/friends every Thursday
- You leave 30 minutes after they do
- 2-3 hour safety window

#### **The Trip Window:**

- They're gone for work/family visit
- You leave immediately
- 1-3 day safety window

## **Believable Excuses That Work**

### **For Being Out of the House**

#### **Medical Excuses (Hard to Verify):**

- "Gynecologist appointment"
- "Mammogram screening"
- "Dentist emergency"
- "Getting bloodwork done"
- "Picking up prescription"

#### **Family Excuses:**

- "Mom needs help with computer"
- "Sister has emergency with kids"
- "Dad's medical appointment"
- "Cousin's birthday lunch"
- "Aunt fell and needs help"

### **Work/Errand Excuses:**

- "Overtime at work"
- "Grocery shopping"
- "Oil change appointment"
- "Bank error to fix"
- "Returning items to store"

### **For Missing Items**

#### **If They Notice Things Gone:**

- "Took clothes to dry cleaner"
- "Lending maternity clothes to friend"
- "Donating to church drive"
- "In the car to take to tailor"
- "At my mom's house"

### **For Emotional Distance**

#### **If They Ask "What's Wrong?":**

- "Just tired"
- "Work stress"
- "Headache"
- "Period starting"
- "Worried about [family member]"

### **Timing Your Exit**

#### **The 72-Hour Timeline**

##### **24 Hours Before:**

- Confirm your destination
- Charge all devices



- Fill up gas tank
- Get cash from ATM
- Pack final items
- Delete browsing history
- Send important docs to safe email

### **12 Hours Before:**

- Act completely normal
- Don't pick fights
- Agree with them more than usual
- Go to bed at normal time
- Set quiet alarm
- Put keys where you can grab them

### **1 Hour Before:**

- Get dressed normally
- Take normal items
- Leave lights as usual
- Don't leave a note
- Don't take time for goodbyes to pets
- Just go

### **The Moment of Leaving:**

- Walk out confidently
- Don't look back
- Drive normal speed
- Take an indirect route
- Turn off phone location
- Breathe. You did it.

## **Covering Your Digital Tracks**

### **Before You Leave:**

- Log out of all shared devices
- Clear all browser history
- Delete texts about leaving

- Turn off Find My Phone
- Log out of shared streaming services
- Remove yourself from shared calendars

### **After You Leave:**

- Change all passwords
- Set up 2-factor authentication
- Block them on all platforms
- Make profiles private
- Change security questions
- Get new email address

## **If You Have Children**

### **School Day Exit:**

- Pack their school bags normally
- Drop them at school
- Call school from safe location
- Inform them of situation
- Pick up children early
- Go directly to shelter

### **Weekend Exit:**

- "Taking kids to park/movie/grandma's"
- Pack snacks and toys (normal for outing)
- Leave during their nap time
- Or early morning before they wake

### **What to Tell Children:**

- "We're going on an adventure"
- "We're visiting somewhere new"
- "We're having a special sleepover"
- Keep it simple and calm
- Answer questions later when safe

# Part 5: First 72 Hours of Freedom

You made it out. Here's your hour-by-hour survival guide.

## First 24 Hours: Safety & Shelter

### Hours 1-3: Immediate Safety

#### First Hour:

- Get to your safe destination
- Turn off phone or put in airplane mode
- Take 10 deep breaths
- Remind yourself: "I am safe now"
- Don't second-guess your decision

#### Hours 2-3:

- Call domestic violence hotline: 1-800-799-7233
- Tell one trusted person you're safe
- If at shelter, complete intake process
- If at hotel/friend's, plan next 24 hours
- Eat something, even if not hungry
- Drink water

### Hours 4-8: Stabilization

#### Contact & Communication:

- Block them on all platforms
- Change voicemail message (neutral)
- Set up email auto-response
- Tell work you need emergency time off
- Inform children's school (if applicable)

#### Basic Needs:

- Take medications
- Shower and change clothes
- Eat a real meal
- Connect to WiFi safely

- Charge all devices

## **Hours 9-24: Initial Setup**

### **Legal & Safety:**

- File police report (if applicable)
- Start protection order paperwork
- Document any injuries (photos)
- Write down abuse timeline while fresh
- Save threatening messages as evidence

### **Practical Matters:**

- Find closest grocery store
- Locate nearest medical facility
- Get familiar with new area
- Make list of tomorrow's priorities
- Try to sleep (you're safe now)

## **Day 2: Legal & Logistics**

### **Morning: Legal Protection**

#### **Courthouse Visit (Bring ID):**

- File for protection order
- Ask for advocate assistance
- Get copies of all paperwork
- Ask about emergency custody
- Schedule court date

#### **Financial Protection:**

- Freeze credit at all 3 bureaus
- Open new bank account
- Apply for emergency assistance
- Change direct deposit at work
- Apply for food stamps/WIC

### **Afternoon: Life Logistics**

#### **Communication Setup:**

- Get new phone number (if needed)
- Update emergency contacts
- Notify HR at work (confidentially)
- Inform children's school/daycare
- Update doctor's office

### **Documentation:**

- Make list of all joint accounts
- List all debts and assets
- Gather evidence of income
- Document their information (SSN, DOB, employer)
- Start expense tracking

### **Evening: Emotional Check-In**

#### **Self-Care Basics:**

- Eat three meals
- Take a walk outside
- Call one supportive person
- Journal for 10 minutes
- List three things you're grateful for
- Go to bed at reasonable hour

## **Day 3: Building Your Foundation**

### **Morning: Resources**

#### **Apply for Everything:**

- TANF (Temporary Assistance)
- Medicaid
- Housing vouchers
- Utility assistance
- Free cell phone (Lifeline program)
- Child care assistance

### **Legal Aid:**

- Call Legal Aid office

- Schedule consultation
- Ask about divorce/custody
- Discuss financial rights
- Get referrals for ongoing help

## **Afternoon: Stability**

### **Work & Income:**

- Talk to HR about situation
- Update emergency contacts
- Discuss safety at work
- Look into EAP (Employee Assistance)
- Update insurance beneficiaries

### **Children's Needs:**

- Register for new school if needed
- Update pick-up authorization
- Talk to school counselor
- Find local pediatrician
- Research childcare options

## **Evening: Future Planning**

### **Make Your 30-Day Plan:**

- Housing goals
- Income needs
- Legal proceedings
- Children's stability
- Support system building
- Self-care routine

## **Your New Daily Routine**

### **Morning Routine (First Week)**

- 7:00 AM - Wake up, medication
- 7:30 AM - Breakfast, journal
- 8:00 AM - Check safe messages only

- 8:30 AM - Daily goal setting
- 9:00 AM - Handle one major task

### **Evening Routine (First Week)**

- 5:00 PM - Dinner preparation
- 6:00 PM - Children's needs/self-care
- 7:00 PM - Tomorrow's planning
- 8:00 PM - Relaxation time
- 9:00 PM - Gratitude practice
- 10:00 PM - Sleep routine

### **Safety Check System**

#### **Daily Safety Checks:**

- Doors locked
- Phone charged
- Someone knows where you are
- No location sharing on
- Varied routine when possible
- Trust your instincts

#### **Weekly Safety Review:**

- Change passwords
  - Check credit report
  - Review bank statements
  - Update safe contact
  - Document any contact attempts
  - Celebrate surviving another week
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## **Part 6: Emotional Recovery Starter**

The trauma is real. The healing is possible. Here's how to start.

### **Managing Fear and Guilt**

#### **When Fear Hits (It Will)**

**The Fear Spiral:** You might think:

- "What if I can't make it alone?"
- "What if they find me?"
- "What if I made a mistake?"
- "What if no one believes me?"
- "What if I have to go back?"

**Breaking the Spiral:**

**5-4-3-2-1 Grounding Technique:**

- Name 5 things you can see
- Name 4 things you can touch
- Name 3 things you can hear
- Name 2 things you can smell
- Name 1 thing you can taste

**Fear vs. Reality Check:**

- Fear: "I'll be homeless forever"
- Reality: "I have shelter for tonight"
- Fear: "I can't do this"
- Reality: "I already did the hardest part"
- Fear: "They'll take the kids"
- Reality: "I'm protecting the kids"

## **Dealing with Guilt**

**Common Guilt Thoughts:**

- "I'm breaking up the family"
- "The kids need both parents"
- "Maybe it wasn't that bad"
- "I should have tried harder"
- "They need me"

**Guilt Breakers:**

**The Truth List** (Read Daily):

- You didn't cause the abuse



- Leaving is protecting your children
- You tried to make it work
- Love shouldn't hurt
- You deserve safety
- Your feelings are valid
- Staying was dangerous
- Leaving was brave

### **When You Want to Go Back:**

- Read your abuse timeline
- Look at photos of injuries
- Read old threatening texts
- Call your support person
- Remember the worst day
- Think of your children's faces
- Give it 24 hours
- The urge will pass

## **Building Your Support System**

### **Finding Your People**

#### **Safe Support Sources:**

- Domestic violence support groups
- Therapy through victim services
- Online survivor forums
- Church support groups
- Al-Anon (if addiction involved)
- Single parent groups
- Women's centers

#### **How to Ask for Help:**

#### **Script for Friends/Family:**

"I've left an abusive relationship and I'm rebuilding my life. I need support, not advice. Can you:

- Listen without judging
- Check in on me regularly
- Help with [specific need]
- Not share my information"

### **Building Professional Support:**

- Therapist specializing in trauma
- Victim advocate
- Legal advocate
- Case manager
- Support group facilitator
- Spiritual counselor
- Doctor who understands trauma

### **Creating Boundaries**

#### **With the Ex:**

- No contact unless absolutely necessary
- All communication in writing
- Only discuss children/legal matters
- Use parenting app if co-parenting
- Never meet alone
- Gray rock method always

#### **With Well-Meaning People:**

#### **When They Say → You Respond:**

- "But they seemed so nice" → "You didn't see what I saw"
- "Think of the children" → "I am. That's why I left"
- "Can't you work it out?" → "No. It's not safe"
- "Why didn't you leave sooner?" → "I left when I could"
- "I would never put up with that" → "Everyone's situation is different"

### **Daily Coping Strategies**

#### **Morning Affirmations**

## **Say These Out Loud:**

- "I am safe today"
- "I made the right decision"
- "I am stronger than I know"
- "I deserve peace"
- "I can handle whatever comes"
- "My feelings are valid"
- "I choose my own path"

## **Anxiety Management**

### **When Panic Strikes:**

- Ice cube on wrist
- Cold water on face
- Step outside for air
- Count backwards from 100
- Call someone safe
- Squeeze and release fists
- Name your emotion: "This is fear. It will pass."

### **Daily Anxiety Prevention:**

- Morning: 10-minute walk
- Afternoon: 5-minute breathing
- Evening: Gentle stretching
- Night: Gratitude journal
- Limit caffeine
- Avoid the news
- Stay off their social media

## **Trauma Responses Are Normal**

### **You Might Experience:**

- Nightmares or insomnia
- Jumping at sounds
- Crying randomly
- Feeling numb

- Appetite changes
- Difficulty concentrating
- Feeling hypervigilant
- Physical pain
- Memory issues

### **These Are Normal Because:**

- Your body was in survival mode
- Your nervous system needs time
- Trauma changes brain chemistry
- Healing isn't linear
- Recovery takes time
- You're processing years of stress

### **Building Joy Again**

#### **Small Joy Practices:**

- Listen to one favorite song
- Take one photo of something beautiful
- Eat one thing you enjoy
- Watch one funny video
- Read one page of a book
- Draw or color for 5 minutes
- Dance to one song
- Hug someone (or a pillow)
- Say one thing you like about yourself

#### **Weekly Recovery Goals:**

- Week 1: Survive and rest
- Week 2: Establish routine
- Week 3: Connect with support
- Week 4: Make one future plan
- Week 5: Try something new
- Week 6: Celebrate progress

**Remember:** Healing isn't about forgetting. It's about building a life where the past no longer controls your future.

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## Part 7: Resources & Hotlines

### National Hotlines (24/7, Free, Confidential)

#### Crisis Lines

##### National Domestic Violence Hotline

- **Phone:** 1-800-799-7233
- **Text:** Text START to 88788
- **Online Chat:** thehotline.org
- Services: Safety planning, local resources, emotional support

##### Crisis Text Line

- **Text:** HOME to 741741
- For any crisis, including abuse

##### RAINN National Sexual Assault Hotline

- **Phone:** 1-800-656-4673
- Also helps with intimate partner sexual violence

##### National Suicide Prevention Lifeline

- **Phone:** 988
- If you're having thoughts of self-harm

### Specialized Support

##### National Child Abuse Hotline

- **Phone:** 1-800-422-4453
- Help for parents and children

##### National Teen Dating Abuse Helpline

- **Phone:** 1-866-331-9474
- **Text:** Text LOVEIS to 22522

##### LGBT National Hotline

- **Phone:** 1-888-843-4564
- LGBTQ-specific abuse support

### **Deaf Abused Women's Network**

- **VP:** 855-812-1001
- **Email:** [hotline@deafdawn.org](mailto:hotline@deafdawn.org)

### **StrongHearts Native Helpline**

- **Phone:** 1-844-762-8483
- Culturally-appropriate support for Native Americans

## **Legal Resources**

### **Free Legal Help**

#### **Legal Services Corporation**

- **Website:** [lsc.gov/find-legal-aid](https://lsc.gov/find-legal-aid)
- Finds free legal aid near you

#### **National Immigration Legal Services**

- **Website:** [immigrationadvocates.org](https://immigrationadvocates.org)
- For undocumented survivors

#### **WomensLaw.org**

- State-specific legal information
- Plain language explanations
- Court form help

#### **American Bar Association**

- **Website:** [findlegalhelp.org](https://findlegalhelp.org)
- Pro bono lawyer referrals

### **Court Resources**

#### **National Center for State Courts**

- **Website:** [ncsc.org](https://ncsc.org)
- Self-help resources by state

### **Protection Order Information**

- **Website:** [womenslaw.org/laws-state-type/restraining-orders](https://womenslaw.org/laws-state-type/restraining-orders)

## **Financial Assistance**

### **Emergency Money**

#### **Temporary Assistance (TANF)**

- Apply at local social services
- Cash assistance for families

#### **Emergency Food Stamps (SNAP)**

- Can often get within 7 days
- **Apply:** [getcalfresh.org](https://getcalfresh.org) (CA) or local office

#### **WIC (Women, Infants, Children)**

- Food assistance if pregnant or with young children
- Further assistance