

— A FREE GIFT FOR YOU —

## You Were Never *Broken* Only Surviving

*Three gentle somatic practices to begin coming home to yourself —  
body, soul, and spirit.*

A HEALING SAMPLER · BY GWENDOLYN R. WHITFIELD

+ THIS IS FOR YOU IF +

*You have poured yourself into everyone  
else until there was nothing left. You have  
survived things that weren't supposed to  
happen to you. You are 45 or older and  
wondering if it is too late to feel like  
yourself again.*

*It is not. And this is where it begins.*

BEGIN READING ↓

A LETTER TO YOU —

### Dear Woman Who Has *Held On So Long*

**I** wrote this for you because I was you. I know what it feels like to wake up in the morning and not recognize the woman in the mirror — not because she changed, but because she disappeared piece by piece while tending to everyone and everything else.

I know what survival mode feels like from the inside. The hypervigilance. The constant bracing. The exhaustion that isn't just tiredness — it lives in your bones, in your jaw, in your chest. You learned to be small, to be careful, to manage your existence so that less pain could find you.

That wasn't weakness. That was wisdom. Your body protected you the only way it knew how.

But here is what I discovered on the other side of my own survival: the body that protected you can also heal you. The same nervous system that held you in survival mode can be gently guided back into *living* mode. Not through willpower. Not through pushing harder. Through something much more ancient — breath, sensation, presence, and the radical act of feeling safe in your own skin again.

This sampler contains three practices drawn from my book, *Discovery of the Empowerment Sequence*. They are not exercises to perfect. They are invitations. Come as you are, at whatever pace feels true. There is no wrong way to begin healing.

You were never broken. You were surviving. And now — if you are ready — you get to do something else entirely.

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*With love and deep respect for all you have carried,*

**Gwendolyn R. Whitfield**

*Author · Discovery of the Empowerment Sequence*

*"Your nervous system was never broken.  
It was brilliant — doing exactly what it was designed to do.  
Now we teach it that the danger has passed."*

— DISCOVERY OF THE EMPOWERMENT SEQUENCE · GWENDOLYN R. WHITFIELD

YOUR THREE PRACTICES —

## Three Ways to Come *Back to Yourself*

Each practice takes 3–5 minutes. You do not need to do them all at once. Begin with the one that calls to you. Return to the others when you are ready. Consistency matters far more than perfection.

01 **NERVOUS SYSTEM · SAFETY**

### **The Coming Home Breath**

*For the woman whose body has forgotten what safe feels like*

*Survival mode lives in the breath. Short, shallow, held — your body staying braced for what might come next. This practice sends one simple message through your entire nervous system: the danger has passed. You are here. You are safe now.*

Inhale 4 counts

Exhale 6–8 counts

5 cycles · 3 minutes

- 1 **Find a comfortable seat** and place one hand on your belly, one on your heart. Feel the weight of your own hands. This is a signal of care — you caring for you.
- 2 **Inhale slowly through your nose** for 4 counts, letting your belly rise first, then your chest. Feel your body making room for air, for life, for this moment.
- 3 **Exhale slowly** through your nose or softly parted lips for 6–8 counts. The long exhale is the key — it directly activates the branch of your nervous system responsible for rest, safety, and receiving. Let the breath carry the tension out.
- 4 **After each exhale, pause gently** and notice: What softened? Where did you feel it? Even a small release — shoulders dropping, jaw unclenching — is your body beginning to trust.
- 5 **Repeat for 5 cycles.** If your mind wanders (it will), simply return to the sensation of the breath. You are not doing this wrong. You are practicing.

*\*What you might feel: Tingling in the hands, a heaviness in the limbs, tears arising, a wave of tiredness — all of these are signs of your nervous system beginning to release what it has been holding. Welcome them. They are not weakness. They are thawing.*

WHISPER OR BREATHE THESE WORDS

*"I am safe in this moment. My body is wise. I am allowed to rest."*

## 02 IDENTITY · SOUL

### The Woman in the Mirror

*For the woman who has lost track of who she is beneath the surviving*

*You have spent years seeing yourself through the eyes of someone who could not fully see you. This practice is about reclaiming your own gaze — meeting the woman who has been there all along, waiting patiently beneath the survival story.*

- 1 **Begin with 3 slow breaths** using the Coming Home Breath pattern from Practice 1. Let your body settle into the present moment before you begin.
- 2 **Place both hands on your heart** and close your eyes. Ask yourself quietly: *"Who was I before I learned to make myself small?"* Don't search for an answer. Simply let the question sit in your body like a stone dropped in still water.
- 3 **Imagine her — the woman you were**, or the woman you have always wanted to become. See her clearly: her posture, her expression, the way she holds herself. She is not far away. She is you, slightly unguarded.
- 4 **Step into her body** in your imagination. Feel what she feels: the steadiness in her spine, the openness in her

chest, the quality of her breath. Even 10 seconds of this sensation begins to create new neural pathways.

- 5 **Bring one sensation back** with you when you open your eyes — warmth in the chest, a feeling of length in the spine, a sense of quiet dignity. That sensation is real. It belongs to you.

*✳️ If resistance arises: If this practice brings up grief, anger, or the thought "I don't know who she is anymore" — that is not failure. That is the beginning of honesty, and honesty is the first step of every real healing. Stay with your breath. Let the feeling move through rather than pushing it away.*

SPEAK TO YOURSELF

*"I am still here. I have always been here. I am coming back to myself — one breath, one moment, one truth at a time."*

## 03 RELEASE · RENEWAL

### Letting the Body Speak

*For the woman carrying grief, anger, or heaviness she has never been given permission to put down*

*The body keeps the score — but it also knows how to release. Emotion that was never safe to express does not simply disappear. It lives in the tissue, the posture, the holding patterns of a woman in survival mode. This practice creates a safe, gentle passage for what has been held.*

- 1 **Stand or sit with feet flat on the floor.** Feel the ground beneath you — solid, steady, supportive. The earth has been here long before your pain and will be here after. You are held.
- 2 **Take a deep inhale,** filling completely. Then exhale with a long, low hum — "mmmmm" — from the belly. Feel the vibration in your chest, your throat, your face. This sound directly stimulates your vagus nerve, the great calming pathway of your body.
- 3 **Repeat 5 times.** On each hum, imagine the sound carrying something out with it — an old worry, an old story, a held tension. You don't need to name it. Just let it ride the vibration out of you.
- 4 **Place one hand on the area of your body** that feels most heavy or most tender — your chest, your belly, your throat. Breathe directly into that place. Speak internally to that part of you: *"I hear you. I see you. You have worked so hard. You can rest now."*
- 5 **Sit quietly for one minute.** Notice without judgment. A sense of lightness, unexpected tears, deep tiredness, or even nothing at all — all of it is the right response. You showed up. That is everything.

*✳️ An important note: If strong emotion arises during this practice, you are not doing anything wrong — you are simply thawing. Slow your breath, keep your feet on the floor, and return to the humming. If you feel overwhelmed, open your eyes, look around the room, name 5 things you can see. You are safe. You are here.*

A PERMISSION SLIP — READ ALOUD

*"I give myself permission to put down what was never mine to carry alone. I am allowed to heal. I am allowed to be free."*

AFTER YOUR PRACTICE —————

## Journal Your Way Through

*These prompts are gentle invitations — not assignments. Write as much or as little as feels true.  
There is no wrong answer. The only rule is honesty with yourself.*

### Prompt One

*When did I first learn to make myself small, and what was I protecting?*

Begin here, gently...

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### Prompt Two

*If survival mode is ending, what am I most afraid of feeling — and what might be waiting on the other side of that feeling?*

Write without editing yourself...

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### Prompt Three

*What is one true thing about who I am beneath the surviving? One thing that has always been mine?*

Even one word is enough to start...

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### Prompt Four

*After doing these practices, what did I notice in my body that surprised me?*

Describe sensation, not just thought...

## Ready to Go *Deeper?*

These three practices are just the beginning. The full transformation — the one that rewires your nervous system and reclaims your identity from the roots — lives in Gwendolyn's complete work.

### + THE FOUNDATION

#### Discovery of the Empowerment Sequence

The original work. The story, the science, and the four-pillar system that moves you from survival mode to sovereign selfhood — at any age, from any starting point.

### + THE PRACTICE

#### Discovery of the Empowerment Sequence Companion: Your Six-Week Journey

Six weeks of daily somatic practices, meditations, affirmations, and deep reflection — a guided transformation built around your nervous system's own wisdom.

*By Gwendolyn R. Whitfield*

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## You Have Already *Done the Hardest Part*

You survived. You are still here, still searching, still reaching for something more. That reaching — that quiet, persistent knowing that there is more for you — that is not desperation. That is wisdom. That is your soul, still intact, still calling you forward.

You are not too old. You are not too damaged. You are not too far gone. You are a woman in the middle of her becoming — and the best chapters of your story are not behind you.

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*"The woman you are becoming has been waiting inside you all along. She was never lost. She was only surviving. And now — she gets to live."*

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*With love,*

*Gwendolyn R. Whitfield*

Discovery of the Empowerment Sequence · Gwendolyn R. Whitfield  
This free sampler is a gift. Share it with any woman who needs it.  
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