

A PATH FORWARD

A 30-Day Mental Health & Stability Workbook

For Individuals Experiencing Homelessness | Women of Color On The Move (WoCoTM)

“You are not where you’ll stay. You are only where you are right now.”

What this workbook is

This is a simple daily companion — not a treatment plan, not a diagnosis. It's a tool to help you notice your own strength, take one small step each day, and stay connected to hope while you work toward stable housing. It pairs a 30-day action plan with short journaling prompts, weekly discussion questions (for use with a case manager, counselor, mentor, or support group), and encouragement to carry with you.

How to use it

- Read one day at a time. You do not have to do every step — pick the one that feels possible today.
- Use the journal prompts in any notebook, on paper, or even on your phone notes. There is no wrong way to answer.
- Bring the discussion questions to a caseworker, pastor, counselor, or trusted friend — healing happens in connection, not alone.
- If you feel unsafe, in crisis, or unable to cope, call or text 988 (Suicide & Crisis Lifeline) or call 211 for Sacramento resources, any time, day or night.

The Four Weeks

Week 1 — STABILIZE: Safety, basic needs, and your first connection to help.

Week 2 — RECONNECT: Your mind, your feelings, and your support system.

Week 3 — REBUILD: Documents, resources, skills, and small routines.

Week 4 — MOVE FORWARD: Housing steps, work, and sustaining your progress.

“Rock bottom became the solid foundation on which I rebuilt my life.” — J.K. Rowling

Week 1 — STABILIZE

Day	Focus	Today's Small Step
1	Safety first	Identify one safe place to sleep tonight. Call 211 (press 8) if you need help finding shelter.
2	Basic needs	Locate the nearest food resource today (see your WoCoTM Resource Guide) and eat at least one meal.
3	One phone call	Call 211 and complete a housing/shelter assessment, even if you've done it before.
4	Rest	Find a quiet 10 minutes today just to breathe. You don't have to solve everything today.
5	Health check	If you're sick, hurt, or need medication, visit a free clinic (Elica, WellSpace, or Loaves & Fishes Mercy Clinic).
6	Name a person	Think of one person or worker you trust. Say hello or check in with them today.
7	Reflect	Write down one thing that went okay this week, even something small.

Journal Prompts — Week 1

1. What does “safe” feel like in my body? Where have I felt even a little of that this week?
2. What is one need I met for myself this week, even if it was hard?
3. Who is one person who has shown me kindness recently?

Discussion Questions — Week 1

1. What is standing in the way of your safety right now, and who can help remove that barrier?
2. What has helped you survive up to this point? What strength did that take?

“You have survived 100% of your worst days so far.”

Week 2 — RECONNECT

Day	Focus	Today's Small Step
8	Name the feeling	Notice one emotion you're carrying today. You don't have to fix it — just name it.
9	Free counseling	Call the Genesis Mental Health Program (Loaves & Fishes) or the Mental Health Urgent Care Clinic to ask about a first appointment.
10	Talk to someone	Have one honest conversation with a case manager, chaplain, or peer support worker.
11	Grounding	Try a 5-minute grounding exercise: name 5 things you see, 4 you hear, 3 you feel, 2 you smell, 1 you taste.
12	Old connections	If it's safe, reach out to one family member or old friend — even just to say you're okay.
13	Gratitude	Write down 3 small things you're grateful for today, even if the day was hard.
14	Reflect	Look back at Day 8. Has the feeling shifted at all?

Journal Prompts — Week 2

4. What feelings am I carrying that I haven't said out loud yet?
5. When I imagine myself stable and housed, what does that version of me feel like?
6. What would I tell a friend who was going through exactly what I'm going through?

Discussion Questions — Week 2

3. What has your homelessness taught you about your own resilience?
4. What would it look like to ask for help without shame?

“Healing doesn't mean the damage never existed. It means the damage no longer controls your life.” — Akshay Dubey

Week 3 — REBUILD

Day	Focus	Today's Small Step
15	Documents	Start gathering or replacing ID, birth certificate, or Social Security card (ask 211 or Loaves & Fishes Guest Advocacy for help).
16	Money picture	Write down what money is coming in and going out, even if it's very little. No judgment — just clarity.
17	Credit check-in	Call a free credit counselor (Credit.org or GreenPath) to ask what your credit picture looks like.
18	Skills inventory	List 3 things you're good at or have done before — paid or unpaid work counts.
19	Apply somewhere	Fill out one application: a shelter bed, a tiny home referral, a job, or a benefits program.
20	Routine	Pick one small routine to repeat daily this week (a wake time, a walk, a prayer, a check-in call).
21	Reflect	What is one system or piece of paperwork that felt less scary today than it did on Day 15?

Journal Prompts — Week 3

7. What is one skill or strength I bring that a job or housing program would value?
8. What is one piece of “paperwork fear” I can shrink by asking one question this week?

Discussion Questions — Week 3

5. What is one system (housing, benefits, ID replacement) that feels confusing, and who can walk you through it?
6. What would financial stability look like for you in one year?

“You don't have to see the whole staircase, just take the first step.” — Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

Week 4 — MOVE FORWARD

Day	Focus	Today's Small Step
22	Housing step	Follow up on your 211 shelter/tiny home assessment. Ask exactly where you stand on the list.
23	Support circle	Identify 2 people or organizations who are now part of your support team.
24	Work step	Look into one workforce program (WoCoTM, NonprofitReady, or a local job center).
25	Mental health check-in	Attend or schedule a counseling session. How are you really doing?
26	Celebrate	Name one thing you've done in the last 30 days that past-you would be proud of.
27	Plan ahead	Write down what the next 30 days could look like, one goal at a time.
28-30	Sustain	Keep your routine. Keep your calls. Keep showing up for yourself — that is the whole plan.

Journal Prompts — Week 4

9. What has changed in me over these 30 days, even if my housing situation hasn't changed yet?
10. What do I want to say to the version of myself who started Day 1?

Discussion Questions — Week 4

7. What does “moving forward” mean to you — not to anyone else, but to you?
8. Who do you want in your life a year from now, and how do you start building that today?

Words to Carry With You

Homelessness is a housing crisis, not a measure of your worth. You are still you — capable of growth, connection, and change. Keep this page and return to it whenever you need it.

“Out of difficulties grow miracles.” — Jean de La Bruyère

“The struggle you're in today is developing the strength you need for tomorrow.”

“Dignity does not come from where you sleep. It comes from who you are.”

“Every storm runs out of rain.” — Maya Angelou

“You are allowed to be both a masterpiece and a work in progress simultaneously.” — Sophia Bush

“It always seems impossible until it's done.” — Nelson Mandela

“This is not the end of your story. It's the hardest chapter — and you're still writing.”

If you need help right now

- 211 (dial 2-1-1, press 8) — shelter, food, tiny homes, and resource navigation, 24/7
- 988 — call or text for a mental health or suicide crisis, 24/7
- 911 — life-threatening emergencies
- Genesis Mental Health Program (Loaves & Fishes): 916-446-0874 — free counseling for uninsured adults

This workbook is a supportive tool, not a substitute for professional medical, psychiatric, or crisis care. If you are in crisis, please contact 988 or 911 immediately.

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