



I AM A  
WARRIOR  
TOO



**#BeyondInvisibleBattles**  
**#BattleTestedForgottenVeteran**



# Disclaimer

The Warrior Spouse Toolkit is a resource created by Dagmarie — Life Coach, and Spouse of a Disabled Veteran, for educational, inspirational, and self-reflective purposes only.

This toolkit is not intended to replace professional mental health services, therapy, medical advice, or crisis support. The contents — including journal prompts, affirmations, communication tips, and self-care suggestions — are based on lived experience and coaching strategies, not clinical diagnosis or treatment.

While every effort has been made to support spouses who are navigating the complex journey of loving someone with PTSD, please know:

You are encouraged to seek professional help if you or your partner are in crisis, experiencing mental health challenges, or need medical support.

## If You Need Immediate Support:

- Veterans Crisis Line (24/7): Call or text 988, then press 1
- National Domestic Violence Hotline: 1-800-799-7233
- Military OneSource (Free Counseling & Support): 1-800-342-9647 or [www.militaryonesource.mil](http://www.militaryonesource.mil)

By using this toolkit, you agree that the creator is not responsible for any actions, decisions, or outcomes related to its content.

This is a safe space — not a clinical one.

Just keep what speaks to you and discard the rest.

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For more resources and connection, visit: [www.wayofthewiseowl.com](http://www.wayofthewiseowl.com)

Use the hashtag #BeyondInvisibleBattles to join the movement.



# Welcome Letter: A Note from One Spouse to Another

## ♥ Welcome Letter: A Note from One Spouse to Another

Dear Warrior Spouse,

If this toolkit has found its way into your hands, it's because you are carrying more than most will ever understand — and you've likely done so in silence.

Loving someone with PTSD is not easy. It's brave. It's exhausting. It's beautiful and painful and messy and holy — all at once.

I know this because I live it too.

One moment you're sharing laughter on the couch. The next, they're lost in a memory that pulls them away from you. You learn their triggers. You manage the home, the moods, the medical appointments. You speak gently when you're screaming inside. And on many days, you wonder: "What about me? Does anyone see the battle I'm fighting?"

That's why I created this toolkit. Not just as a life coach — but as someone who's stood exactly where you are.

This is your space.

A space to breathe.

To reflect.

To cry, if you need to.

To finally say, "I matter too."

Inside these pages, you'll find simple tools to help you reconnect with yourself — your voice, your emotions, your needs. This is not about fixing your partner. It's about taking care of you — the anchor, the lifeboat, the one quietly keeping it all together.

Because here's what I've learned, and I hope you remember it too:

♥ Boundaries are not betrayal.

♥ Taking care of yourself is not selfish — it's survival.

♥ You are doing your best, even on the days it feels invisible.

So breathe. This moment is yours.

You are not alone in this. You are not weak for feeling tired. You are not failing because it's hard. You are a warrior — soft-hearted, resilient, and worthy of healing, too.

I see you. I stand with you. And I created this for you.

With love, strength, and deep respect,

*Dagmarie Daniels*

Life Coach | Spouse of a Disabled Veteran | Founder of #BeyondInvisibleBattles

**“You hold someone else’s storm every day — let these pages hold yours.”**

*— Dagmarie Daniels*

# Journal Prompts

This isn’t about pretty journaling. This is about survival.

These prompts are your permission slip to feel everything — the grief, the guilt, the love, the burnout. Because when you're loving someone with PTSD, your truth often gets buried under caregiving, silence, and sacrifice. These questions are here to help you reconnect with the one person who often gets left behind in the battle: you.

***Write raw. Write real. Don’t hold back — this space is yours.***

***Encourage gentle reflection and emotional expression with these prompts:***

WHAT DOES LOVING SOMEONE WITH PTSD FEEL LIKE ON YOUR HARDEST DAYS? ON YOUR BEST DAYS?

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WHAT BOUNDARIES DO YOU NEED BUT OFTEN FEEL GUILTY SETTING?

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DESCRIBE A TIME YOU SHOWED UP FOR YOUR PARTNER — AND HOW IT MADE YOU FEEL.

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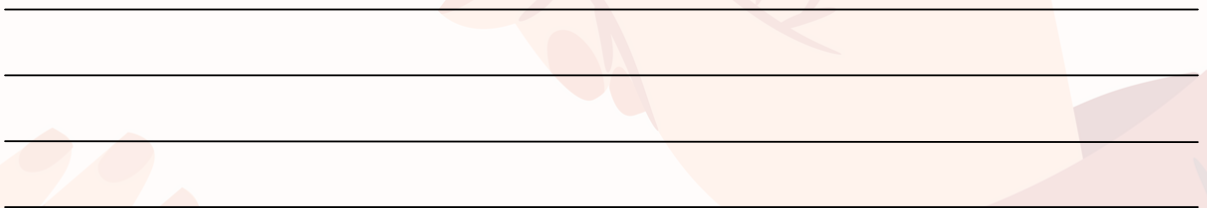
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WHAT DOES “SELF-CARE” LOOK LIKE FOR YOU WHEN NO ONE ELSE IS AROUND?

Age (Years)	Men (%)	Women (%)
18	10	5
20	15	10
25	25	20
30	35	30
35	45	40
40	55	50
45	65	60
50	75	70
55	85	80
60	90	85
65	95	90

WHAT WOULD YOU SAY TO ANOTHER SPOUSE GOING THROUGH WHAT YOU'RE GOING THROUGH?



## USE THIS IF YOU NEED MORE SPACE

[illegible]

# Daily Affirmations to Stay Grounded

When you're loving someone through PTSD, your voice often becomes the quietest in the room — drowned out by the chaos, the caregiving, and the constant emotional weight. These affirmations are small but powerful reminders that you still matter. They're not just words — they're anchors. Each one was chosen to gently pull you back to yourself when you start to drift into self-blame, emotional exhaustion, or forget your own needs. You don't have to shout them. You don't even have to believe them at first. Just whisper them to yourself — again and again — until they start to feel like home.



## ***How to Use Them:***

- Write one on a sticky note and place it on your mirror, phone case, or journal cover.
- Repeat one each morning before you start your day — even if it's whispered through tears.
- Breathe deeply as you say them out loud. Let the words settle into your nervous system.
- Choose the one you need most today — and carry it with you like armor.

***Short and powerful phrases that spouses can repeat or post in visible places:***

***“I can love deeply without losing myself.”***

***“Their pain is not my fault.  
My peace is my responsibility.”***

***“I am allowed to feel. I am allowed to heal.”***





# PTSD Communication Tips: Talking When It's Tough

Loving someone with PTSD means navigating a minefield of unspoken emotions, invisible triggers, and conversations that can turn tense without warning. You may find yourself constantly wondering, “Should I say something? Will this make it worse? Why can’t we just talk like we used to?” This section isn’t here to give you the perfect script — because perfection isn’t the goal. Connection is. These tips are here to help you protect your peace while still showing up in love. You are not responsible for their trauma, but you can help create safer space around it — while keeping yourself grounded in your truth.



## ***How to Use This Section:***

- Pause and read before or after a difficult interaction — especially when you’re overwhelmed or second-guessing yourself.
- Pick one tip at a time to focus on — keep it simple and compassionate.
- Journal after using a tip: How did it feel? What shifted? What still needs care?
- Remember: These aren’t rules. They’re tools. Use what serves you, release what doesn’t.



## **5 Gentle but Grounding Tips for Communicating Through PTSD**

### ***1. Use “I Feel” Instead of “You Always”***



Instead of: “You always shut down on me.”



Try: “I feel disconnected when we go silent.”

Shifting from accusation to emotion lowers defensiveness and invites dialogue instead of conflict. You’re sharing your truth — not assigning blame.

### ***2. Timing Matters — Pause When Emotions Run High***

Not every moment is a good moment.

When your partner is triggered, overwhelmed, or emotionally distant, it’s okay to say: “This matters, and I want to talk... when we’re both in a calmer space.”

Pausing is not giving up. It’s giving the conversation a better chance to land gently.

### ***3. Validate Their Experience Without Neglecting Your Own Needs***

Say things like:

“I know this is hard for you... and it’s hard for me, too.”

Both can be true. You can acknowledge their pain without silencing your own. You don’t have to shrink in order to be supportive.



# PTSD Communication Tips: Continued

## 4. Use Non-Verbal Signals Wisely

When words feel sharp or heavy, your presence can still speak love.

- A soft hand on their back
- A warm but brief glance
- Giving space without storming off
- Sitting silently nearby

Read their cues — but trust your own too. Sometimes touch comforts. Sometimes stillness does more.

## 5. Know When to Pause, When to Persist, and When to Protect Your Peace

You will not always get it right. That's okay.

Here's the rhythm to hold in your heart:

- Pause when it's escalating — protect the connection before it breaks.
- Persist when the silence becomes a wall — love them enough to stay engaged.
- Protect your peace when the interaction becomes hurtful or harmful — you matter, too.

Loving someone through trauma is not about fixing them — it's about staying grounded while walking beside them.





**“You are not just holding them together —  
you deserve space to breathe, rest, and remember who you are too.”**  
— Dagmarie Daniels



# **Realistic Self-Care for the Spouse Warrior**

## ***From Survival Mode to Sacred Moments of Peace***

When you're loving someone with PTSD, it's easy to fall into the pattern of managing everything — their needs, their triggers, the household, the emotional climate — and forget you have needs of your own.

But self-care isn't selfish. It's not a luxury. And it doesn't have to be expensive, time-consuming, or Pinterest-perfect. It's about creating tiny sacred moments in the chaos... so you can come home to yourself.

This section offers realistic, low-pressure practices designed for the days you feel like you're barely holding on. Use them without guilt. Use them as a lifeline.

### **✨ *How to Use This Section:***

- Choose just one practice a day. Even five minutes is enough to start shifting your nervous system.
- Don't aim for perfection. Aim for presence. Self-care doesn't have to be pretty — it just has to be yours.
- Pair with journaling. Reflect on what works for you, and what doesn't. Make this personal.
- Repeat what soothes you. Create a rhythm that becomes your reset button — especially on high-stress days.

### **💛 *5 Gentle, Doable Self-Care Practices***

#### ***1. 10-Minute Silent Walk or Stretch***

Whether it's outside with the morning sun or just around your living room, give yourself 10 uninterrupted minutes to move without multitasking.

- No podcast. No music. Just your body, your breath, and your thoughts.
- Let your mind wander or empty — either is okay.
- If 10 minutes is too much, start with 3. The key is intention, not duration.

#### ***2. “Unplug Hour” — No Tech, No Caregiving, Just You***

Set a timer for one hour a day (or even 30 minutes) to unplug from everything.

- No phone. No caregiving. No fixing.
- Light a candle, read something nourishing, doodle, sit in silence — anything that's just yours.
- This is about reclaiming your mental space, even if you're still physically in the same room.



# Realistic Self-Care for the Spouse Warrior

*Continued*

## 3. *Permission Slip Practice*

Every morning or before bed, write this simple sentence and finish it freely:

***“Today, I give myself permission to...”***

Examples:

- “...cry without explaining why.”
- “...say no without guilt.”
- “...do absolutely nothing.”

This simple exercise gives your inner self the validation it’s been waiting for — from you.

## 4. *Grounding Routine*

When emotions spike or you feel overwhelmed, use this 3-step grounding technique:

- Feet on the floor – press gently into the ground.
- 3 deep belly breaths – inhale slowly through your nose, exhale out your mouth.
- Name 3 things you see – slowly look around and say them out loud.

This practice resets your nervous system and brings you back to the present moment when your mind is spiraling.

## 5. *Create a “You Box”*

Find a small box or container and fill it with things that remind you who you are outside of caregiving. Ideas to include:

- A photo of you smiling before the hard days
- A quote that moves you
- A small object that symbolizes freedom
- A journal entry that reminds you of your strength
- A scent, song lyric, or affirmation that makes you feel safe

Open this box when you feel lost or invisible — it’s a physical reminder that you still exist and still matter.

# How to Guide: Breathwork & Stillness Routines

## Reminders That You Are Not Alone

### *Why Breathwork & Stillness?*

Breathwork and periods of stillness are two easy but powerful ways to center yourself when life gets too much, especially when you love someone with PTSD. These things can help you relax, lower your stress, and remember that you're not alone, even when things are tough.

### **Step 1: Create Your Safe Space**

- Find a quiet area where you will not be interrupted for 5-10 minutes.
- Sit comfortably, keeping your back straight yet relaxed, or lie down if you like.
- Close your eyes if you feel secure doing so.

### **Step 2: Grounding Breathwork**

Try this simple 4-7-8 breathing technique to center yourself:

- Take four slow, deep breaths in and out through your nose. Feel your belly rise.
- Hold your breath slowly for seven counts. Take a moment to enjoy the silence.
- Let go of stress and problems by fully exhaling through your mouth for eight counts.

Do this four times, or more if you have time.

**Tip:** Imagine your breath connecting you to the earth beneath you and the sky above — a reminder you are held by more than just yourself.

### **Step 3: Stillness & Presence**

- After your breath cycles, rest in stillness for 2–3 minutes.
- Focus on the sensations in your body — where do you feel tension or ease?
- If your mind wanders, gently return your attention to your breath.
- Use a simple mantra if helpful:
- “I am here. I am safe. I am not alone.”

### **Step 4: Closing & Reflection**

- Slowly open your eyes when ready.
- Take a moment to notice how you feel.
- If you journal, jot down any insights or feelings that came up.
- Carry this calm with you into your day, knowing you can return anytime you need.

### **Bonus: Daily Reminder**

Set a gentle alarm or reminder to take these few minutes daily — even when things feel okay. Consistency builds resilience.

### **Remember:**

You don't have to carry this alone. Your breath connects you to life, to others, and to your own inner strength. This moment of stillness is your sanctuary — always available, always yours.

# ◆ Boundary Checklist ◆

## So You Don't Disappear in Someone Else's Pain

For the spouse, the caregiver, the battle-tested — this is your permission to stay whole while showing up for someone else's healing.

### ✓ Emotional Boundaries

- ☐ I can hold space without holding the burden.
- ☐ I will not take responsibility for emotions that are not mine.
- ☐ I remind myself: their anger, silence, or triggers are not my fault.
- ☐ I do not need to explain or defend my boundaries to be valid.
- ☐ I allow myself to feel without guilt, even when they cannot.

### ✓ Time & Energy Boundaries

- ☐ I give support within my limits — not at the cost of my own wellness.
- ☐ I take time for myself without apology (walks, naps, silence, self-care).
- ☐ I am not available 24/7 — and that does not make me uncaring.
- ☐ I check in with myself first before saying "yes" to anyone else.
- ☐ I honor my right to rest, even when they're struggling.

### ✓ Communication Boundaries

- ☐ I do not engage in conversations when I feel unsafe or triggered.
- ☐ I can walk away without guilt when disrespect is present.
- ☐ I do not absorb toxic blame, gaslighting, or emotional manipulation.
- ☐ I ask for clarity or space when communication becomes too heavy.
- ☐ I know silence doesn't always mean love is gone — but I still deserve kindness.

### ✓ Relationship Boundaries

- ☐ I can love someone deeply and still say "this isn't okay."
- ☐ I do not betray myself in the name of loyalty.
- ☐ I remind myself: Supporting them does not mean erasing me.
- ☐ I will not shrink to keep the peace.
- ☐ I deserve connection, not just survival.

♥ **Reminder:** Boundaries don't push people away — they protect the parts of you that are worth preserving.

🔄 **Save this. Print this. Use it when you forget.**

🔊 **Share with a fellow caregiver who might be losing themselves quietly.**



**We can't fix what they don't speak. We're not mind readers—we're just human, loving them through the silence, carrying the weight of unspoken battles. But no matter how deep our love runs, we can't heal what they refuse to share. Their silence doesn't protect us—it only keeps us both in the dark. So while you're holding space for them, don't forget to hold space for yourself too. Your well-being matters. You can't pour from an empty cup. Loving someone through their pain is powerful—but loving yourself through it is essential.**

**You Don't Have to Do This Alone**  
“Even warriors need a village — healing happens faster when help has a name.”  
— Dagmarie Daniels

## **Bonus Resources: Where to Turn for Support**

***Sometimes, love isn't enough.  
And that doesn't make you weak.  
It makes you human.***

There will be moments when the weight of it all — the silence, the triggers, the responsibility — becomes too much. And while you are strong, you don't have to be strong alone. This section includes carefully selected resources for you and your partner — spaces where help is real, healing is available, and support isn't just a word.

### **How to Use This Section:**

- Bookmark or print this page so it's easily accessible during high-stress moments.
- Explore one resource at a time — find what fits your needs and comfort level.
- Reach out before you're desperate — support is most powerful when it's proactive.
- Share with other spouses — help build a community of support around you.

### **Trusted Support Resources for Spouses of Veterans with PTSD**

#### **Military OneSource**

 [www.militaryonesource.mil](http://www.militaryonesource.mil)


A free, confidential resource for military families. Offers 24/7 counseling, wellness coaching, legal and financial advice, and mental health support — all at no cost.

#### **Give an Hour**

 [www.giveanhour.org](http://www.giveanhour.org)

Connects military families and caregivers with volunteer mental health professionals across the country. A powerful option if you're seeking trauma-informed therapy or emotional support.

#### **Veteran Crisis Line (For Veterans & Their Loved Ones)**

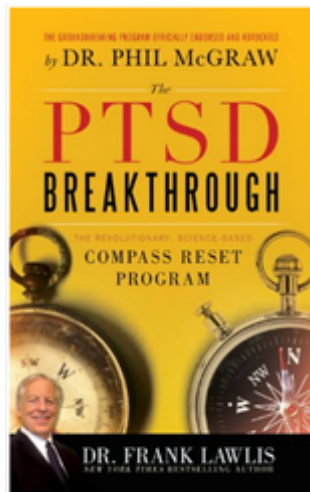
 Dial 988, then Press 1

24/7 confidential support for anyone struggling with thoughts of suicide, emotional distress, or crisis. Trained responders — many are veterans or spouses themselves.



# Bonus Resources: Continued

## Books That Heal & Empower



★★★★☆ 243

### **When Someone You Love Suffers from Posttraumatic Stress: What to Expect and What You Can Do**

When Someone You Love Suffers from Posttraumatic Stress: What to Expect and What You Can Do (Audible Audio Edition): Claudia C. Zayfert PhD, Jason DeViva PhD, Susan Boyce, Tantor Audio: Audible Books &...

 Amazon.com

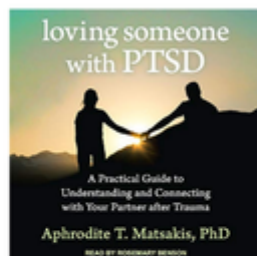


★★★★★ 79,677

### **The Body Keeps the Score: Brain, Mind, and Body in the Healing of Trauma**

The Body Keeps the Score: Brain, Mind, and Body in the Healing of Trauma (Audible Audio Edition): Bessel van der Kolk M.D., Sean Pratt, Penguin Audio: Audible Books & Originals

 Amazon.com

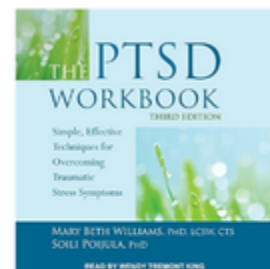


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### **Loving Someone with PTSD: A Practical Guide to Understanding and Connecting with Your Partner After...**

Loving Someone with PTSD: A Practical Guide to Understanding and Connecting with Your Partner After Trauma (Audible Audio Edition): Aphrodite T. Matsakis PhD, Rosemary Benson, Tantor Audio: Audible...

 Amazon.com



★★★★☆ 1,299

### **The PTSD Workbook, Third Edition: Simple, Effective Techniques for Overcoming Traumatic Stress Symptoms**

The PTSD Workbook, Third Edition: Simple, Effective Techniques for Overcoming Traumatic Stress Symptoms (Audible Audio Edition): Mary Beth Williams PhD CTS, Soili Poijula PhD, Wendy Tremont King, Tantor...

 Amazon.com

**“You may not wear the uniform, but you’ve carried the weight of war in your heart — and that makes you a warrior, too.**

**— Dagmarie Daniels**

## **Closing Words: We See You. We Stand With You**

If you’ve made it to the end of this toolkit, take a deep breath — not just of relief, but of recognition. Because this was never just a journal.

***This was a mirror.***

***A moment.***

***A reminder that you matter, too.***




Loving someone with PTSD is one of the hardest, most sacred roles a person can take on — and too often, it’s also one of the loneliest. But I want you to know this: You’re doing your best in an impossible situation.

Your love — even when it goes unseen or unreturned — is saving someone’s world. And your healing? It’s not just important — it’s revolutionary.

This isn’t the end of your story.

It’s the beginning of your voice being heard, your heart being held, and your life being reclaimed — one gentle step at a time.

 ***Join the Movement — #BeyondInvisibleBattles***

-  Share your story on social media or in our private spouse community — even anonymously.
-  Post a quote, a photo, or your journal reflection with the hashtag #BeyondInvisibleBattles to raise awareness and uplift another spouse who may be silently struggling.
-  Come back to this toolkit anytime you need grounding, perspective, or simply a soft place to land.

***You don’t have to do this alone anymore.***

***You’ve got a tribe now. A movement. A moment of truth that reminds you:***

 ***You are not invisible. You are not weak. You are not alone.***

***You are seen. You are held. You are loved.***

***And we stand with you — every step of the way.***

With all my heart,

*Dagmarie Daniels*

Life Coach | Spouse of a Disabled Veteran | Founder of #BeyondInvisibleBattles

# ☀️ Final Words: You Don't Have to Carry This Alone

**What if today was the day you stopped pretending you're fine...  
and reached out instead?**

I know what it's like to be the strong one.  
The steady one.  
The one who holds it all together while quietly falling apart inside.  
And I want you to hear this loud and clear:  
You don't have to keep doing this by yourself.  
If you need someone to talk to  
— someone who gets it, someone who's been there  
— I'm here.  
Not as a stranger.  
But as a wife, a warrior, and a woman walking the same road.

💛 ***Let's Talk — For Real.***

🌐 Visit my website for free life coaching support:  
👉 [www.wayofthewiseowl.com/Book-Online](http://www.wayofthewiseowl.com/Book-Online) **Select Service “Discovery Call”**

💬 Just need to talk, cry, or breathe with someone who understands?  
Schedule a free heart-to-heart session here:  
👉 [www.wayofthewiseowl.com/Book-Online](http://www.wayofthewiseowl.com/Book-Online) **Select Service “Free Heart to Heart Conversation”**

Whether it's one conversation or ongoing support, you are welcome. No pressure. No judgment. Just real talk and real care — from one spouse to another.

## 🚨 ***In Case of Crisis:***

- If you are in immediate danger, please call 911.
- If you or your partner are in a mental health crisis or having suicidal thoughts, please call the Veteran Crisis Line at 988, then Press 1 — help is available 24/7.

**I created this toolkit because I live this life, too.**  
**The sleepless nights.**  
**The fear of saying the wrong thing.**  
**The love so deep it hurts.**  
**The exhaustion so real it becomes normal.**  
**You're not broken. You're carrying too much.**  
**Let someone help carry it with you.**

# ☀️ Final Words: Continued

## 📢 *Your Next Step:*

Don't close this and go back to pretending.  
Reach out. Reclaim your breath. Rediscover yourself.

💬 Share your story using #BeyondInvisibleBattles

💻 Connect with me one-on-one at [www.wayofthewiseowl.com](http://www.wayofthewiseowl.com)

💖 Take the first step toward healing  
— not just for your partner, but for you.

With all my love and respect,

Dagmarie Daniels

Life Coach | Spouse of a Disabled Veteran | Founder of #BeyondInvisibleBattles