



## When the Therapist Is Going Through It Too

### *A steadiness guide for continuing the work without self-erasure*

This is not a resilience plan.

It is not a reminder to be grateful, grounded, or strong.

It is an orientation for therapists who are carrying their own strain while continuing to show up for others. A place to pause, notice, and tend to what is real without needing to fix it.

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## Naming the Reality

There are seasons when therapists are navigating grief, fear, anger, helplessness, or personal instability while still holding space for clients. This does not mean you are unfit for the work. It means the work is happening inside a shared and difficult reality.

Helplessness is not a failure signal.

It is often the nervous system's response to conditions that cannot be controlled, resolved, or repaired by effort alone.

Staying balanced in these seasons is not about pushing through.

It is about staying intact enough to keep going.

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## What Balance Actually Means Here

Balance does not mean feeling okay.

It means staying present without abandoning yourself.

In practice, balance often looks like:

- narrowing focus to what is *yours* to hold today
- letting some questions remain unanswered
- allowing pace to slow without interpreting that as regression
- choosing containment over constant processing

You do not need clarity to practice ethically.

You need steadiness.

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## When You're In It: Gentle Practices for Tending to Yourself

These are not assignments.

They are options. Choose one, or none.

### Before a session

- Notice what you're carrying that belongs to *you*, not the work
- Place your feet on the floor and let your weight settle once
- Orient your eyes to something steady in the room before opening the door

### Between sessions

- Allow one full exhale longer than the inhale

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- Release the last client intentionally, even silently
- Step outside or change sensory input if possible

### **After sessions**

- Name one thing you held with care
- Let your body discharge before moving on
- Resist the urge to immediately consume more information

These moments matter more than elaborate routines.

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## **Tending to the Nervous System Without Performance**

Regulation is not a private achievement.  
It is relational and contextual.

Tending to yourself may include:

- seeking supervision or consultation earlier rather than later
- adjusting caseload, pace, or exposure outside of work
- choosing fewer inputs on heavy days
- allowing rest that is not earned

None of these choices mean you care less.  
They mean you are responding to real limits with respect.

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## **Permission to Adjust Without Quitting**

Staying balanced sometimes means adjusting how you practice, not whether you practice.

Fewer sessions.  
More containment.  
Clearer edges.  
Different rhythms.

These are not signs of weakness.  
They are signs of responsiveness.

You are allowed to care deeply *and* conserve yourself.

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## **A Closing Orientation**

You do not have to be untouched to be present.  
You do not have to feel resolved to continue ethically.  
You do not have to carry this alone.

Staying steady in a hard season is not about overcoming it.  
It is about staying with yourself while it passes.

That is not self-erasure.  
That is care.