TRU HEALING SOLUTIONS

TRU HEALING SOLUTIONS | ROOTED LEADERSHIP SERIES

Your Yellow Brick Road

A Rooted Leadership Reflection & Action Guide

Remember who you are. Trust your wisdom. Keep your heart open.
Practice courage. Walk together.

Inspired by the enduring themes of The Wiz and developed for leaders navigating change and complexity.



Welcome to the Journey

Change can ask a great deal of us. We may be leading teams, caring for others, managing uncertainty, and trying to preserve our own well-being—all at the same time. Resilience is not simply the ability to endure more. Rooted leadership means staying connected to our values and relationships, making thoughtful choices under pressure, and helping create conditions in which people can thrive.

The familiar journey of Dorothy and her companions offers six useful reminders. Each character points toward a capacity we can recognize, strengthen, and practice. No one capacity is sufficient on its own. And personal practices, however helpful, cannot replace equitable policies, adequate resources, psychological safety, or organizational change.

Six guideposts for the road



Dorothy
Identity, values, grounding, and belonging



Scarecrow
Wisdom, curiosity, and learning



Tin Man
Compassion, boundaries, and flexible responses



Lion
Courage, agency, and supported action



The companions
Community, mutuality, and collective care



The Wiz
Practice over quick fixes; meaningful change over magic

How to use this guide:

Spend 10–15 minutes on the questions that matter most today. Return to the guide after a difficult week, a transition, or a leadership decision. Your answers may change as your circumstances change.

A grounding question

When the demands around me increase, what helps me remember what matters most?

_____

_____

_____

1



Dorothy:

Remember your home base

Home is not always a location or the place we began. It can be a set of values, a chosen community, a cultural tradition, a practice, or a relationship that helps us feel connected to ourselves. For some, building a sense of home also means creating the belonging or safety that was missing earlier in life.

Rootedness does not mean standing still. It means carrying a foundation that supports movement through uncertainty.

Three values I want to guide my leadership, especially under pressure:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

People, places, traditions, or practices that help me feel grounded:

_____

_____

_____

A small practice

Choose one accessible way to reconnect with your foundation this week: a meaningful conversation, time outdoors, music, prayer or contemplation, a familiar ritual, or a moment to revisit your values. Choose what is supportive for you; there is no universal grounding technique.

2



Scarecrow:

Trust your wisdom and remain curious

The Scarecrow questions his intelligence even as he demonstrates creativity and problem-solving. Many capable leaders underestimate the wisdom they have earned through experience. Confidence, however, is not the same as certainty. Rooted leadership combines trust in what we know with the humility to learn what we do not.

One strength or insight I have earned but sometimes minimize:

One assumption I am ready to question, or one skill I want to develop:

3



Tin Man:

Care for your heart without closing it

When demands and disappointments accumulate, people may become guarded, reactive, detached, overly accommodating, or exhausted. Under threat, our nervous systems can organize around protective responses such as fight, flight, freeze, appeasement, or withdrawal. These responses are not character flaws. They may be understandable adaptations to stress or danger.

The goal is not to force vulnerability or eliminate protection. It is to expand our ability to notice what is happening, evaluate safety, set boundaries, and choose a response that fits the present moment. Openness and discernment belong together.

When I feel overloaded, what patterns do I notice in my thinking, behavior, or relationships?

What boundary, support, or condition might help me respond with more flexibility?



Pause • Notice • Orient • Ask

- **Pause:** If the situation allows, slow the next response.
- **Notice:** What is happening in me and around me, without judgment?
- **Orient:** What is actually needed for safety and clarity right now?
- **Ask:** What matters, what support is available, and what is one useful next step?

If you are unsafe, prioritize protection and appropriate help rather than trying to regulate your way through danger.

4



Lion:

Practice courage with support

Courage is not fearlessness. It may look like a difficult conversation, a boundary, an honest request for help, or a first step toward change. Confidence often grows through manageable action, learning from experience, seeing others model effective responses, and receiving encouragement and practical support.

One courageous but manageable action I am considering:

What resources, allies, or safeguards would make that step more possible?

5



The companions: *We do not travel alone*

Dorothy and her companions bring different strengths to the journey. In our own lives, relationships can provide perspective, belonging, feedback, encouragement, practical help, and accountability. Community care is not simply asking individuals to be more resilient; it also means sharing responsibility and creating conditions that make care possible.

Who helps me think clearly, tell the truth, learn, rest, or act with courage?

Where am I carrying responsibility that should be shared?

Map your support

Write a name, group, or resource beside each role. It is okay to leave spaces blank; a gap can point toward a needed connection.

A person who offers perspective:

A peer or community where I can learn:

Someone I can ask for practical help:

A place where I can contribute and receive care:

6



The Wiz:

Choose practice over magic

No single course, expert, affirmation, or viral tip can resolve the complexity of being human or leading an organization. Coaching, mentoring, training, therapy, and peer learning can be valuable scaffolds. Sustainable change also takes repeated practice, reflection, resources, accountability, and—when needed—changes to structures and systems.

Healing is not only a destination or a noun. It is also a verb: something we participate in, individually and collectively. Progress is rarely linear. It should not be measured by how well we hide distress or tolerate harmful conditions.

What "quick fix" am I tempted to seek? What steady practice or structural change would be more useful?

Your Leadership & Environment Check-In

This is a reflective check-in, not a diagnostic instrument or validated organizational assessment. Consider both your personal capacities and the conditions in which you are expected to lead.

For each statement, check: 1 = rarely true • 2 = sometimes true • 3 = often true • N/A = not applicable.

Statement	1	2	3	N/A
I can name the values that guide my decisions under pressure.	○	○	○	○
I have access to trusted peers, mentors, or practical support.	○	○	○	○
I can notice stress responses and adjust when safety permits.	○	○	○	○
I have room to learn, ask questions, and acknowledge uncertainty.	○	○	○	○
Our team can raise concerns without fear of humiliation or retaliation.	○	○	○	○
Workloads, expectations, and resources are regularly examined.	○	○	○	○
Our practices address secondary traumatic stress and cumulative strain.	○	○	○	○
People affected by decisions have meaningful voice and choice.	○	○	○	○
Equity and cultural responsiveness show up in decisions, not only statements.	○	○	○	○
We have ways to learn, act, review progress, and stay accountable.	○	○	○	○

Do not total the numbers. Instead, notice patterns: Where are strengths visible? Where are gaps related to resources, relationships, policies, or power?

One strength I can build upon:

_____

_____

_____

One need that requires more than an individual coping strategy:

_____

_____

_____

Continue the journey *with TRU*

Your next step may be an individual practice, a learning community, or a commitment to change the conditions in which people work. TRU Healing Solutions offers pathways for each.

Steady in the Storm | Election Day edition

A focused, one-hour learning experience planned for November 3, 2026, exploring practical ways to respond to stress, uncertainty, and difficult moments. Visit TRU for registration details and confirmation of the session time.

REGISTER HERE

bit.ly/steadyinthestorm2

Leadership Communities of Practice

For leaders, helpers, and professionals who want sustained peer learning, deeper trauma-informed and justice-informed practice, thoughtful accountability, and opportunities to apply what they learn alongside others with shared commitments. Express interest to hear about upcoming cohorts and formats.

Organizational Learning Collaboratives

For organizations and teams prepared to move beyond one-time training toward sustained culture and systems change. Areas of focus may include workplace sustainability, psychological safety, secondary and vicarious trauma, equitable practices, staff voice, and practical implementation. Request a conversation about organizational needs and readiness.

What would be most helpful next?

- ☐ A practical workshop
- ☐ A consultation
- ☐ A Community of Practice
- ☐ Future resources and updates
- ☐ An organizational partnership

Explore TRU Healing Solutions: www.tru-healingsolutions.org

Learn about the Trauma & Resilience Initiative: www.traumaresilienceinc.org

Sign up for our newsletter here:

A final reminder

You do not need a Wizard, and you do not have to walk alone. Trust the wisdom you carry. Make room to learn. Protect your heart without closing it. Practice courage. Build relationships. And help create environments in which more of us can thrive.

This guide is educational and reflective; it is not individualized mental health care or a substitute for organizational assessment. Inspired by themes from The Wiz; this is an independent TRU resource, not affiliated with or endorsed by the production or its rights holders.