

BONUS MATERIAL

How To Be Your Own Mental Health Detective

Here is a simple, five-lens checkup you can do yourself.

You do not have to be a doctor to start understanding your own mind. You do not have to know every diagnosis or memorize every textbook. What you do need is curiosity, honesty, and a simple way to scan your life from more than one angle.

The New Medical Model does exactly that. It looks at you through five lenses:

- Biological
- Psychological
- Social
- Cultural
- Spiritual

You can use these same five lenses at home. Think of this as a guided self-checkup. It is not a replacement for professional care, but it can help you see patterns, make better decisions, and know when it is time to ask for help.

Step 1: Start With One Problem

Pick one thing that is bothering you right now.

- “I feel anxious all the time.”
- “I cannot stop overthinking at night.”
- “I keep saying yes when I want to say no.”
- “I feel empty, even when life looks ‘fine’ on paper.”

Write it in one sentence. That is your starting point.

Step 2: Look Through the Five Lenses

Now ask, for this one problem, what is happening in each part of your life.

1. Biological: Your Body

This is your brain, sleep, energy, hormones, medical conditions, medications, and substances, and within that lies your concentration, sadness, anger, and even appetite.

Ask yourself:

- Am I sleeping enough and at roughly the same time each night?
- How is my eating, movement, and physical health?
- Have there been changes in meds, hormones, or substance use?

You do not need to diagnose yourself. Just notice. “I drink more when I am stressed.”

“My sleep is a mess during exams.” “I feel worse the week before my period.” Biology does not cause everything, but it is *never* irrelevant.

2. Psychological: Your Thoughts and Feelings

This is your inner story, your beliefs, and your habits of thinking.

Ask yourself:

- What am I telling myself about this problem?
- Do I jump to worst-case scenarios?
- Do I speak to myself the way I would speak to a friend?

Notice patterns, not just moments, or what I would call “cognitive schemas”. Maybe your mind says, “I am a failure” whenever something goes wrong, or “If I am not perfect, I do not matter.” Those thoughts feed emotion, which then feeds behavior.

3. Social: Your Relationships

These are your people—family, friends, partners, coworkers, classmates.

Ask yourself:

- Who makes me feel calmer and more myself?
- Who leaves me drained, anxious, or on edge?
- Am I isolating when I actually need support?

You are not weak if you are affected by people. You are human. Sometimes a problem is not “in your head” as much as it is in a pattern with someone else. Boundary problems, lack of support, or constant conflict all increase emotional load.

4. Cultural: Your World Around You

This is the air you breathe. Gender roles, religion, politics, race, money, expectations about success, beauty, and “a good life.”

Ask yourself:

- What messages did I grow up with about what I “should” be?
- Which of those messages still fit, and which ones hurt me now?
- Where do I feel like I have to perform instead of being myself?

Maybe you were taught that rest is laziness, that emotions are weakness, or that women must always take care of others first. Those beliefs can quietly drive anxiety and depression even when “nothing is wrong” on the surface.

5. Spiritual: Your Meaning

This is not just religion. It is purpose, conscience, values, and what gives your life direction.

Ask yourself:

- What makes my life feel meaningful right now?
- When do I feel most like my real self?
- Have I drifted away from practices that once grounded me?

You do not have to have all the answers. The key is noticing whether you feel connected to anything larger than daily tasks, or whether you are running on empty.

Step 3: Name the Three Ps of a Problem

Throughout this book, I've taught you the Three Ps of a Problem (professionals call this the psychodynamic formulation) to return to again and again: predisposing, precipitating, and perpetuating across each of the Five Lenses.

- Predisposing "What has set me up for this?"
- Precipitating "What recently triggered or worsened it?"
- Perpetuating "What is keeping it going?"

For your one problem, jot down one item in each category. For example:

- Predisposing "I grew up being told I had to please everyone."
- Precipitating "New job where my boss is critical."
- Perpetuating "I say yes to every request and never rest."

You now have a mini map. Not the whole story, but more than "I am just broken."

Step 4: Choose One Small Experiment

Here is the trap. When people finally see how many factors are involved, they try to fix everything at once. That almost always fails.

Instead, pick one or two small experiments from different lenses.

Examples:

- **Biological:** Go to bed thirty minutes earlier for one week. Or talk to your doctor about that medication side effect you have been ignoring.
- **Psychological:** When you notice a harsh thought, write it down and add one kinder sentence underneath.
- **Social:** Set one boundary. "I cannot talk right now. I can call you tomorrow."
- **Cultural:** Challenge one "should." "I am allowed to rest even if something is still on my to-do list."

- **Spiritual:** Try a five-minute daily practice. A short prayer, quiet breathing, a walk without your phone, or writing down one thing you are grateful for.

Make it small enough that you could actually do it this week, not “when life calms down.”

Step 5: Know When DIY Is Not Enough

Being your own mental health detective is helpful. It is not a substitute for medical or psychotherapeutic care, especially when symptoms are severe.

It is time to reach out for professional help if you notice:

- Thoughts of self-harm, or feeling that others would be better off without you.
- Hallucinations, strong paranoia, or losing track of reality.
- Panic or depression that makes it hard to work, study, or care for yourself.
- Sudden changes in sleep, appetite, energy, or personality that scare you or people who love you.

Using the five lenses can actually make that first call easier. You can walk into a doctor’s or therapist’s office and say, “Here is what I am seeing in my body, my thoughts, my relationships, my culture, and my sense of purpose.” That is not weakness. That is wisdom.

Closing: You Are Not ‘The Problem’

The most important part of this checkup is remembering that you are not just the symptom you are worried about. You are a whole person living in a complex web of body, mind, people, culture, and meaning.

When you look across all five lenses, you stop asking, “*What is wrong with me?*” and start asking, “*What is my whole self trying to tell me?*”

That question is where real healing begins.

From Chapter 4

The New Medical Model:

Quick Use Guide

When something feels off:

Run the Three Ps → within each, scan the Five Lenses → act on one clear lever.

STEP 1: Predisposing

What part of the past set this up?

Scan across the five lenses:

1. Biological

- Low iron, thyroid issues, painful periods, poor sleep hygiene
- Chronic depletion, inconsistent routines

2. Psychological

- Perfectionism, black-and-white thinking, people-pleasing
- Old shame scripts

3. Social

- Growing up walking on eggshells
- Confusing kindness with compliance

4. Cultural

- “Be nice, never need help, beauty first, ambition last.”

5. Spiritual

- No clear values
- No anchoring ritual

STEP 2: Precipitating

What triggered this now?

Scan across the five lenses:

1. Biological

- All-nighter, skipped meals
- New intense workout without recovery

2. Psychological

- A comment, a grade, a rejection

3. Social

- Conflict, demand, guilt trip, jealousy

4. Cultural

- • Family pressure
- • Community expectations
- • Comments about your role

5. Spiritual

- Loss, disappointment, transition, comparison

STEP 3: Perpetuating

What is keeping this going right now?

Scan across the five lenses:

1. Biological

- Living on sugar/caffeine
- Scrolling past midnight
- Never moving your body

2. Psychological

- Rumination, self-attack, future-tripping

3. Social

- Vague boundaries
- Apologizing for needs
- Silent resentment

4. Cultural

- Living by a rule you never chose
- Measuring your worth by others' expectations

5. Spiritual

- Abandoning practices that give your life meaning
- Living by default

STEP 4: Choose the Lever

You are not fixing everything.

You are choosing one clear point of change.

Ask:

- What is one perpetuating habit I can stop?
- What is one constructive action I can start?

Common Levers By Lens

Biological: No Biology, No Life

- Sleep window: same bedtime and wake time for seven days
- Protein + fiber each meal; water every few hours
- Ten to twenty minutes of movement daily
- Track cycle patterns

Discernment: “Am I dysregulated—or just depleted?”

Psychological: Name It, Tame It, Train It

- Label the feeling
- Test the thought (data vs. drama)
- Edit the story
- Act for ten minutes—motion changes emotion

Stop: rehearsing worst-case scripts

Social: People Can Heal You or Bleed You

- • One boundary: “That doesn’t work for me”
- • One request: say it clearly
- • One repair: address the rupture

Stop: over-explaining your “no”

Cultural: The Rules You Inherited

- Name the rule
- Test it: True? Good? Beautiful?
- Replace it with a chosen belief

Stop: living by rules you didn’t choose

Spiritual: Your Why, Your Way

- What matters this week?
- Who am I becoming?
- What am I building today?
- Daily ritual (ten minutes)

Stop: delaying meaning “until life settles down”

How To Use This

1. Start with what feels off.
2. Run Predisposing → scan all five lenses.
3. Run Precipitating → scan all five lenses.

4. Run Perpetuating → scan all five lenses.
5. Identify what's loudest.
6. Stop one habit.
7. Start one action.

One clear step. That's how change begins.

FROM CHAPTER 5

The Biological Seven-Day Reset (Tiny Habits, Huge Results)

This is not a diet.
Not a challenge.
Not a punishment.

It's a signal to your nervous system: *I am safe.*

For seven days:

Day	Step	Description
1	Sleep	Phone on the other side of the room Aim for seven to eight hours
2	Hydration	One full glass of water first thing in the morning
3	Food	Eat every three to four hours Include protein + fat + carbs + veggies
4	Movement	Ten to twenty minutes walking outside daily No step goals. Just movement.
5	Cycle Tracking	Note your emotional energy levels each day
6	Stimulant Honesty	Notice how caffeine affects your stress
7	Digital Boundaries	No phone during meals or right before bed

Your body will respond faster than you think.

FROM CHAPTER 7

A Forty-Eight-Hour Boundary Reset

In Practice

For the next forty-eight hours:

When someone asks something of you, do not answer immediately.

Instead, say:

“Let me get back to you.”

Pause.

Check the compass:

- Is it TRUE? (Do I actually want this?)
- Is it GOOD? (Will it harm me later?)
- Is it BEAUTIFUL? (Will I feel peace after saying yes?)

If the answer is no?

Then your answer is no.

You don't owe a paragraph.

You don't owe a justification.

“That doesn't work for me.”

That is enough.

FROM CHAPTER 9

A Ten-Minute Spiritual Alignment Exercise

In Practice

Take a deep breath.

Grab a notebook or the notes app on your phone.

1. **Ask:** “What am I living for right now?”
Write the first thing that comes to mind— no censoring.
2. **Ask:** “Does this give me life or drain me?”
Circle the answer.
3. **Ask:** “What would it look like to move ten percent closer to what gives me life?”
Write one action. Do it this week.
4. **Ask:** “What small ritual can remind me of meaning every day?”
Create one. Keep it simple. Repeat it.

This is how you build spiritual strength—one choice, one practice, one honest answer at a time.

FROM CHAPTER 12

A Reflection Exercise: Building the Bridge to Legacy

In Practice

Take a quiet half hour this week.

Write down answers to these five questions:

1. What kind of woman am I becoming?
2. Who benefits from my growth?
3. What truths do I want to embody for others?
4. Where do I still need to integrate?
5. What do I want people to feel when they're around me?

Then, write one sentence that sums up your personal mission as of today.

Example: *"I bring peace into chaotic spaces by being calm, direct, and kind."*

Read it out loud.

If it feels true, good, and beautiful, keep it.

If not, refine it.

You're not just writing a goal.

You're shaping a legacy.