Bloom Anyway

Companion Guide



Cheralyn Darcey

PUBLICATION INFORMATION

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Bloom Anyway: Companion Guide

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BEFORE USING THIS WORKBOOK

Health advice and support

A reflection workbook, not treatment

This workbook offers general wellbeing information, journalling prompts and practical reflection exercises. It is not medical or mental health advice, diagnosis or treatment, and does not replace professional care. Do not delay care or change prescribed treatment because of this workbook. Speak with a qualified health professional about health concerns.

Choose what feels manageable

The prompts may bring up feelings about grief, stress, relationships, separation, identity or difficult experiences. You do not need to describe trauma, revisit painful events or find a positive lesson. Choose an ordinary situation, leave a question unanswered, skip a page or stop. If writing leaves you distressed or overwhelmed, pause and seek suitable support.

Breathing and body awareness

Breathing practices are optional. Breathe gently and comfortably; do not force a deep breath or a breath hold. You may skip the hold, breathe normally or choose another practice. Stop if you feel dizzy, uncomfortable or more distressed. If you have a condition that affects breathing, ask your health professional what is suitable.

Use the action pages safely

Only choose steps that are safe and realistic. Boundary and connection exercises do not require confrontation or contact with someone who feels unsafe. Seek specialist support if you are experiencing violence, abuse or intimidation. Keep completed worksheets private and leave out sensitive military or personal details.

When more support is needed

If distress persists or affects daily life, contact a doctor or qualified mental health professional. This workbook and its contact pages are not a crisis plan. If you or someone else is in immediate danger, call 000 in Australia or the local emergency number where you are.

Support in Australia

Lifeline: 13 11 14 for crisis support.

1800RESPECT: 1800 737 732 for domestic, family and sexual violence support.

Open Arms: 1800 011 046 for veterans and eligible families.

Outside Australia, seek qualified care and crisis or violence support services in your own country. Australian helplines may not work from overseas.

BEFORE YOU BEGIN

Welcome to your own ground

This guide gives you room to make the ideas in Bloom Anyway your own. Use it beside the book, return to a page that helps, or begin with the practice that meets today.

You do not need to complete every page. A few words, a drawing or one small action can be enough. Leave questions unanswered when they do not fit. Your circumstances may change; your answers can change with them.

Choose a pace that feels manageable. The exercises do not ask you to describe trauma or prove that difficulty has made you stronger. You may choose an ordinary situation, pause, skip a page or seek support.

Care and support

This guide offers general reflection and wellbeing practices. It is not medical or mental health advice, diagnosis or treatment, and does not replace professional care. If you are struggling, contact a qualified health professional. If you are in immediate danger, contact local emergency services.

Keep your pages somewhere private. For military family life, leave out operational details, locations or information that should not be recorded or shared. Use initials or general descriptions when useful.

Printing and use

Print at actual size on A4 paper. The guide uses light lines and ample margins for economical printing. Print the whole guide, selected sections or extra copies of the reusable pages. It is designed for handwriting; it does not contain interactive form fields.

Find the Bloom Anyway book on Amazon

Amazon link: _____

Book references use the printed page numbers. Practice worksheets adapt Bloom Anyway; additional pages extend its themes.

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Follow the chapters in order, or choose the practice that is useful now. Each chapter has a practice page and a page for applying it.

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YOUR STARTING POINT

Where I am beginning

Date: _____ Name or initials: _____

There is no score to improve. Notice what is here, and let that be your starting point.

What is taking up the most space in my life today?

What is already helping, even a little?

What would I like this guide to make room for?

What pace or boundary will help me use it kindly?

PART ONE / CHAPTER 1

The One-Step Reset

Read alongside Chapter 1, pp. 10-22; practice pp. 21-22.

Readiness does not have to arrive before a safe, useful first action. Pause, name the facts, find one small step and do only that step.

What is happening? Describe the facts without judging yourself.

What is one small, physical action within my control?

What would make that action safe and possible?

When will I take it? Choose a realistic time.

If the action is unsafe or depends on information you do not have, your first step can be to seek advice or support.

CHAPTER 1 / PUT IT INTO PRACTICE

After the first step

Return after you act, or after you decide that the step needs to change. An honest observation is more useful than an impressive result.

What did I do, or what did I learn about why it was not possible?

What shifted? It is fine if nothing feels different yet.

What is the next workable response: act, ask, pause or rest?

When could I use this reset again?

PART ONE / CHAPTER 2

The Season Reflection

Read alongside Chapter 2, pp. 23-34; practice pp. 33-34.

Different conditions need different care. Use seasonal language if it helps, or describe your circumstances in your own words.

What season am I in, and what evidence helps me name it?

How have I been treating myself for being in this season?

What does this season actually require: care, protection, effort, patience, rest or support?

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CHAPTER 2 / PUT IT INTO PRACTICE

Tend, release, allow time

Waiting can still involve care, information and support. Choose responses that fit your present conditions.

TEND: What needs one action from me this week?

RELEASE: What can I put down or reduce for now?

ALLOW TIME: What cannot be hurried, and what care does it still need?

What observable change would tell me to revisit this reflection?

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PART ONE / CHAPTER 3

The Myth Audit

Read alongside Chapter 3, pp. 35-49; practice pp. 48-49.

An old belief can sound like a fact. Choose one belief to examine gently, using the evidence of your own life.

The five myths in the book:

1. Resilient people do not feel fear; they just push through.
2. Asking for help is weakness.
3. Resilience means never breaking.
4. You should be over it by now.
5. Resilience is a fixed personality trait.

Which belief has the strongest grip on my choices?

Where might I have learned it? Share only what feels useful.

How does it affect the way I treat myself?

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CHAPTER 3 / PUT IT INTO PRACTICE

Let the evidence speak

Think of ordinary moments of asking for help, acting while afraid, learning, recovering or respecting a limit. They count.

The myth says...

My own experience shows...

A more useful and believable sentence would be...

What choice could I make if this belief had less say?

PART TWO / CHAPTER 4

Breathe: The 60-Second Reset

Read alongside Chapter 4, pp. 56-75; practice pp. 74-75.

Create a little space before choosing what comes next. The aim is honest noticing, not a requirement to feel calm.

The book's practice: sit or stand comfortably, place a hand on your stomach, inhale through your nose for four counts, pause for four and exhale through your mouth for four. Repeat for about a minute, only if comfortable.

Keep the breath gentle. You can skip the hold, breathe normally or simply notice your feet on the ground. Stop if you feel dizzy, uncomfortable or more distressed. Practise somewhere safe and stationary.

Before: What do I notice in my body or thoughts?

After: What do I notice now, including anything unchanged?

What response feels available now?

CHAPTER 4 / PUT IT INTO PRACTICE

Make room in an ordinary day

Familiarity can begin in a small, ordinary moment. Choose an anchor that fits your day, rather than adding another demand.

Where might a brief pause help me: before a call, after arriving home, or at another transition?

What existing routine could remind me?

Which version feels comfortable for me?

If I cannot pause then, what smaller option could I use later?

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PART TWO / CHAPTER 5

Learn: The Lesson Journal

Read alongside Chapter 5, pp. 76-89; practice pp. 88-89.

Choose an experience you feel steady enough to consider. It can be ordinary. You do not have to find a lesson, a gift or a positive meaning.

What manageable experience am I willing to look at today?

What might it be showing me about a need, boundary, strength or source of support?

What do I understand more clearly now, if anything?

If this feels too raw, leave the page. You can return to an everyday situation or choose another practice.

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CHAPTER 5 / PUT IT INTO PRACTICE

Borrow some kindness

Reflection can lead to a useful observation or an unanswered question. Both are allowed.

What would I want someone I love to hear in this situation?

Which part of that care can I offer myself?

What question can remain unanswered for now?

What would help next: information, a conversation, practical support or time?

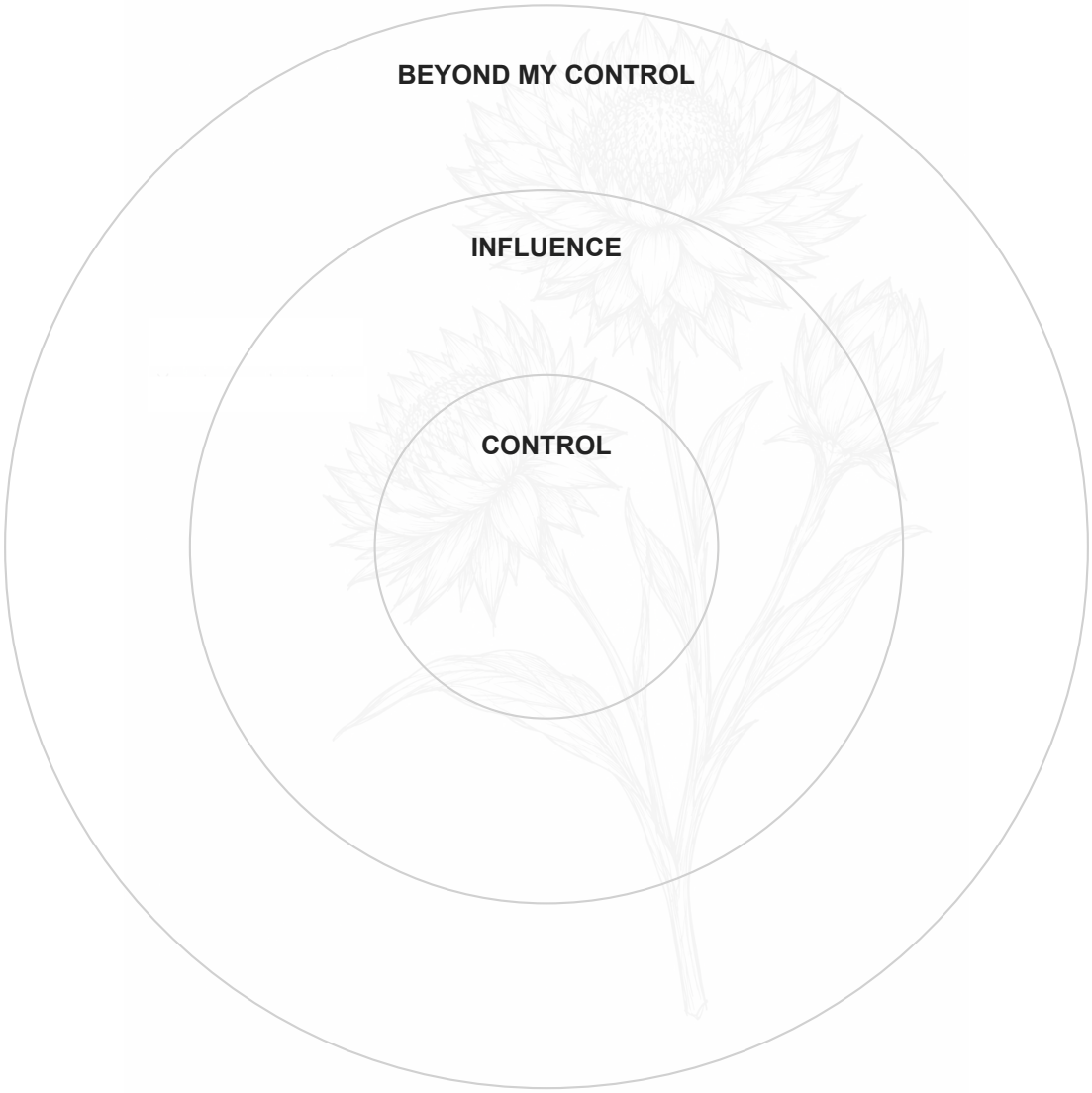
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PART TWO / CHAPTER 6

Own: The Control Circle

Read alongside Chapter 6, pp. 90-99; practice pp. 98-99.

Sort one situation into what you decide, what you may influence and what is beyond your control. Ownership does not mean responsibility for another person's behaviour.



Use short words inside the circles, draw symbols, or complete the three lists on the next page. Your circles do not need to be full.

CHAPTER 6 / PUT IT INTO PRACTICE

Put energy where it can help

A choice may be to ask, act, leave, rest or seek qualified support. Choose what fits the situation safely.

CONTROL: What is directly mine to decide or do?

INFLUENCE: What could I affect through a request or shared plan?

BEYOND MY CONTROL: What outcome, decision or timing is not mine?

Where has my energy gone, and what will I choose now?

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PART TWO / CHAPTER 7

Overcome: The One-Step Plan

Read alongside Chapter 7, pp. 100-115; practice pp. 114-115.

Choose an action small enough for the life you are actually living. A useful plan includes support and respects real limits.

What current challenge am I working with?

What is one action I can realistically take today?

What person, service, tool or practical help could support it?

What limit do I need to respect?

CHAPTER 7 / PUT IT INTO PRACTICE

Notice the small evidence

Progress might be a completed task, a clearer question, a request made or a plan adjusted. Record what actually happened.

What would tell me that something had shifted?

What happened when I tried the step?

What helped, and what obstacle needs a different response?

What is the next step, or the pause I need before it?

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PART TWO / CHAPTER 8

Move: The Daily Bloom Ritual

Read alongside Chapter 8, pp. 116-134; practice pp. 133-134.

B.L.O.O.M. is a flexible rhythm. Use all five words, or stay with the one that meets today. Date: _____

BREATHE: What do I notice after one comfortable pause?

LEARN: What is today asking me to notice or understand?

OWN: What is genuinely mine to choose today?

OVERCOME: What is one small action I can take?

MOVE: What direction does it serve, and what support or limit matters?

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CHAPTER 8 / PUT IT INTO PRACTICE

Choose a direction gently

You can imagine a direction without promising a particular outcome. Rest and changing course can belong to moving forward.

What would I like to make more room for over the next six months?

What feels worth continuing? What might need to change?

What small, safe experiment could help me learn about that direction?

When will I review it, and what support or limit will I include?

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PART THREE / CHAPTER 9

The Connection Inventory

Read alongside Chapter 9, pp. 136-148; practice pp. 147-148.

Name up to three people whose presence steadies you. Fewer is fine. Choose connection that feels safe and reciprocal.

Anchor 1: Who are they, and what does this connection offer?

When did we last connect? What small gesture might fit this week?

Anchor 2: Who are they, and what does this connection offer?

When did we last connect? What small gesture might fit this week?

Anchor 3: Who are they, and what does this connection offer?

When did we last connect? What small gesture might fit this week?

A support person or service can be an anchor too. You do not have to contact someone who feels unsafe.

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CHAPTER 9 / PUT IT INTO PRACTICE

A conversation that fits

A short message, a shared cup of tea or a practical request can be enough. Choose one connection to tend.

Who would I like to connect with, and what would I like to say?

What is making it difficult: time, distance, energy or something else?

What boundary, support or smaller gesture would help?

Afterwards: How did it feel, and what do I want to notice?

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PART THREE / CHAPTER 10

The Purpose Map

Read alongside Chapter 10, pp. 149-169; practice pp. 168-169.

Purpose can run through paid work, study, creative life, caring or volunteering. Look for the thread beneath the role.

What kinds of work or effort draw me in so fully that I lose track of time?

What am I good at that others value? Include ordinary skills.

Where do those two things meet?

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CHAPTER 10 / PUT IT INTO PRACTICE

Make purpose sustainable

A meaningful direction still needs workable conditions. Include income, flexibility, health, safety and support in your thinking.

What part of my current life already carries this thread?

What conditions would let me tend it sustainably?

What small opportunity could I explore without committing to a whole new path?

If I loosened an old comparison, what would I be free to build?

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PART THREE / CHAPTER 11

The Nourishment List

Read alongside Chapter 11, pp. 170-187; practice pp. 186-187.

Name what actually restores you. Small things belong here. This list supports everyday care; it does not replace treatment or professional support.

Write up to ten things. Beside each, note whether it has been available to you this month.

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

6. _____

7. _____

8. _____

9. _____

10. _____

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CHAPTER 11 / PUT IT INTO PRACTICE

Choose care that is available

The most useful choice is one you can access today. Consider a smaller version, practical help or a change to the conditions around it.

What do I notice about what has restored me this month?

Which one thing is available to me today?

What barrier is in the way, and what could make it easier?

What is my body or mind asking me to take seriously?

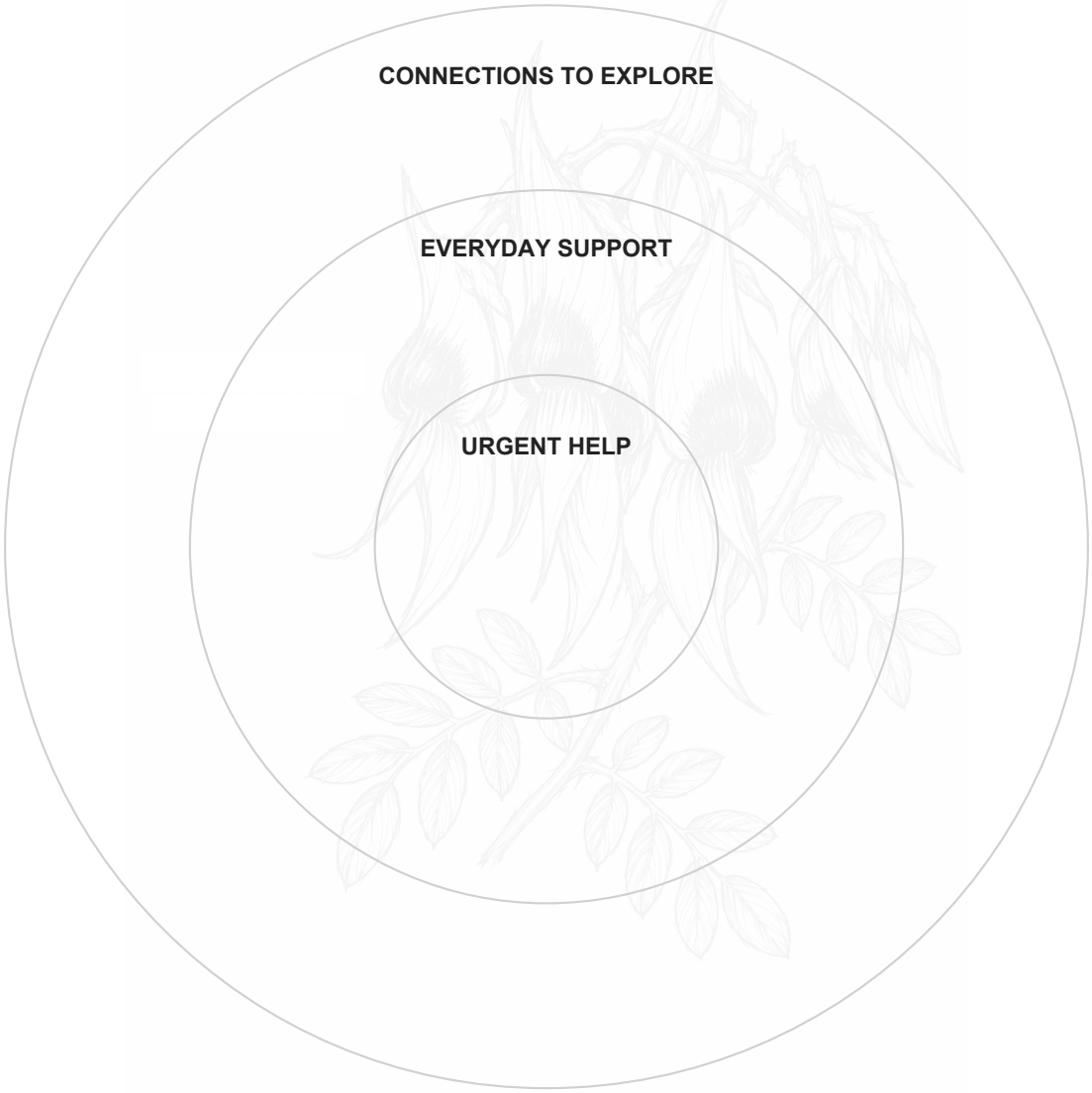
If you notice ongoing distress or health concerns, consider speaking with a qualified health professional.

PART THREE / CHAPTER 12

The Community Map

Read alongside Chapter 12, pp. 188-204; practice pp. 203-204.

Community can include people, places, groups and practical services. Sketch your connections here, or use the lists on the next page.



Centre: who you could contact for urgent practical help. Middle: people and places that offer steadiness or companionship. Outer ring: connections to strengthen or explore. Emergency services are separate from your personal network.

CHAPTER 12 / PUT IT INTO PRACTICE

One act of presence

Look without judgement. An empty space is information, not a verdict. You can build a connection slowly.

URGENT HELP: Who could I contact for practical help in a difficult moment?

EVERYDAY SUPPORT: Which people, places or groups help me feel connected?

TO EXPLORE: Where would I like to strengthen or begin a connection?

What is one gentle action for this week?

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KEEP TENDING

Where I Grow From Here

Read alongside Closing section, pp. 205-209; practice pp. 208-209.

Begin again with three honest lines. They are a way of meeting today, not a contract with a perfect future.

1. The ground I am standing on today is...

2. The B.L.O.O.M. word that feels useful in this season is...

3. One small, safe action that belongs to that word is...

What support or limit will make that action possible?

KEEP TENDING

Looking back with care

You may have completed a few pages or many. Look for what has become clearer, including needs and limits. You do not have to show improvement.

Which practice has been most useful, and when?

What do I understand about my needs or choices now?

What has stayed difficult, and what support might help?

What would I like to carry into the next season?

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MILITARY FAMILY LIFE / DEPLOYMENT AND SEPARATION

When someone is away

Use this for a deployment, an uncertain absence or another period apart. Keep operational details and sensitive information off the page.

What uncertainty am I carrying, and what is actually mine to decide?

Which home routines would help, and what can be simplified?

What safe, realistic expectations could help with communication?

Who can offer practical help, and what specific request could I make?

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MILITARY FAMILY LIFE / RELOCATION

Beginning in a new place

A move can ask for both practical action and room for loss. You can miss the old place while finding your footing in the new one.

What am I leaving behind that matters to me?

What familiar routine, object or connection can travel with me?

What are my first practical needs, and who can help?

What is one manageable way to explore local support or belonging?

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MILITARY FAMILY LIFE / IDENTITY AND CHANGING ROLES

When my role changes

Use this for a homecoming, work change, caring role, retirement or another transition. You can renegotiate what fits.

What has changed in my responsibilities or sense of self?

What part of me would I like to keep tending?

What expectation, task or arrangement needs a conversation?

What boundary or support would make this next season workable?

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REUSABLE / PRINT AGAIN WHENEVER USEFUL

A weekly tending page

Week beginning: _____

Choose only the prompts that fit. A week does not have to be productive to deserve care.

What is the ground I am standing on this week?

What needs tending, and what can wait or be released?

Which B.L.O.O.M. word would help, and what is one possible action?

What support or limit will I include?

At week's end: What happened, and what needs adjusting?

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REUSABLE / PRINT AGAIN WHENEVER USEFUL

A daily Bloom page

Date: _____

Use one word or all five. Keep the answers short if that helps.

BREATHE: What do I notice in this moment?

LEARN: What is becoming clearer, or what can remain unanswered?

OWN: What is mine to choose?

OVERCOME: What is the smallest safe action, including asking or resting?

MOVE: What support or limit belongs with my next step?

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REUSABLE / PRINT AGAIN WHENEVER USEFUL

A page for a difficult day

Date: _____

Choose one prompt. A few words can be enough. Leave the rest for another day.

What is happening, in plain terms?

What would make the next hour more manageable?

What can wait?

Who or what could help, and what could I ask for?

What is one kind, realistic next step?

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REUSABLE / PRINT AGAIN WHENEVER USEFUL

Return to the season

Date: _____

Return when conditions change or your usual response stops helping.

What has changed since I last checked in?

What does this season require now?

What needs action, what can be released, and what needs time?

What support, information or boundary would help?

What will tell me to review this again?

REUSABLE / KEEP PRIVATE AND REVIEW REGULARLY

My practical support page

Last reviewed: _____

Record only details you feel comfortable keeping here. Check contact information yourself before relying on it.

A trusted person I can ask for practical help, and how to reach them:

A health professional, service or other qualified support:

A local group, place or service I would like to explore:

A request I can make when I need help:

My local emergency number and where I keep essential information:

For immediate danger, contact local emergency services. This page is a personal contact list, not a crisis or treatment plan.

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NOTES AND OBSERVATIONS

Notes from my own ground

Use this page for observations, sketches, questions or words you want to keep.

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NOTES AND OBSERVATIONS

Room to keep growing

Return here as your circumstances change. You can begin again as often as you need.

CHERALYN DARCEY

About the author

Cheralyn Darcey is an author, artist, illustrator, national broadcaster and military wife, mother and sister. Her care for people, community and the connections that sustain us is at the heart of her work. In Bloom Anyway, she brings that personal perspective to finding resilience, nurturing a sense of self and creating a meaningful life alongside the demands of military family life.

Cheralyn has written more than two dozen titles, including many international bestsellers, with her work translated into over a dozen languages. Her books include Flowerpaedia: 1000 Flowers and Their Meanings and The Language of Houseplants.

Her fiction includes the children’s chapter book series The Florasphere Diaries and the adult romantasy series The Last Wildflower Witch.

As host of The Nightline on the Super Radio Network across Australia, Cheralyn shares stories that connect people through their histories, experiences and everyday lives. She values the opportunity to listen, bring people together and remind us that everyone has a story worth hearing.

A botanical historian and keen gardener, Cheralyn also finds inspiration in the practical pleasures of growing and tending a garden. She writes the weekly Down in the Garden column for Coast Newspapers and, as patron of the Central Coast Edible Garden Trail, champions the ways gardens can nourish friendships and strengthen communities.

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