



Rebuilding From Within

A Self-Discovery Workbook for Neurodivergent Expats

A practical and supportive tool for navigating ADHD in transition

How to Use This Workbook

This resource was created to support you - not to overwhelm you. It's designed with ADHD in mind: low-pressure, flexible, and focused on real, meaningful reflection. You don't have to complete it in order. You don't have to fill in every section. Start where you are, skip what you need to, and come back whenever you like.

Use this workbook if you:

- Recently moved to a new Country or City
- Feel like you've "fallen apart" after the move
- Suspect your coping mechanisms aren't working anymore
- Have ADHD (diagnosed or undiagnosed) and are seeking clarity and calm

This isn't about fixing you. It's about helping you *understand* yourself, and build systems that work *with* your brain - not against it.

Section 1: Where Am I Now?

Section 2: Naming My Iceberg

Section 3: What I Lost, What I Need

Section 4: Designing My Daily Anchors

Section 5: Rewriting My Coping Story

Section 6: My Personal Support Map

Section 7: Directing Your Energy: From Concern to Action

Section 8: Overcoming Rejection Sensitive Dysphoria (RSD)

Section 9: If I Forget Everything Else...



Section 1: Where Am I Now?

A gentle check-in

Take a moment to reflect on your current experience. These prompts aren't meant to be perfect.

Let your thoughts be honest and unfiltered.

- What feels heavy right now?
- What's one thing I'm doing well, even if it feels small?
- What's draining me the most in my day-to-day life?
- What's giving me the tiniest bit of energy or comfort?
- How would I describe the pace and pressure of my life today?

Bonus: Create a visual or written snapshot of your current state. This could be a drawing, a list, a color palette, or even a mood board.



Section 2: Naming My Iceberg

What others see vs. what's actually going on

Draw your own iceberg or use this template:

Above the Surface (Behaviors others notice):

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

Below the Surface (What you're actually feeling/experiencing):

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

Prompt: What happens when you're misunderstood by someone who only sees the top of the iceberg?



Section 3: What I Lost, What I Need

A space to grieve and gather insight

In transition, we often lose things we didn't even realize we depended on. Let's name those—and gently explore what you *now* know you need.

What I Lost	What I Need Now
e.g. Familiar grocery store layout	A go-to small market I can trust
e.g. My best friend down the street	Regular check-ins with someone I trust

Prompt: What's one thing I can offer myself this week to meet a small need?

Section 4: Designing My Daily Anchors

Rituals and rhythms to stabilize your day

Neurodivergent minds thrive with just enough structure—but it has to be *your* kind of structure. Let's explore small, manageable rituals you can use as anchors throughout your week.

Prompts:

- What time of day feels most disorienting for me?
- What helps me reset when I feel overwhelmed?
- What's a comforting or grounding habit I can repeat regularly?



Build Your Anchors:

- One daily ritual I want to try: _____
 - One weekly reset I can commit to: _____
 - One "emergency anchor" (for tough days): _____
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Section 5: Rewriting My Coping Story

Letting go of outdated strategies

Sometimes we hold onto coping tools that no longer serve us - not because we're doing something wrong, but because we haven't yet found new ones.

"Stop doing what does not work" as said by Yann in the [podcast](#). You can give up the coping mechanisms that do not work anymore or when they generate more issues than solutions.

Example: using fear to control your ADHD or your siblings' ADHD could be an effective coping mechanism because it creates the missing neurotransmitters in the ADHD brain needed to focus and get things done. But when this leads to anxiety, "Stop It". It will not be easy because our brain unconsciously concluded that fear gives the needed results and it doesn't realize that it has a high cost to our mental health!

Prompt: What would I say to my younger self who needed those old coping tools?

What I've Outgrown	What I want to try Instead
Forcing myself to work late	Taking structured breaks
Saying yes to everything	Practicing saying "let me check"



Section 6: My Personal Support Map

Identifying what and who holds you up

ADHD can feel isolating—especially in a new environment. This page helps you take inventory of your support system, and encourages gentle action to expand it.

Support Map Prompts:

- Someone I can talk to without masking: _____
- A tool or app that actually helps: _____
- A space (online or physical) where I feel safe: _____
- A professional or service I could explore: _____

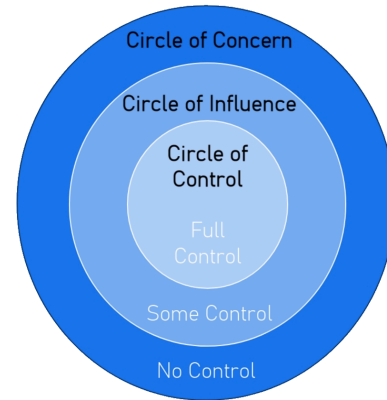
Bonus Exercise: Write one message (real or imagined) asking for help.



Section 7: Directing Your Energy: From Concern to Action

Focusing Where You Have Power

When facing challenges or uncertainty, especially while navigating a new environment, it's common to feel overwhelmed by worries outside our control. This section uses the Circles of Concern, Influence, and Control model to help you identify where to best direct your energy – shifting from reactive worry to proactive steps within your power.



Focus & Actions Prompts:

- A current worry that sits mostly in my Circle of Concern (little/no control over it):
- One aspect of this situation that might fall into my Circle of Influence (where I have some indirect influence):
- One specific action, reaction, or decision I can fully control (Circle of Control) regarding this situation:
- A typical reactive thought I have when facing difficulty (e.g., "There's nothing I can do," "He makes me so angry", etc...):
- How I could rephrase that thought proactively (e.g., "Let's see alternatives," "I decide my feelings," "I choose to..."):



Section 8: Overcoming Rejection Sensitive Dysphoria (RSD)

Understanding and managing intense emotional reactions to perceived rejection

Rejection Sensitive Dysphoria (RSD) is common with ADHD. People with RSD experience intense emotional pain in response to perceived rejection, criticism, or even the anticipation of these things. RSD can lead to emotional blockages and hinder your life. It also significantly amplifies feelings of frustration.

Understanding RSD Prompts:

- A specific situation where I felt intense emotional pain due to perceived rejection:

- How RSD has impacted my relationships or daily life?

- A personal trigger that seems to worsen my RSD symptoms:

- A strategy or technique I can use to manage my emotional response to perceived rejection:

Bonus Exercise: Think of one specific goal where fear of failure or rejection might be holding you back. What is one small step you can take *today* that is fully within your control to move towards it?



Section 9: If I Forget Everything Else...

Your grounding page

This is your "cheat sheet" for when everything feels too much. Fill it out now, and return to it as often as needed.

- My 3 non-negotiables for stability: _____
- My favorite reset button (activity, sound, ritual): _____
- A note to future me: _____

Affirmations

I don't need to earn rest, safety, or support.

I'm allowed to make my life work for *me*.

You've made it this far—and that means something. Whether you filled in every prompt or just skimmed, you're already building awareness, capacity, and care. You're rebuilding from within.

Come back to this as often as you need.

You're not doing this alone.