

The Storm Plan

Write it in calm conditions. You won't write a good one in the storm.

1. My early warning signs

My signs, specifically — not a generic list. (The day the dread starts arriving early. The sitting-in-the-car moments. The third skipped lunch in a week.)

2. My three non-negotiables

The foundations that stay in place even when everything else gets reduced. Three maximum.

3. My one person

Who can hear "I'm having a hard stretch" without needing to be managed. (*Make sure they know they're this person.*)

Name: _____ How I'll tell them they're on this plan: _____

4. Decisions I commit NOT to make in heavy weather

The categories that historically produce regret when decided from a depleted state (career? relationship? financial?). If one genuinely can't wait, I decide it with a calmer co-signer.

5. My one plank

The single restoring thing I do not cancel, even at the bottom of a bad stretch.

Storm rules: shed what guilt alone is carrying — the world notices less than you fear. "This will never improve" is weather, not forecast. Shared storms are shorter. And the time to reduce the load is when you first wonder whether you should.