PACK 1

The First Weeks

Everything from Part One. For the months-one-to-three reader.

Diagnosis Day CHAPTER 1

You Are Here CHAPTER 2

Sort the Pile CHAPTER 3

The Cost Ledger CHAPTER 4

What Was Seen Instead CHAPTER 5

What My Report Says CHAPTER 6

The Reply Card CHAPTER 7

Print what you need and leave the rest. These pages are free, there is nothing to sign up for, and nothing here expires. Each sheet reproduces the instrument from the chapter named beside it — if a page differs from the book, the book is right and this is a mistake worth telling me about.

THE ONLY THING TO WRITE DOWN TODAY

Diagnosis Day

One page, and it takes a minute. Not homework. Evidence, for later.

Date I was diagnosed:

One sentence about how today felt

(any tone — relief, numbness, anger, flatness, all four)

THE STAGE LOCATOR

You Are Here

Mark the line that sounds most like this week, then open that chapter next. This page works again in three months, when your line has changed.

DATE FILLED IN _____

One thing it can't do: it can't tell you whether you have ADHD. No page in any book can. Only an assessment does that, and if that's where you are, line one is yours.

☐ **1. "I haven't been assessed. Something in this sounds like me."**
→ *Chapter 14. How assessment actually works, what the routes are where you live, and what's worth writing down before you go.*

☐ **2. "I'm waiting — for an appointment, or for a decision I haven't made yet."**
→ *Chapter 14, same chapter. It's written for both of you, and there's a page for what to do with the waiting.*

☐ **3. "It just happened. I have the letter, or the words, and not much else."**
→ *Chapter 1, which you may have just read. If you skipped it, go back. It's the shortest chapter in the book and it's the one written for this week.*

☐ **4. "I have the word and forty open tabs."**
→ *Chapters 3 through 7. The flood, the doubt that follows it, why nobody caught this earlier, what the terms on your report mean, and what to say to the person who tells you everyone's a bit ADHD.*

☐ **5. "Medication has come up, and I don't know what I think."**
→ *Chapter 9. Not a recommendation: a framework, including the option of not taking any, and a page to take to the person who prescribes.*

☐ **6. "I need to tell someone. Or I told someone and it went badly."**
→ *Chapter 10, for partners, family, and work, including which of those doors only open one way. Chapter 7 has the short reply for the ones who shrug.*

☐ **7. "I keep thinking about the years I spent not knowing."**
→ *Chapter 11. The anger, the what-ifs, and the arithmetic your brain keeps doing at 2 a.m. about a life you didn't get to have.*

☐ **8. "I don't know how much of me is this."**
→ *Chapters 11 and 12. Where you end and the diagnosis starts, and the other letters that often travel with it.*

☐ **9. "Fine. But where do I start fixing things?"**
→ *Chapter 16, which is written for exactly that question. Chapter 15 has everything else worth reading.*

Everything you didn't mark can wait — and that's not a consolation; it's the instruction.

THE TRIAGE SORT

Sort the Pile

Take everything currently in your head, every open tab, every ought-to, every "I should probably", and put each one in a column.

DATE FILLED IN _____

THIS WEEK

almost nothing belongs here.

THIS MONTH

the two or three that have shape.

CAN WAIT

everything else. And that's most of it.

The rule that makes this work: if a deadline for it wasn't set by somebody other than you, it isn't this week. Most people's first column comes out empty. That's the correct result, not a sign you've misunderstood the exercise.

EVIDENCE FOR THE NEXT WOBBLE

The Cost Ledger

This page is not here to prove you have ADHD. It's here because the wobble erases something, and this is how you get it back. Write the cost down while you can still see it, and keep it somewhere you can find it in three months.

DATE FILLED IN _____

What it has cost me.

Three specific things, with dates or names attached. Not feelings. Events. The thing that was late. The one that ended. The money.

What I built so it wouldn't cost more.

The systems, alarms, rules, rituals, and crises you generate on purpose. Everything you do that other people apparently don't have to.

What happened the times the scaffolding failed.

The week it all came down. What that week looked like.

Date it. Keep it with the page from Chapter 1.

THE CORRECTION

What Was Seen Instead

Pick three or four moments where the system came close and missed — a school report, an appointment, a conversation with a parent, a review at work.

WHAT THEY SAW	WHAT THEY CALLED IT	WHAT WAS GOING ON

The third column is the whole exercise. That's the correction: not that you were lazy and got away with it, but that a real thing was happening and it was being named wrongly by people who were working from the wrong description.

A warning about this page. It can tip into a ledger of everyone who failed you. That is not what it is for.

THE TRANSLATION

What My Report Says

Copy out each phrase from your paperwork that you can't confidently define. Then fill in the middle column from this chapter, and leave the third for the ones this chapter didn't cover.

THE PHRASE ON MY PAPERWORK	WHAT IT MEANS IN PLAIN ENGLISH	ASK ABOUT THIS

The third column is not a complaint list. It's the start of the next conversation you have with whoever is treating you, and clinicians generally like a patient who arrives with three specific questions instead of a general unease. Take it to the start of the appointment.

DECIDED ON A CALM DAY

The Reply Card

Fill this in now, while you're calm, rather than at the table.

The three people most likely to say something.

Name them.

For each: which conversation is it?

End it · straighten the record · be known.

My one line for the first two.

Write it in your own words: the ones in the book are his, and his will sound wrong in your mouth.

What I will not do.

Complete the sentence: I'm not going to _____ in order to be believed.

That last box is the one that matters most. Deciding in advance what is off the table is what stops a two-minute conversation from becoming a performance of your own suffering for an audience that didn't earn it.