

Balancing **Service & Self**

Sustaining Educators in the Work of Caring

A Restorative Guide for K-12 Educators, Leaders, and Support Staff

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Join the Conversation



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Framing the Learning Space

- Confidentiality
- Respect for all experiences
- Right to pass
- Speak from the “I”
- Non-judgment
- Care for self while practicing

Meet Your Presenter

How it Started
Signing
yearbooks



How it's Going
With my nursing students

Mentimeter

Workshop Overview

- Reflect on the emotional demands of service-centered roles and how these demands show up in our work.
- Understand the concept of servant leadership and its potential costs.
- Recognize early warning signs of imbalance and burnout.
- Learn strategies to restore personal balance through boundaries, professional growth, and recreation.

What Does it Cost to Care?

As educators, we frequently suppress our own needs to serve others.



Mentimeter

The background of the slide features abstract, flowing shapes in shades of blue and purple, creating a modern and dynamic aesthetic.

The Paradox of Servant Leadership

The Ideal: The Philosophy

Putting others' needs first

Leading with empathy

Authenticity and compassion

The Reality: The Practice in Schools

Constant emotional labor

An ingrained moral obligation

Chronic suppression of personal boundaries

The desire to be noble creates an unsustainable expectation of constant availability.

The Anatomy of Burnout

1. Habitual Self-Sacrifice

Repressing emotional and personal needs.

2. Dissonance

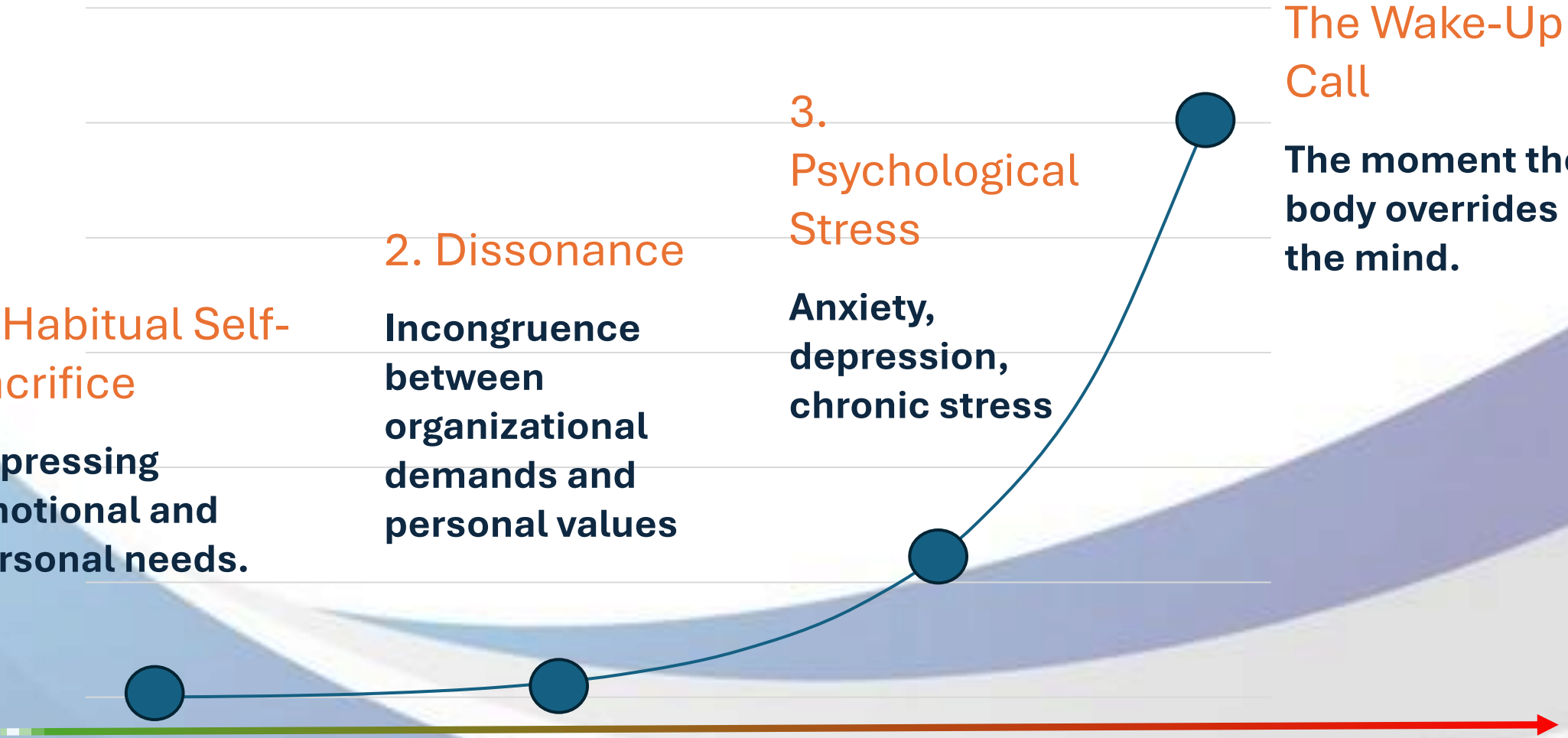
Incongruence between organizational demands and personal values

3. Psychological Stress

Anxiety, depression, chronic stress

The Wake-Up Call

The moment the body overrides the mind.



Mapping the Origins of Imbalance

Where does the dissonance between serving students and serving yourself begin?

Mindset vs. Environment

Internal vs. External

Identity as a Helper
(Over-identifying with the
'hero' role)

The Culture of Schooling
(Systemic demands and
lack of support)

Guilt
(Feeling selfish for resting)

Unspoken Expectations
(The "do more with less"
mandate)

The Central Question

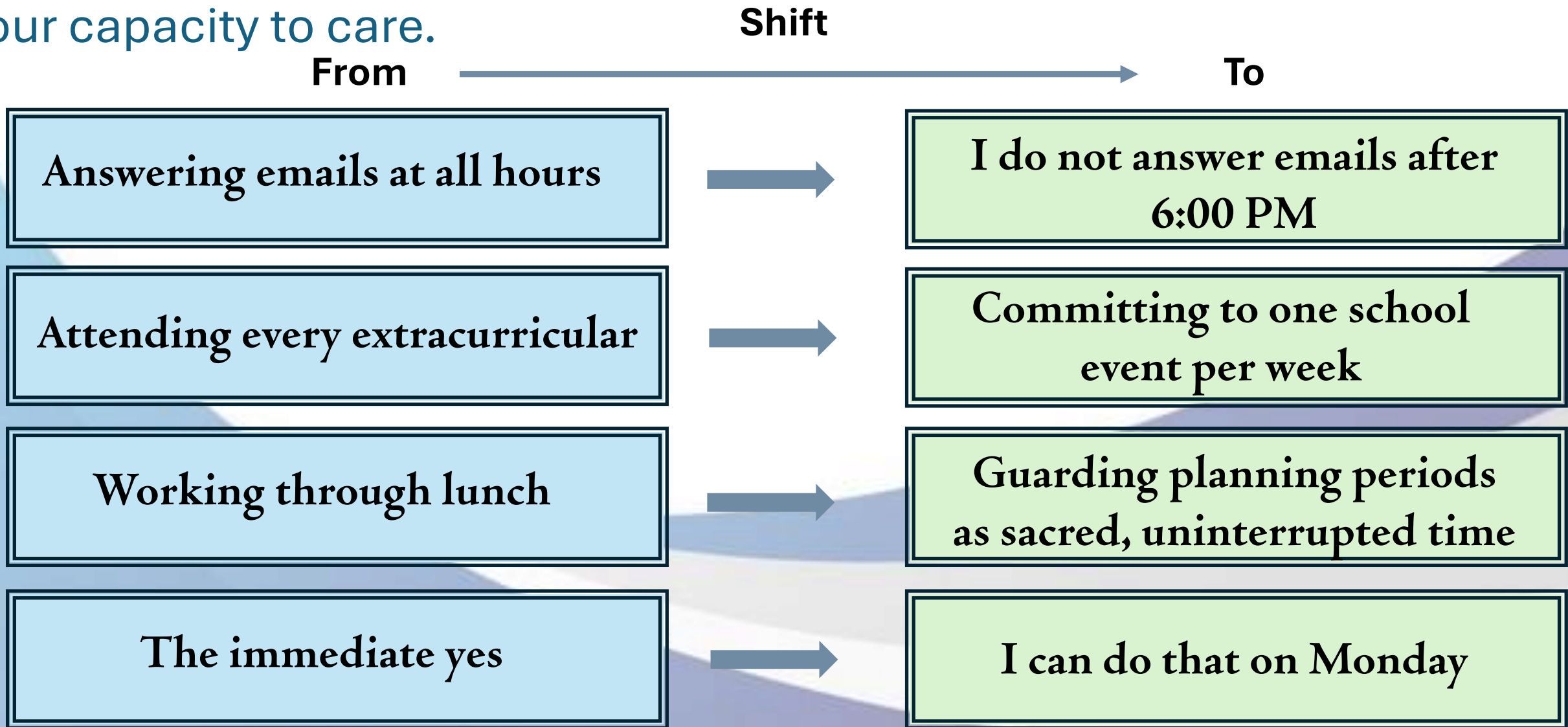


**How do we continue
to serve without
setting ourselves on
fire?**

**Moving from chronic self-sacrifice to intentional
restoration.**

Restorative Practice 1: Boundary Reset

Boundaries are not walls; they are structural scaffolding that protects our capacity to care.



Restorative Practice 2: Reclaiming Time



What activity restores you that you wish you could do more of, or you haven't done in the last 30 days?

Restorative Practice 3: PD as Restoration

Professional development is not training; it's a tool to reignite purpose and reduce friction.

Skill Building

Improves specific competence to reduce daily stress and inefficiency.

Pillar 1

Career Trajectory

Focuses on long-term goals to reignite professional purpose and vision.

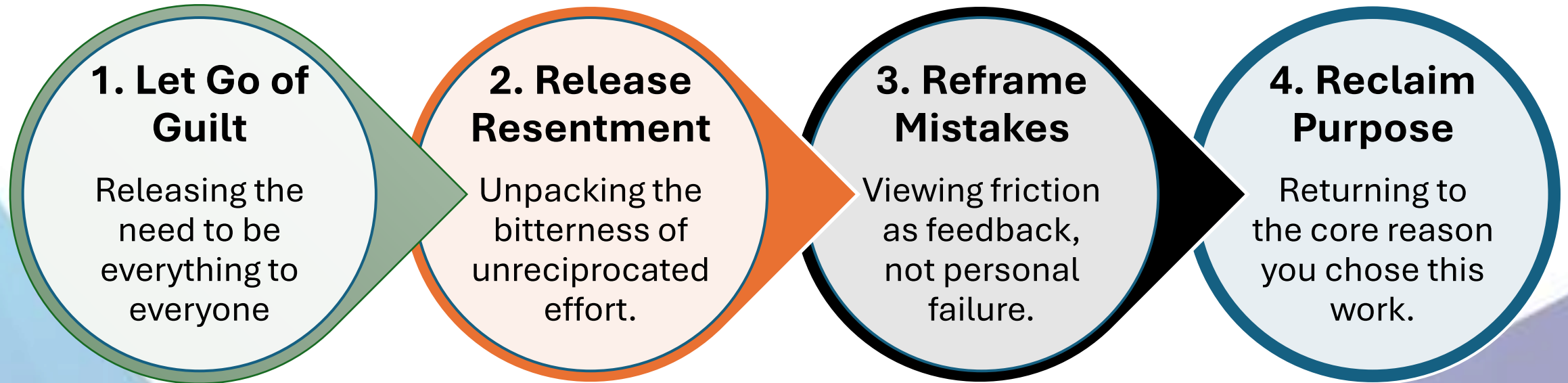
Pillar 2

Passion PD

Learning purely for the joy and intellectual stimulation.

Pillar 3

Restorative Practice 4: Emotional Forgiveness



I have returned as a stronger leader.

Your Restoration Blueprint

Build your personal plan for sustaining the work of caring.
Choose one action to start this week.

Quadrant 1: My Warning Signs

(Recognizing my body's signals and limits)

Quadrant 2: Non-Negotiable Boundaries

(Protecting my time and emotional availability)

Quadrant 3: Personal Commitments

(Scheduling recreation, joy, and guilt-free rest)

Quadrant 4: Professional Growth

(Set 3–6 month goals for identity-affirming PD)

BALANCING SERVICE & SELF: A RESTORATIVE GUIDE FOR EDUCATORS

THE HIGH COST OF CARING

THE RESTORATIVE BLUEPRINT



The Paradox of Servant Leadership
While leading with empathy is the ideal, the reality often involves unsustainable emotional labor.

The Anatomy of Burnout
Habitual self-sacrifice and repressing personal needs lead to a physical "wake-up call."

The Weight vs. The Light
Caring brings joy and purpose, but also carries the weight of exhaustion and guilt.



From (Chronic Self-Sacrifice)	To (Sustainable Boundary)
Answering emails at all hours	No emails after 6:00 PM
Attending every school event	One school event per week
Working through lunch	Guarding planning periods as sacred



PD as Restoration
Use professional development to build competence, reignite passion, and reduce daily friction.

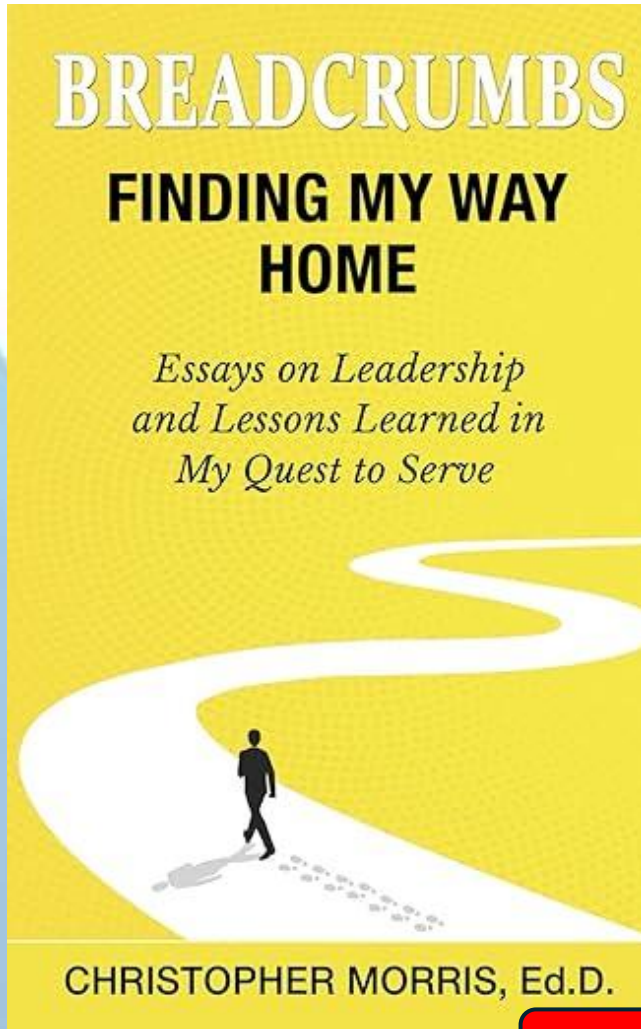
The Boundary Reset
Shift from an "immediate yes" to guarded planning periods and specific communication windows.

Reclaiming Personal Time
Schedule guilt-free recreation, exercise, and "doing nothing" to restore your capacity to care.

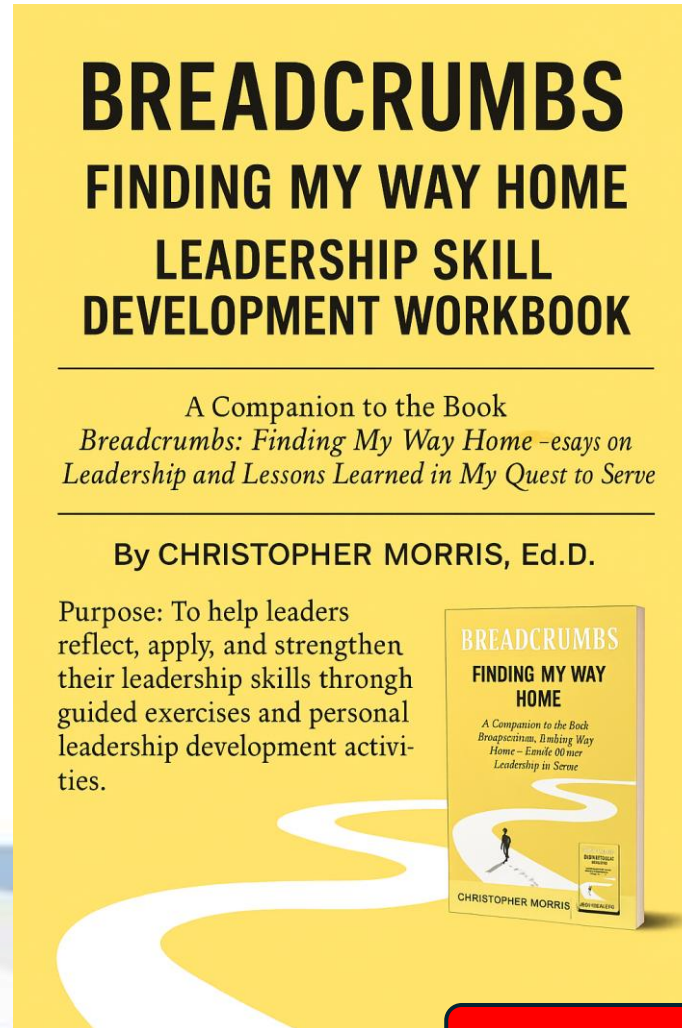


Request Documents

Additional Resources



Available now



Coming, Winter 2026

