

The Days That Are Hard

Some days, everything you have learned will feel very far away.

You will have practiced the affirmations. You will have built the rituals. You will have told yourself, honestly, that your worth was never in your hair. And then you will catch your reflection in a shop window, or find a new bare patch, or watch a photograph from three years ago appear on your phone without warning, and you will come undone.

I want you to know that this does not mean you have failed.

Healing is not a straight road with a ribbon at the end. It is a spiral. You circle back to the same feelings, but you arrive each time as a slightly different woman, carrying a little more knowing. Grief that returns is not grief that was never resolved. It is grief that loves you enough to visit again on the hard anniversaries.

Hard days have their own weather. Sometimes it is a flare, new shedding after months of calm, and your body feels like a house with a door you cannot lock. Sometimes it is regrowth that arrives and then leaves again, which can be crueler than never growing at all, because it taught you to hope. Sometimes there is no reason. You wake up heavy, and the heaviness has no story.

On those days, lower the bar. All the way down.

You do not have to be inspiring today. You do not have to be an example for anyone. You do not have to post anything, teach anyone, or model resilience. You only have to get through the hours, and getting through is enough.

Do the smallest kind things. Drink water. Open a window. Put on something soft. Eat something warm. Step outside for four minutes even if you do not want to. Call the one person who does not require you to perform. Let the dishes wait.

And let yourself cry if crying is what wants to happen. Tears are not a setback. They are the body doing its work. You will feel emptied afterward, and emptied is often the beginning of rest.

Be careful with comparison on hard days. Do not measure your morning against someone else's photograph. You are seeing their chosen moment and living your whole

hour. If a feed is hurting you, close it. Protecting your peace is not weakness. It is maintenance.

Be careful with the stories you tell, too. Notice the difference between I am having a hard day and I will always feel like this. The first is true. The second is the pain talking, and pain is a very confident liar.

Watch also for the days that stack. One hard day is weather. Weeks of not eating, not sleeping, not wanting to be here, of joy going quiet in everything you used to love, is something else. That is not weakness and it is not something to be ashamed of. It is a signal that you need more support than a good scarf and a brave morning can give. Tell your doctor. Tell a therapist. Tell someone today. Asking for help is one of the strongest sentences a woman can say. If you ever feel unsafe with yourself, reach out immediately to a crisis line or someone you trust, and stay with someone until the feeling passes. You are needed here.

And then, quietly, the hard day will end. It always does. You will sleep, and the morning will arrive with its ordinary light, and you will feel a small willingness return. Not joy yet. Just willingness. That is how it comes back.

Keep a record of the good days, if you can. A note on your phone, a line in a journal, a photo from an afternoon you felt like yourself. On the hard days, read it. Let your past self speak to your present self and say, I was here too, and it passed.

Because it did. Because it will.

You are not starting over. You are continuing, which is a much braver thing.

AFFIRMATION

Hard days do not erase my progress. I am allowed to rest, to cry, and to lower the bar. I will not measure my healing against anyone else. Pain is not a prophet, and this feeling will pass. I can ask for help, and asking makes me strong.