Phone down, I'm here.



The printable companion to the audiobook

The tools from the book, written down, so they're there the next time the phone stays dark. Cards to cut out, pages to fill in and lines to say.

The Phone Down Kit

For Stop Waiting for His Text.

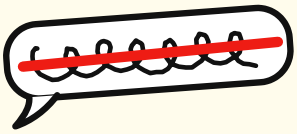
Eight tools from the book, free for listeners.

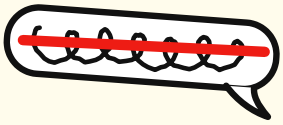
Mariah Renner

SECRET SELF CARE, BOOK 5
PRINT IT, OR KEEP IT ON YOUR PHONE

START HERE

Phone down, I'm here.





You didn't fix or decide anything. You just put a little space between the feeling and your thumb. That space is where everything else in this book happens.

How to use this kit

Every exercise has a name and a short phrase, like Phone down, I'm here, so after a few goes you can do it without me. Cut out the cards, fill in the pages, or keep a photo on your phone.

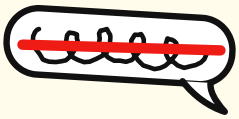
The whole book in one breath

When the alarm goes off: the Pause, the Proof, the Choice. When the urge to text hits: the 20-minute rule. When you're working out what someone's giving you: bread, not crumbs. And when you need something: a small, clear ask.

1	**Sixty-Second Phone Down card**	The phrase, one slow breath out and the one-sentence fear, on a cut-out card for when your thumb heads for the chat.	3
2	**Pause, Proof, Choice card**	The three words, one sentence each: settle enough to choose, zoom out to the pattern, decide from your own standards.	4
3	**The 20-Minute Rule**	For a strong urge to text: the full Phone Down, ideas for the rest of the twenty minutes and your choice at the end.	5
4	**Breadcrumbs vs. Bread sort**	Plans, consistency and follow-through on one side, crumbs on the other, said plainly and held up against what you want.	7
5	**Three sentences you can steal**	Short asks that start with I, a calm answer if he calls you needy, and one small, clear ask to make this week.	9
6	**Know Your Own Answer First**	Before the "what are we" talk: what you want in one sentence, a boundary, not an ultimatum, and your check-in date.	10
7	**Kind and Brief message**	Five sentences that ask for no reply, plus what to set up first: one friend, one agreed word, one evening plan.	12
8	**The setback card**	Three or four lines for the night the old checking comes back, with a friend on it and a plan if she is slow to reply.	13
+	**An Ending of Your Own**	Four answers, a few lines each, to read back to yourself.	14
+	**Lines worth keeping**	The short lines from the book, on one page.	15

Practice the tools: kalderno.com/secure/practice

Sixty-Second Phone Down card



The next time the phone stays dark and your thumb is already heading for the chat, do Sixty-Second Phone Down once before you open it. You're still allowed to open the chat afterward.

FRONT

Phone down, I'm here.

Say it with me, out loud or in your head.

BACK

1. If you're holding your phone, turn it face down. Screen hidden.
2. If it feels okay, rest one hand flat on the middle of your chest.
3. Now breathe in normally. And let one slow breath out, longer than the in-breath. **Out, two, three, four, five, six.**
4. Now name the fear. One sentence. Not the whole story, just the fear underneath it.

Cut along the dashes Fold on the dots Or take a photo for your phone

FRONT

Here's the eyes-open version.

Press your feet into the ground. Feel the floor or the sidewalk pushing back. Name three things you can see. Then the one slow exhale, and the one-sentence fear.

BACK: THE FEAR UNDERNEATH IT

I'm scared he's losing interest.

I'm scared I said something wrong.

I'm scared I'm about to be left again.

Mine: _____

SAME PHRASE

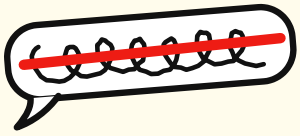
Same exercise. Same phrase. Phone down, I'm here.

IF IT SURPRISES YOU

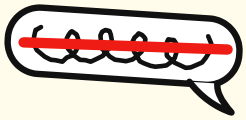
If the fear that comes out surprises you, notice that. What came out was "I'm scared I'm only fun on Sundays."

SIXTY SECONDS

And if the check marks turned blue while your phone was face down, they'll still be blue in sixty seconds.



Pause, Proof, Choice card



Settle enough to choose, zoom out to the pattern, then decide from your own standards. **Speed isn't the problem. Who's driving is the question.**

FRONT

Pause.
Proof.
Choice.

Say the three words with me.

BACK: ONE SENTENCE EACH

Pause "I'm at about a six, and that's enough to decide."

Proof "He usually goes quiet midweek, and he's replied by Friday every time."

Choice "I'm going to wait until tomorrow," or "I'm going to send one clear message," or "I'm not going to text, and I'm going to bed."

Cut along the dashes Fold on the dots Or take a photo for your phone

FRONT

So how do you know you're settled enough?

BACK: A FEW SIGNS

1. You can read his last message and it only means one thing, instead of seven.
2. Your breath goes past your collarbones again.
3. You can wait another ten seconds without it feeling unbearable.

Think of your alarm on a scale from one to ten. One is lying on a beach. Ten is the moment your stomach drops when the phone lights up. **If you're at a nine, you don't need to get to a one.**

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 **9** **10**

PAUSE

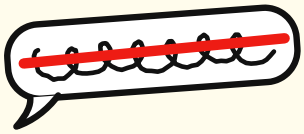
The Pause is about your body. Not until you're calm. Just enough to choose.

PROOF

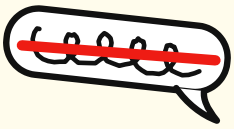
The Proof is about evidence. And the main rule is: zoom out. One late reply tells you almost nothing.

CHOICE

The Choice is about you. Your standards. What you're willing to accept.



The 20-Minute Rule



Here's the tool. When the urge to text hits, the itchy, heart-pounding, need-to-send-something feeling, you wait twenty minutes before you act on it.

What it's for

What decides whether the rule applies isn't the type of message. It's what the message is for. If he asks a simple question and you're happy to answer, just answer.

If fifteen works better, use fifteen.

Never for anything urgent

It never applies to anything urgent. Safety, a ride home, where you're meeting, a booking with a deadline. Send those right away.

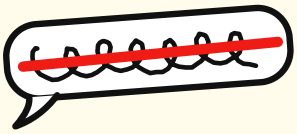
It's a gap for you, not a performance for him.

Phone Down, Full Version

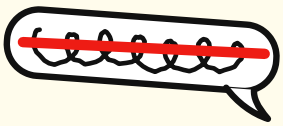
Here's the longer version of Phone Down, for nights when the urge is strong.

1. Turn your phone face down. Put it somewhere your hand has to travel to reach it.
2. Now pick one. Rest a hand flat on the middle of your chest. Or press both feet into the floor and feel it pressing back.
3. **In, two, three, four. Out, two, three, four, five, six.**
   If you feel light-headed, stop and let your breath do its own thing.
4. Now name the fear. One sentence. Not "I want to text him." The thing underneath that.
5. You don't have to fix the feeling or push it away. Stay with it. Notice where it sits: chest, stomach, throat.
6. Let it be as big as it is. One more slow breath out. Notice whether it shifted, even a little.

SAFETY If your body ever feels different from your usual alarm, the safety note from Chapter 2 applies. It is on page **16**.



The rest of the twenty minutes



Then come back to the phone. At minute twenty, you decide.

Ideas for the rest

- [ ] Make a cup of tea. Fill the kettle, wait for it to boil, pick a mug. Five minutes, hands busy.
- [ ] Walk around the block. Leave the phone at home if you can.
- [ ] Text a friend about anything except him. Ask your sister what's for dinner. Send a photo of a weird-looking dog.
- [ ] **My own:** _____

If a friend asks for the screenshots

What did he say? Send it!

I'm trying not to decode him this week. Ask me how I'm doing instead?

Good friends get it.

So do Pause, Proof, Choice in one sentence each.

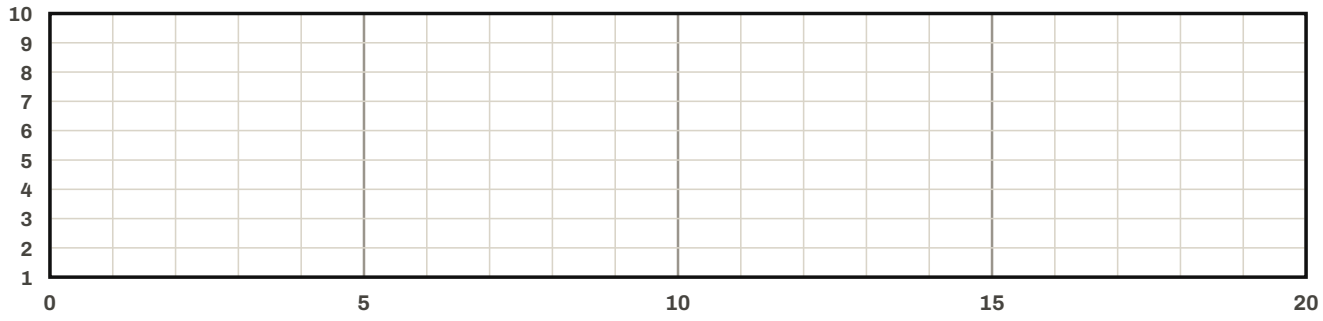
Pause: _____

Proof: _____

Choice: _____

Don't start the twenty minutes over because you're not perfectly calm.

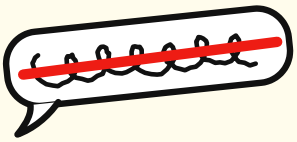
Watch how it moves. Does it climb? When does it peak? Does it come down at all?



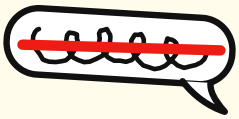
UP: THE ALARM, ONE TO TEN

ACROSS: MINUTES, ZERO TO TWENTY

Mia: "Peaked at about minute four. Gone by twelve. Ate the whole sandwich."



Breadcrumbs vs. Bread sort



Breadcrumbs feel like a trail. Look back, and there's often nothing there. We're building judgment here, not another surveillance system.

Bread

Plans. He suggests real ones. A day, a time, a place.

Consistency. His contact has a rhythm you can rely on. It doesn't have to be constant. Just steady enough that you're not guessing.

Follow-through. He does what he said. If he said he'd confirm Saturday, he confirms Saturday, without you needing to chase it.

~~Breadcrumbs~~

The late-night "hey." No question, no plan, just a ping at eleven or one in the morning.

Likes without plans. He reacts to every story with a fire emoji. And still never asks to see you.

"We should sometime." We should get dinner sometime. Sometime never gets a date.

What makes something a crumb isn't that it's small. **When that's all there is, it's a crumb: attention that never grows into anything you can count on.**

A Quick Sort

Think of someone you're seeing, or talking to, or recently stopped seeing. Just the last month.

Bread

A real plan he suggested. Something he said he'd do, and did.

Crumbs

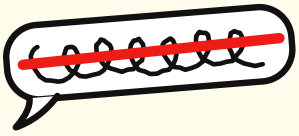
Say it plainly, no rounding up.

Context

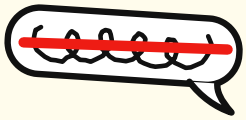
Be fair to him, and fair to yourself.

Next to what I want

And last, how does it all sit next to what you want?



A weekly check-in



It's optional, and it's small. Two questions. How did this week feel? And did I get what I want? The goal is checking less, not more often.

PLAINLY

Describe it plainly. No adjectives, no guesses. Just "He sent 'thinking about you' at 11 p.m. on Thursday. No plan."

FRIEND TEST

Use the friend test, gently. If your best friend described this man, what would you say?

YOUR STANDARD

Then check it against your own standard. What did you say you want? Ask for it. Accept it as it is. Or step back.

My time for it: _____ Ten minutes is plenty.

Week 1
DATE _____

How did this week feel? _____

And did I get what I want? _____

Week 2
DATE _____

How did this week feel? _____

And did I get what I want? _____

Week 3
DATE _____

How did this week feel? _____

And did I get what I want? _____

Week 4
DATE _____

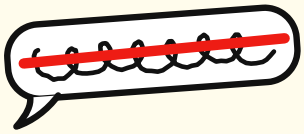
How did this week feel? _____

And did I get what I want? _____

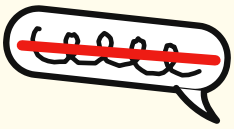
That's for Sunday

Outside that time, if you catch yourself going over the same ground, say, "That's for Sunday," and put it down. Jot it in a note if you're worried you'll forget.

Some things don't wait for Sunday, though. If he says he's not interested, treats you with disrespect, needs an answer about plans, or anything makes you feel unsafe, deal with it then.



Three sentences you can steal



Say each one out loud, even if you feel silly. Your mouth needs practice as much as your head does.

I feel more settled when we make plans ahead.

A quick 'busy, talk tonight' would help me.

I've noticed I'm anxious about us. Can we talk?

They're short. They start with "I." They ask for one thing, not five. And none of them accuse him.

If He Calls You Needy

Kind of clingy, huh?

So first, press your feet into the floor and breathe out slowly, just once. You don't have to answer instantly. Then try:

I don't think it's clingy. It's just something that helps me. You're allowed to say no to it. I'd rather you didn't laugh at it.

One clumsy comment isn't a pattern.

One Small Ask

Somewhere in the next few days, make one small, clear ask of someone close to you. A friend, a date, your mom. One sentence, starting with "I."

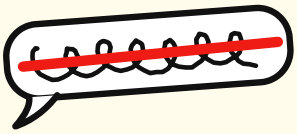
I find Sunday evenings really hard at the moment. Could you call me then for a bit?

Obviously. Seven?

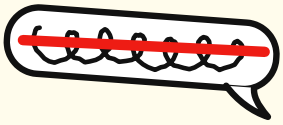
My small ask: _____

To: _____

Asking for reassurance. Plainly. "I'm feeling a bit wobbly today. Can you tell me you're looking forward to Saturday?"



Know Your Own Answer First



Before you ask what he wants, get some idea of what you want. A lot of us go into this conversation hoping to hear his answer so we can match it. That's backwards.

Ask yourself plainly.

Do I want to be exclusive? _____

Do I want this heading toward an actual relationship? _____

What do I need day to day? _____

My answer in one sentence

_____

Mia: "I want a real relationship, exclusive, where I see and hear from him in the week too, not just Sundays."

Not one tidy sentence yet?

I think I want something more serious, and I'm still working out what that looks like. Can we figure it out together?

Clear beats polished.

Two questions hiding in here

"Are you seeing anyone else right now?" is about today. "Do you want us to be exclusive?" is about what comes next.

If both matter to you, ask both.

AN ULTIMATUM

An ultimatum is "commit or I'm gone," said to force his hand.

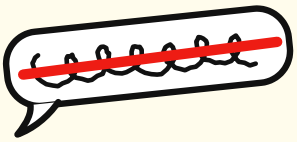
An ultimatum gets repeated, louder each time, to squeeze an agreement out of him.

A BOUNDARY

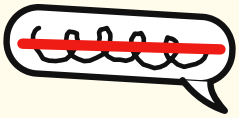
A boundary is about what you'll do.

I want a relationship where we're both in it. If that's not what you want, I'm going to step back.

With a boundary, a no is genuinely allowed. And you say it once.



Your first sentence



Now find your first sentence. Just the first one.

Can I talk to you about something?

I've noticed I'm anxious about us.

I want a relationship, and I want to know what you want.

My first sentence: _____

_____

Say your first line out loud. If you're somewhere public, whisper it, or move your lips. Once. Wobbly is fine. Quiet is fine.

Where and when

Keep it to one message, not a stream. Say what you want and what you're asking. Tell him he can take time to reply.

Not at 2 a.m. Not mid-spiral, not after a big night out, not as he's walking into a meeting.

SAFETY

If you ever feel unsafe raising things with him, your safety matters more than the format. The safety note in Chapter 2 is there for exactly this. It is on page **16**.

Time Is Not a Reset Button

So name two things, out loud or in writing. Your check-in date, on the calendar. And what you'll do if nothing changes by then.

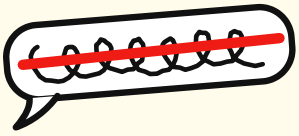
My check-in date: _____

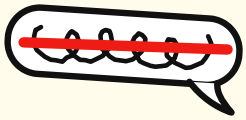
If nothing changes by then, I will: _____

_____

Mia's note: "30th. If it's still Sundays and 'sometime,' I end it. Good Sundays don't move the date."

Kind and Brief message





Something short. Something kind. Something that doesn't end in a question.

> **Hey. I've thought about it, and I want a relationship, which isn't what you want right now. So I'll step away. I've really enjoyed our time together. Take care of yourself.**

That's the whole message. Five sentences. There's no list of everything he did wrong in it. And nothing that asks for a reply, because asking for a reply means waiting for one, and you've done enough waiting.

SAFETY **If you're frightened of how he'll react, skip the standard message. The safety note in Chapter 2 is for this, and specialist support can help you plan.** It is on page **16**.

Before You Send It

Now, before you send anything, set up your support. This part matters more than the message.

☐ **One friend who knows the plan.**

Not the whole group chat. One person. Ask her first, rather than assuming.

My friend: _____

☐ **An agreed word, with limits.**

You send her something short when you want to text him. Mia and Hannah picked "swan," after the swan cake. A reply doesn't need to be wise. Even "I'm here" is enough.

Our word: _____ **She can reply:** _____

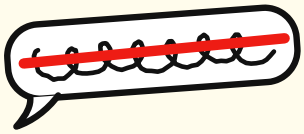
☐ **A backup plan for evenings.**

Write down three things you'll do if you get the itch and your friend isn't around.

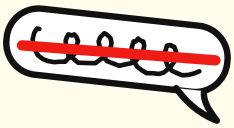
1 _____ **2** _____ **3** _____

Mia's list: bath, baking show, walk to the corner store and back.

One friend, one agreed word, one evening plan. You're not asking her to decode him. You're asking her to keep you company while you stick to a decision you've already made.



The setback card



Make it a setback card of your own. Three or four lines, for the night the old checking comes back. Ask a friend if she's willing to be on it, and agree together what happens when she can't reply right away.

MIA'S CARD, IN HER PURSE

Phone down. Text Hannah 'swan.' Do the three words. Ask him straight if I need to.

If Hannah's quiet, she's busy. Bath, then baking show.

Priya, not Tues

A friend's slow reply isn't her leaving. And it helps not to rest it all on one person.

A setback isn't failure. It's a Tuesday. You notice it, and you do the next thing.

FRONT

My setback card

A setback isn't failure. It's a Tuesday.

BACK: THREE OR FOUR LINES

My friend on it: _____

If she's slow to reply: _____

Cut along the dashes Fold on the dots Keep it in your bag or wallet

When You Reply Anyway

1. No self-attack.
2. Tell your friend.
3. Restate your decision.
4. Try the next step again.

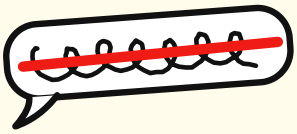
A setback isn't the end of leaving. It's usually part of it.

One small promise

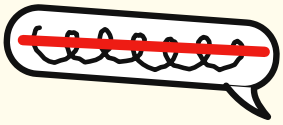
And keep one small promise to yourself, small enough that you'll actually do it.

Mine: _____

On Thursdays at six, Mia goes swimming.



An Ending of Your Own



He's not going to give you closure. So let's choose an ending ourselves. If you'd like a longer version some evening, write those same four answers down, a few lines each, and read them back to yourself.

1. **Now say, out loud or in your head, what it was. Plainly.**
   "It was five months of something that didn't become what I wanted."

2. **If there's anything you're glad about, name it. A good night. A laugh. Something you learned. If nothing comes, skip it.**

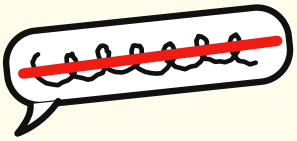
3. **Now name what you wanted that you didn't get.**
   "I wanted to be chosen in the week too."

4. **Name one thing you're taking with you. A boundary. A lesson. Something about yourself you know now.**

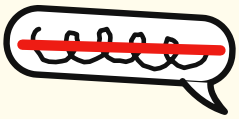
And last, say this with me.

I'm letting this go. I don't need his agreement to be finished.

Closure is something you give yourself. He doesn't get to hold it hostage.



Lines worth keeping



Short enough to say under your breath. Take a photo of this page, or pin it somewhere you'll see it.

Phone down, I'm here.

INTRODUCTION

Butterflies aren't a forecast.

CHAPTER 3

But relief tells you the waiting is over, not whether the relationship is good.

CHAPTER 2

Speed isn't the problem. Who's driving is the question.

CHAPTER 4

Success isn't silence. Success is acting on purpose.

CHAPTER 5

A relationship is mostly made of regular Tuesdays.

CHAPTER 6

That's for Sunday.

CHAPTER 6

Clear beats polished.

CHAPTER 7

Security isn't the alarm never going off. It's what you do when it does.

CONCLUSION

Mostly is what dependable looks like.

CONCLUSION

The feeling visited. It didn't drive.

CONCLUSION

The phone is still quiet. And you're still here.

CONCLUSION

FROM THE CONCLUSION · SAY THIS WITH ME, OUT LOUD OR IN YOUR HEAD

A quiet phone isn't proof I've been left.

I can look after myself while I wait.

Take a breath, and say it again, slowly. If part of it doesn't feel true yet, just say the part that does.

THE KIT PAGE, FREE

kalderno.com/secure

Scan it to get this kit again, to print a fresh copy, and for more from Mariah Renner. If the book helped you, a rating on Spotify helps the next listener find it.

Practice the tools, free: kalderno.com/secure/practice

Your Safety First (from Chapter 2)

Not every tight chest is about him. Chest pain or pressure, a pounding or irregular heartbeat, trouble breathing, fainting or severe dizziness: don't assume it's anxiety. If it's sudden, severe or you're not sure what it is, call your local emergency number right away, that's 911 in the US, even if it feels mild. If symptoms are new or just feel different from your usual alarm, get them checked by a doctor. And if you ever have thoughts of harming yourself, contact a crisis line or your local emergency number right away.

The same goes for danger from someone else. If a man threatens you, coerces you or stalks you, or you're frightened of how he'll react, contact a domestic-violence hotline before you end things. They can help you plan a safe way out. And if there's any chance he can get into your phone or accounts, search for help on a device he can't reach, like a trusted friend's phone or a library computer.

If the pull of all this starts taking over your sleep, your work or your friendships for weeks at a time, that's a good moment to talk to a qualified professional.

Your safety comes before anything in this book.