

# WHEN A CLIENT'S STORY STAYS WITH ME

## PAGE 1: NOTICING AND UNDERSTANDING

*Being affected does not mean I am failing. It may mean something in the work needs noticing, holding or support.*

### 1. WHAT IS STAYING WITH ME?

- ☐ words or images
- ☐ emotion or body sensations
- ☐ worry about the client
- ☐ an urge to rescue or protect
- ☐ uncertainty about my response
- ☐ a sense of responsibility
- ☐ something personally familiar
- ☐ something else

When do I notice it returning?

### 2. WHAT HAPPENS INSIDE ME?

What feelings are present?

What do I notice in my body, sleep, attention, mood or relationships?

Is this one powerful moment—or part of something accumulating?

### 3. WHAT MIGHT THIS BE CONNECTED TO?

- ☐ empathy and human connection
- ☐ concern about risk or safety
- ☐ uncertainty or unfinished work
- ☐ personal experience or resonance
- ☐ feeling helpless or responsible
- ☐ repeated exposure to distress
- ☐ workload or limited recovery time
- ☐ organisational pressures

*I can stay curious without needing to decide immediately.*

### 4. WHAT BELONGS WHERE?

What belongs to the client and their story?

What belongs to my feelings, history or needs?

What belongs to the therapeutic relationship or wider system?

*Some experiences may overlap.  
This is for reflection, not separation by force.*

## II PAUSE AND CARRY FORWARD

What feels most important for me to take into Page 2?



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## • PAGE 2: SUPPORT AND MOVING FORWARD •

### 5. DOES ANYTHING NEED PROFESSIONAL ATTENTION?

- ☐ Review risk or safeguarding
- ☐ Seek supervision or consultation
- ☐ Check ethical or organisational guidance
- ☐ Clarify records, actions or follow-up
- ☐ Consider whether my capacity is affected
- ☐ No immediate professional action identified
- ☐ I am unsure

Protect confidentiality when seeking support.  
If safety or serious harm may be involved,  
do not wait for routine supervision.

### 6. HELPING MY BODY RECOGNISE THE SESSION HAS ENDED

What might support transition?

- ☐ pause and breathe
- ☐ move, stretch or walk
- ☐ orient to the present environment
- ☐ write a brief confidential note
- ☐ use a closing ritual
- ☐ connect with safe support
- ☐ rest, eat or meet a sensory need

What works for me?

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### 7. BRINGING THIS TO SUPERVISION

What feels hardest to name?

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What do I want help to understand?

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Do I need reflection, reassurance, challenge,  
guidance or practical support?

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### 8. BOUNDARIES WITHOUT HARDENING

What boundary might protect my capacity while  
allowing me to remain compassionate?

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What am I carrying that is not mine to  
resolve alone?

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### 9. CHECKING MY CAPACITY

- ☐ I am affected but recovering
- ☐ I need more time or support
- ☐ this is affecting my wellbeing or practice
- ☐ I feel numb, overwhelmed or persistently on alert
- ☐ I may need support beyond supervision

### 10. CARRY FORWARD

One thing  
I will do...

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One thing  
I will release...

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One thing I want  
to remember  
about myself...

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**I can care deeply without  
carrying every story alone.**

Seeking support is part of caring for the work.