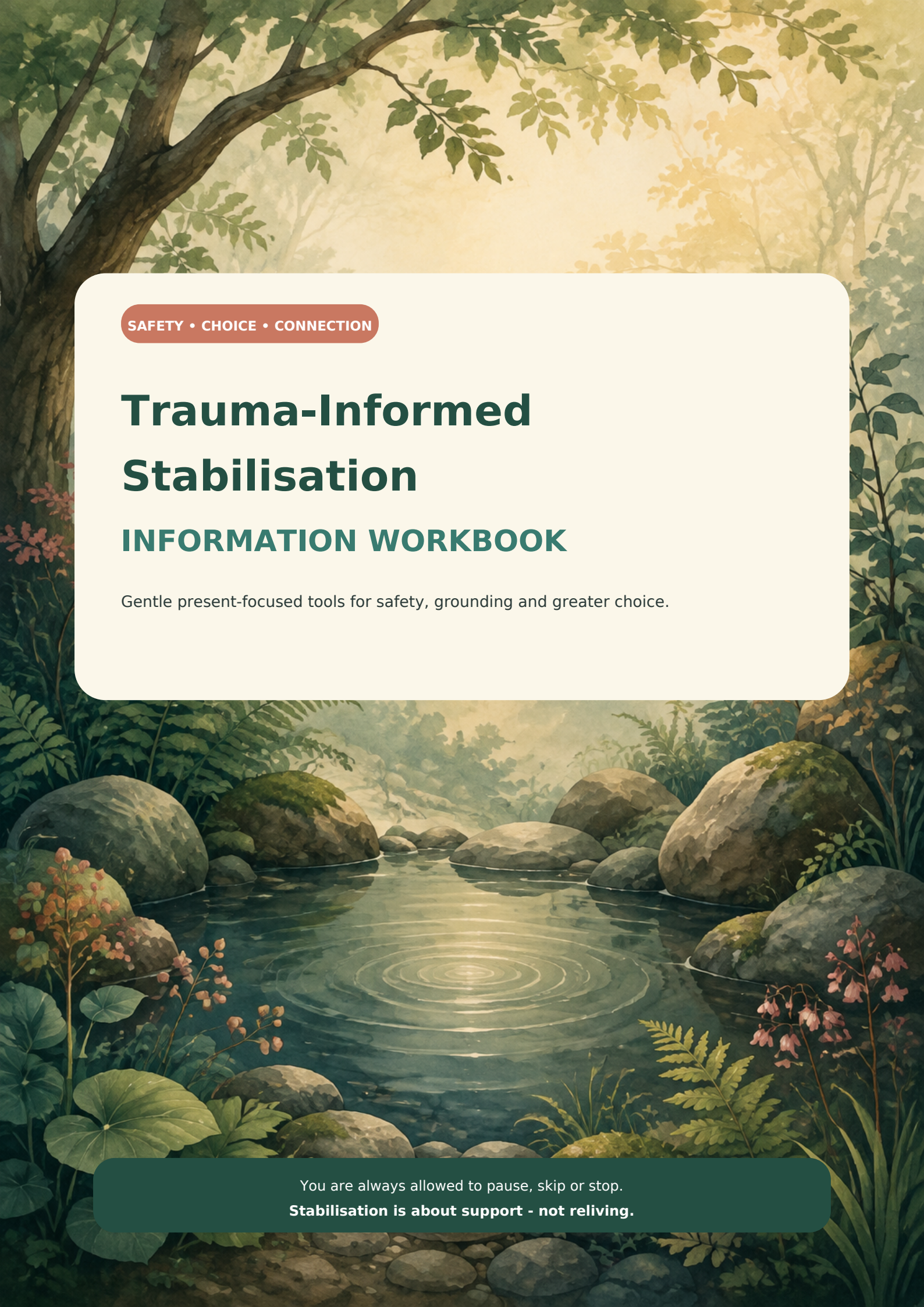




SAFETY • CHOICE • CONNECTION

Trauma-Informed Stabilisation

INFORMATION WORKBOOK

Gentle present-focused tools for safety, grounding and greater choice.

You are always allowed to pause, skip or stop.
Stabilisation is about support - not reliving.

Begin with safety and choice

There is no requirement to describe what happened in order to practise stabilisation.

What stabilisation means

Trauma can leave the nervous system responding as though danger is still present. Stabilisation develops enough present-day safety, support and choice to manage distress. It is not about forcing calm, erasing reactions or processing traumatic memories before you are ready.

My permission slip

- ☐ I can pause at any time
- ☐ I can keep my eyes open
- ☐ I can change the exercise
- ☐ I can move while grounding
- ☐ I do not have to explain
- ☐ I can ask someone to stay

Signs I have enough capacity today

What helps me feel a little safer now?

Think about place, distance, exits, lighting, sound, temperature, clothing, objects, trusted people and control over what happens next.

A useful starting question

“What would make the next five minutes feel 1% more manageable?”

Map my nervous-system responses

Protective responses make sense. Noticing them can increase choice.

Notice without judging

Trauma responses may move between activation and shutdown. The aim is not to stay perfectly calm; it is to recognise what is happening and choose support that matches the state.

HIGH ACTIVATION

- ☐ racing heart or thoughts
- ☐ panic, anger or urgency
- ☐ scanning for danger
- ☐ tense, restless or shaky

MORE PRESENT

- ☐ aware of now
- ☐ able to notice choices
- ☐ connected enough
- ☐ feelings have some space

SHUTDOWN

- ☐ numb, distant or unreal
- ☐ heavy, frozen or foggy
- ☐ hard to speak or move
- ☐ wanting to disappear

My earliest activation signs

My earliest shutdown signs

The state I seem to be in right now

- ☐ High activation
 ☐ Present enough
 ☐ Shutdown
 ☐ Unsure / mixed

A menu of present-focused tools

Choose; do not force. If a tool increases distress, stop and try something different.

Orient first

Gently look around and notice where you are now. Let your eyes rest on neutral or pleasant details. Remind yourself of the date, place and what will happen next.

SEE & NAME

- ☐ name 5 colours
- ☐ find 3 straight edges
- ☐ notice an exit
- ☐ read today's date

FEEL SUPPORT

- ☐ press feet down
- ☐ feel the chair
- ☐ hold a steady object
- ☐ lean against a wall

USE RHYTHM

- ☐ walk at an even pace
- ☐ tap left and right
- ☐ hum or count
- ☐ lengthen the out-breath

Settling high activation

Reduce stimulation, slow the pace, use steady pressure if welcome, cool the face or hands, and make the next step predictable.

Gently lifting shutdown

Add light, warmth, sound or movement gradually. Name familiar objects, sip something, stretch or contact a trusted person.

The tool I want to practise when relatively steady

Containment and everyday anchors

Stabilisation grows through repeated experiences of predictability, care and return.

Containment is temporary holding - not denial

When a thought, image or memory feels too much for now, imagine placing it in a secure container of your choosing. Remind yourself when and with whom you may return to it. Do not use this to force unwanted images away.

My imagined container

What does it look like? How does it close? Where is it kept?

My place, time and support for returning

I will only return when I choose and have enough support.

Daily anchors that support stability

- | | |
|---|--|
| ☐ regular food and fluids | ☐ sleep and wake cues |
| ☐ medication as prescribed | ☐ movement or fresh air |
| ☐ safe connection | ☐ quiet recovery time |
| ☐ predictable transitions | ☐ one manageable task |

What supports me after a difficult moment?

Consider warmth, privacy, hydration, safe food, comfortable clothing, reduced decisions, reassurance and not having to explain immediately.

My stabilisation and support plan

Keep this accessible. Share it only with people you choose.

My signs that distress is rising

What helps me return to the present

People and places that feel safer

What I want others to do or avoid

My plan for the next hour

One body need:

One grounding action:

One safe connection:

A compassionate reminder

If I need urgent help

If you may act on thoughts of suicide, cannot keep yourself safe or are in immediate danger, call 999 or go to A&E. Samaritans are available free, day or night, on 116 123 in the UK and ROI. Ask a trusted person to stay with you and help you make contact if needed.