THE BETTER MAN

WORKBOOK

Five moves for the man whose old life has stopped working



JAY CHRISTIAN

START HERE

If tonight isn't safe

This page is for one night: the night you're not safe, or not sure you can stay safe.

AUSTRALIA	**000**	**If you're in immediate danger, if you've started to act on a plan to harm yourself or someone else, or if you can't keep yourself or another person safe, call 000 now.**
OUTSIDE AUSTRALIA	**Local**	**In an emergency, call your local emergency number. For the local crisis lines: findahelpline.com — enter your country.**

And if you're not sure how close you are, that's not a reason to wait and see. Treat tonight as that night.

A book can't pick up the phone. Get another person in the room, or on the line. That's the whole task.

SAY THIS

I'm not safe tonight and I need to talk to someone.

You don't have to explain how you got here.

AUSTRALIA · TO TALK TO SOMEONE TONIGHT

Lifeline — 13 11 14. Twenty-four hours. A real person, any hour of the night. If talking's beyond you, text 0477 13 11 14.

Suicide Call Back Service — 1300 659 467. Twenty-four hours, phone and online.

Open Arms — 1800 011 046. Veterans and families. Twenty-four hours.

1800RESPECT — 1800 737 732. Domestic, family and sexual violence — for you, or because of you. Twenty-four hours. If the danger's in the room, it's 000 first.

And if your phone or your movements are being watched, don't call where you can be seen or heard — get to another room, outside, or to someone you trust, and call from there.

Do that first. This workbook will keep. Come back to it when the ground is steadier.

START HERE · TONIGHT

Two Dates

If you're not safe tonight, or not sure you can stay safe, stop here and get help first.

Call 000 now if you're in immediate danger, if you've started to act on a plan to harm yourself or someone else, or if you can't keep yourself or another person safe. Outside Australia, your local emergency number.

To talk to someone tonight: Lifeline **13 11 14**, or text **0477 13 11 14**. **Veterans and families:** Open Arms **1800 011 046**. Both twenty-four hours. More on page 4.

The day it stopped working

There's a day you can point to. Maybe not the exact date. But you know the week.

For some men it's loud. A scan comes back. A test comes back. A phone rings at an hour when phones only ring for one reason.

For most men it's quieter. You sat in the car in a car park with the engine off. And somewhere in that dead ten minutes a thought came up from underneath, flat and clear: this isn't working anymore.

That's the day. Whatever yours looks like. The day it stopped working.

The line

Write two dates on one line.

The first is the day it stopped working. You don't need the exact date if you haven't got it — the week will do, the month will do, whatever's honest. The second is today.

THE DAY IT STOPPED WORKING

TODAY

Then pin it somewhere you'll see it. On the fridge. On the visor of the ute. Taped inside the door of the locker.

Because that line is the road.

Two dates. One line. Pin it up.

In the book: Chapter 1, The Man in the Car Park, pp. 8–17.

MOVE 1 OF 5 · GROUND

Ground: your first night

Three things to write tonight, and one thing to read.

1 Not this week

Write down every irreversible thing you're tempted by right now. Now, next to each one, put a date. The date is weeks out. Six weeks. Eight. That's the day you're allowed to reconsider it, with a clearer head, off the floor.

TODAY'S DATE

THE IRREVERSIBLE MOVE	A REAL DATE, WEEKS OUT

Nothing tempting you? Leave it blank. More than five? Use the Notes pages. Until that day, it's off the table. Not banned. Just not this week.

2 One wake time

Pick the hour you'll get up — a real hour, one your life can hold — and set the alarm across the room so you have to stand up to kill it.

MY WAKE TIME

3 Food and drink

Nothing to fill in. Just read it.

Eat something. On some kind of schedule. Toast counts. The tinned thing counts.

Is it still yours, or does it have you? Naming it is the move. You don't have to fix it tonight.

4 Three fixed points, on top of the wake time

Tonight, before you sleep, write three fixed points for tomorrow. Not thirty. Three. One in the morning, one in the middle, one at night.

MORNING	MIDDLE	NIGHT

Whatever the three are, make them real and make them yours and make them small enough that you'll actually hit them. Tomorrow night, carry on with the Ground cards, page 8. Fourteen is a supply, not a schedule. When the list on page 22 is true, move on.

In the book: Part I, Ground. Chapter 3, pp. 22–28. Chapter 4, pp. 29–35. Chapter 5, pp. 36–41.

MOVE 1 OF 5 · GROUND · CARD 1

Ground card

NIGHT

DATE

Tonight

Drive them in tonight. Meet them tomorrow.

TOMORROW'S WAKE TIME

MORNING

MIDDLE

NIGHT

Tomorrow night, before you write the next card

Tick what you met. A partial or missed day is a fact, not a verdict.

- [ ] Wake time
- [ ] Morning
- [ ] Middle
- [ ] Night

Anything tempting?

Anything irreversible pulling at you today? Put it on your not-this-week list, page 7, with a date weeks out.

Food and drink

One honest line. Naming it is the move.

The size of the thing is not the measure. The turning up is the measure.