



TOOLKIT

The Lifeboats toolkit

Everything you need for a Sunday night, in one place. Copy it, print it, scribble on it.

This section collects the practices so you can find them quickly. Photocopy the worksheet pages, copy them into your notebook or phone, or download free printable versions at www.lifeboatsbook.com. You only need a pen, ten minutes and a bit of honesty.

The full boat scan (about ten minutes)

Read this through once, then try it with your eyes closed, or record yourself reading it slowly and play it back.

The full boat scan

Find somewhere you won't be interrupted. Sit with your back supported and your feet on the floor.

Take a slow breath in. Let it out a little longer than it came in. Again. And once more. With each breath out, let your shoulders drop a fraction.

Picture a harbour at dusk. The water is still. The light is going gold. Along the dock your lifeboats are moored in a line, each one where you left it.

Before you walk the dock, look up at the sky. What's the weather in you right now? Storm, rough seas, fog, doldrums, trade winds, fair weather, or a changing tide? Don't argue with the answer. Just name it.

Now begin walking, slowly.

Stop at the first boat. Look at it. What's the first feeling word that comes? Where do you notice it in your body? How is it sitting in the water: sailing, low in the water, or taking on water? Breathe out, and move on. You're not here to fix it. Only to see it.

Do the same at each of your lifeboats. Work. Family. Your partner, if you have one. The children in your care. The people who raised you. Your friends. Your home and money. Your body. The things that are just yours. If a boat is hard to look at, nod to it from a distance and move on. You can come back another day.

At the end of the dock, turn around and look back along the line. Which boat is out in front? Did you choose it, or did life choose it for you?

Now let one boat come forward in your mind. Not the loudest. The one that needs you. Say to yourself: *this week, I'll give my attention to*

_____.

Take three slow breaths. Feel the chair under you. When you're ready, open your eyes. Write down the boat, before the moment passes.

The one-minute boat scan

For the bus, the car park, the queue, the minute before a meeting.

1. One slow breath, longer out than in.
2. Name the weather in one word.
3. Run down the dock: one feeling word per boat, as fast as they come. If one feels heavy, ask what's blowing on it: work, money, people, your body, your screen.
4. Glance at who's leading.
5. Which boat made you wince? That's the one to watch today.
6. One more breath. Carry on.

Shorter still: one breath at the kettle, the school gate or in the car. Name the weather and one boat. That counts.

On the move: walk, wheel or drive the same loop and run down the dock in your head.

The harbour check worksheet

Once a week. Ten minutes. Cup of tea optional, honesty compulsory. Give every boat a mark. **S** means sailing, **L** low in the water, **T** taking on water. Add a feeling word and where you feel it only for the boats marked L or T.

Short version, for a hard week: weather, leader, one boat, one action. Four lines.

Date _____ Who's leading? _____

Weather

Storm

Rough seas

Fog

Doldrums

Trade winds

Fair weather

Changing tide

S

 Sailing

L

 Low in the water

T

 Taking on water

Boat	Mark	Feeling word	Where in my body
 Work	S L T		
 Family	S L T		
 Partner	S L T		
 Kids	S L T		
 Parents	S L T		
 Friends	S L T		
 House	S L T		
 Health & Body	S L T		
 Personal	S L T		
	S L T		

The one boat this week

This week I will

One small action

Idle on purpose

Other fleets

Once a month (optional)

The weekly check stays at seven steps. Once a month, if you like, add these three questions. For a deeper look once a season, try *Going deeper* at the back of the book.

- 1. **The crew:** rest, movement, food. Which one is running low?
- 2. **The forecast:** is there a storm I can already see coming? What's one thing I can get ready now?
- 3. **The paint:** what's one thing I enjoyed lately, and who do I want to thank?

The logbook

After each harbour check, write one line in your logbook. **Minimum entry:** date, weather, one boat, one action, done or not. The rest is optional. There's a worked example in *The logbook* chapter; here's a blank page for your own.

Week of	Weather	Leading	Marks	Feelings	One boat	Intention	Done

Words to reach for

When "fine", "busy" and "stressed" are all you've got, borrow from here.

Light

Calm

Hopeful

Proud

Grateful

Joyful

Content

Relieved

Curious

Energised

Loved

Playful

Settled

Muted

Numb

Restless

Distant

Bored

Unsure

Drained

Blank

Flat

Detached

Meh

Heavy

Tired

Anxious

Sad

Angry

Guilty

Lonely

Overwhelmed

Ashamed

Resentful

Afraid

Hurt

Frustrated

Feeling words, for when "fine" won't do.

What each boat needs, in each kind of weather

	 Storm sudden, violent	 Rough seas long and hard	 Fog can't see ahead	 Doldrums stuck, no wind	 Trade winds steady progress	 Fair weather calm, all level	 Changing tide transition
 Work	Hold the basics	Pace it	Small, safe moves	Pick one goal	Lead it, time-boxed	Plan the next lead	Review the role
 Family	Close ranks	Share the load	Say it out loud	Reconnect	Don't go missing	Make memories	Talk it through
 Partner	Hold on together	Daily check-in	Ask, don't guess	Plan a date	Protect one night	Invest in us	Re-plan together
 Kids	Reassure them	Keep routines	Simple, honest words	Small adventure	Show up	Play	Prepare them
 Parents	Check in	Share the care	Ask their view	Visit	Regular call	Ask for their stories	Plan ahead
 Friends	Let them in	Accept help	Ask for bearings	Say yes	Stay in touch	Build ties	Find your people
 House	Bills only	Minimum only	Clear one space	One project	Steady upkeep	Repair and refit	Sort and simplify
 Health & Body	Basics first	Sleep and food	Rest; see your GP	Move every day	Protect sleep	Build strength	Book check-ups
 Personal	Idle is OK	Five minutes	Write it down	Start something	Park it, on purpose	Explore	Rediscover

 **All hands** needs crew now  **Skeleton crew** just stay afloat  **Steady** keep it moving  **Invest** a good time to build  **Idle on purpose** allowed to drift *A starting point, not a rule.*

Boats x weather: what each boat usually needs in each kind of weather. A starting point, not a rule.

Harbour notes

- Look inside: the boat scan.
- Think with intention: one boat, one sentence.
- Act small: one action you'll actually do.
- Log it, and look back when the weather's bad. Seasons pass.

Set your intention

My harbour check happens every _____ at
_____, in _____.