



THE NEXT CHAPTER

Starter Guide

Reflection prompts, strengths work, and a framework for figuring out what comes next — at any age, from any starting point.

A free resource from **Kim Brady** — Author, Reinvention Strategist,
Licensed California Optician.

This is a fillable PDF. For best results — and to see the highlighted answer boxes — open it in Adobe Acrobat Reader (free) rather than your browser.

Former Athlete · Entrepreneur · Author · Optician · Reinvention in Progress

A Note Before You Start

I know what it feels like to be done with something but not yet know what comes next. I left a soccer career I loved under circumstances I didn't control. I walked away from a therapy practice because I was burning out. I quit corporate America when a nineteen-year-old held up a mirror and told me the truth. Then I built a business from scratch, grew it for ten years, and sold it. Two days later, California shut down.

In 2021 I herniated my discs, had to stop coaching soccer, and needed health coverage — which led me to Costco. In 2023, I woke up one morning and couldn't walk. Emergency back surgery. Everything I'd been building had to stop. During those years I lost several people I loved: one of my oldest friends and my first love both died from cancer, and both of my step-sisters passed unexpectedly over the course of five years. I was grieving, working seven days a week across three jobs, sending out more than 620 job applications, and still not making ends meet.

My godsister started calling me a pathfinder. I didn't always feel like one. What got me through was a team of people who believed in me when I was struggling to believe in myself, and the kind of honest clarity work that forced me to stop running from the question and actually answer it. That answer was the optical department at Costco — not the pivot I'd have planned, but a real one that led to two national board exams passed at 53.

None of it felt elegant from the inside. It felt like losing the prescription that helped you see clearly and having to find a new one from scratch. That's what this guide is for — honest prompts to help you slow down long enough to hear yourself think. Work through it at your own pace. Reinvention doesn't have a shot clock.

— Kim

“When people think they are done, they are often just beginning.”

— Kim Brady

How to Use This Guide

Think of this like a pre-season film session. Before a team steps back onto the field, they study what worked, what didn't, where the gaps are, and where the opportunities are. This guide is your film session — for your life and career.

Section 1	Getting Honest About Where You Are You can't navigate to a new destination if you don't know your current location. This section is about looking at your life clearly — without judgment.
Section 2	Strengths & What You Actually Do Well Not what's on your résumé. What you are genuinely good at — including the things you take for granted because they come easily to you.
Section 3	Values — What You Can't Compromise I didn't know my values clearly until I kept violating them. This section helps you name what actually matters, so you stop building things that don't fit.
Section 4	Looking for Themes Across jobs, sports, hobbies, and life — there are patterns. Things you keep coming back to. This section helps you find them.
Section 5	What's Next — First Moves Not a five-year plan. Just the next honest step. What you can do this week, with what you already have.

A few ground rules: Be honest, not impressive. Nobody is grading this. The more real you are with yourself here, the more useful this becomes. And if something is hard to answer — good. That's usually where the work is.

Getting Honest About Where You Are

SECTION 1

In optometry, before you can get a new prescription, you have to go through a series of tests. The doctor doesn't just hand you lenses and wish you luck. They check where your vision currently stands.

I have sat in that chair more times than I planned to. A pandemic that cancelled every plan two days after I sold my business. A back surgery that put me in the hospital for five days. Grief I didn't see coming. Some of it was circumstance. Some of it was me not being honest fast enough about what wasn't working.

Either way, the exam had to happen before anything else could. This section is that exam. You might not love what you see. That's okay. You're here because you're ready to look.

WHERE YOU ARE RIGHT NOW

Describe your current situation in plain terms. Not how you explain it to other people — how it actually feels day to day.

WHAT'S NOT WORKING

If you're honest with yourself, what parts of your current chapter are you ready to be done with? What are you staying in longer than you should?

WHAT PROMPTED THIS

What happened — or what kept happening — that brought you to this guide? Was it a moment? A slow burn? Name it.

WHAT YOU'RE AFRAID OF

Fear doesn't go away by ignoring it. What's the fear underneath the uncertainty? Write it down. Taking it out of your head and putting it on paper is the first step.

WHAT YOU ALREADY KNOW

Somewhere in you, there's something you already know about what needs to change. What is it? What have you been avoiding saying out loud?

Strengths & What You Actually Do Well

SECTION 2

When I was playing soccer, I didn't always see what my coaches saw in me. I knew I was fast. I knew I was relentless. But I undersold the other things — the ability to read a field, to organize people around me, to stay calm when things went sideways. Those weren't just soccer skills. Those showed up in business too.

Your strengths work the same way. Some of them are obvious. Some you've written off as 'just how you are.' Those are often the most valuable ones.

WHAT PEOPLE COME TO YOU FOR

When friends, colleagues, or family need something — advice, a skill, a problem solved — what do they usually ask you for? What do they count on you for?

WHAT COMES NATURALLY

What do you do that feels almost effortless — even if it's hard work to others? What do you do that you don't think twice about?

YOUR BEST PROFESSIONAL MOMENTS

Think back across your career, jobs, or even sports. When did you feel most competent? Most in the zone? Describe two or three of those moments.

WHAT YOUR COACHES, MANAGERS, OR MENTORS NOTICED

What have the people who know your work best said about you? Not the generic feedback — the specific things. Write those down.

SKILLS YOU'VE TAKEN FOR GRANTED

What do you do consistently well that you've never put on a resume? Think beyond job titles — communication, organizing, calming chaos, seeing patterns, coaching others.

Values — What You Can't Compromise

SECTION 3

I didn't understand my values until I violated them enough times that I couldn't ignore it anymore. Every time I left a job, it wasn't just because the work was wrong — it was because something fundamental to who I am was being asked to take a back seat. Integrity. Autonomy. Honesty. Doing things the right way even when it costs you something.

When you build your next chapter on a foundation that doesn't match your values, you'll feel it. You'll be good at it and still be miserable. This section helps you name what you actually need — before you build something else on the wrong ground.

WHAT YOU'VE WALKED AWAY FROM

Think about a job, a relationship, a situation you left — even when it was hard or costly. What was the thing you couldn't tolerate? What crossed the line?

WHAT GENUINELY MATTERS TO YOU

Not what's supposed to matter. Not what looks good. What actually matters? Write it like nobody's reading it.

WHAT ENVIRONMENT BRINGS OUT YOUR BEST

Think about the times you've performed at your highest level — in sport, in work, in life. What was the environment like? What was present that made it work?

WHAT YOU WILL NOT COMPROMISE

If you were building something new right now, what are the non-negotiables? The things that have to be true for you to show up fully?

Circle or underline the values that feel most true for you right now:

- | | | |
|--------------|--------------|-------------|
| ■ Autonomy | ■ Integrity | ■ Community |
| ■ Growth | ■ Security | ■ Adventure |
| ■ Impact | ■ Creativity | ■ Loyalty |
| ■ Honesty | ■ Leadership | ■ Service |
| ■ Freedom | ■ Excellence | ■ Belonging |
| ■ Resilience | ■ Family | ■ Purpose |

Other values not listed:

Looking for Themes

SECTION 4

When I look back at my own path, the thread was always there — I just couldn't see it from inside it. Athletics. Coaching. Building teams. Helping people figure out what they're capable of.

That theme ran through being a therapist, a business owner, a sales leader, and now a reinvention strategist. It even runs through optometry — helping people see more clearly. Which is not a metaphor I planned. It's just what happened when I followed the next honest step instead of the perfect one.

I couldn't see that thread from inside the hard years. The losses, the back surgery, the job applications, the grief — none of it felt like a narrative. It felt like chaos. The thread only became visible when I slowed down and looked at the whole picture. This section asks you to do the same thing.

Part A: Across Your Career & Work

THE THROUGH-LINE IN YOUR WORK

Look at every job, role, or project you've had. What is the common thread? What were you always doing, regardless of the title or industry?

WHAT YOU'VE BUILT OR CREATED

What have you made, built, launched, or shaped in your career? It doesn't have to be official. Teams, systems, programs, relationships, culture — what are you leaving behind?

THE PROBLEMS YOU KEEP SOLVING

Across different jobs and contexts, what problems have you kept getting pulled toward? What do you end up fixing, clarifying, or untangling?

Part B: Across Sport, Hobbies & Personal Life

Your life outside of work tells you things your résumé never will. The athlete who becomes a great manager. The parent who is exceptional at navigating chaos. The hobbyist who has been teaching themselves new skills their entire life. None of it is irrelevant. Look at the full picture.

YOUR ATHLETIC OR COMPETITIVE BACKGROUND

What sports did you play, or what competitive environments have shaped you? What did you learn about yourself there that still shows up today?

WHAT YOU DO WHEN NOBODY'S WATCHING

What do you do for fun, for yourself, that you've never thought to put on a resume? What activities restore you or pull you in without effort?

WHERE YOU LEAD NATURALLY

*Outside of official roles — where do people look to you? In your family, your community, your friend group?
What role do you play naturally?*

WHAT'S THE THEME ACROSS ALL OF IT

*Now look at everything you've written in this section. Career, sport, hobbies, life. What keeps showing up?
What is the recurring theme in who you are?*

What's Next — First Moves

SECTION 5

I am not going to ask you to write a five-year plan.

When I was in the hardest stretch of my reinvention — working seven days a week, grieving, recovering from surgery, watching opportunity after opportunity fall through — a five-year plan would have been useless. What I needed was the next honest step. And I needed people around me who could help me see it when I was too exhausted to find it myself.

My godsister saw something in me I couldn't see. My team held the thread when I dropped it. Clarity work — the kind this guide is trying to start — is what eventually led me to the optical department at Costco. Not a glamorous answer. But a real one. And it became the foundation for everything I'm building now.

You don't need the whole plan. You need enough clarity to take one honest step forward. That's what this section is for.

THE GOAL BEHIND THE GOAL

Not what you're going to do — why you're going to do it. What is the deeper outcome you're really after? What would having a clear next chapter actually give you?

WHAT YOU ALREADY HAVE

Based on everything you've written in this guide — what assets do you already have? Skills, relationships, experience, reputation, knowledge. What don't you have to build from scratch?

THE SMALLEST FIRST STEP

Not the whole plan. One step. What is the one thing you could do this week that moves you in the right direction? Something concrete, not conceptual.

WHO YOU NEED AROUND YOU

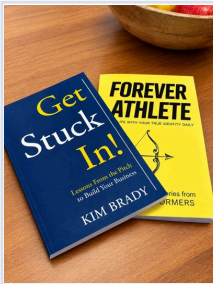
I learned early in soccer that you get better faster by surrounding yourself with people who are bigger, better, and stronger than you. Who do you need in your corner right now? Coach? Advisor? Community? Accountability partner?

WHAT YOU'RE COMMITTING TO

End with a commitment. Not a wish — a decision. What are you going to do differently starting now? Write it like you mean it.

What to Do Next

If you've worked through this guide honestly, you now know more about yourself than most people ever take the time to figure out. That matters. Don't let it sit in a drawer.

Read it back.	Go back and read every answer you wrote. Look for patterns. Underline the things that surprise you or feel especially true.
Name the theme.	In one sentence - what is the through-line? What did you keep coming back to? That thread is your starting point.
Take the first step.	You wrote it down in Section 5. Do it. This week. Not next month.
Keep the story going.	The Complete Comeback Bundle pairs Get Stuck In!™ and Forever Athlete™ - both signed - with The Comeback Companion, for more of the story and more prompts like these. 
Sharpen how you show up.	Your Reinvention Blueprint is a written review of your story, your message, and how you're positioning yourself for what's next - no calls, just a clear look on paper.

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- Kim Brady

No Lack. No Limits.

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Complete Comeback Bundle · Your Reinvention Blueprint