MATTER OVER MIND · CHAPTER 1 WORKSHEET

Know Your Tells

DATE _____

Everyone has tells. A poker player watches for them across the table. This page is for catching your own: the signs that you're getting wound up or shutting down, before anyone else has to point them out. Fill it in after a week of check-ins, then take a picture of it and keep it on your phone.

1 Check what's true for you.

Wound up — anxious, on edge, in overdrive

BODY

- ☐ tight jaw or shoulders ☐ shallow breath
- ☐ stomach in knots ☐ heart racing
- ☐ can't fall asleep, or awake at 3 a.m. ☐ _____

MOOD

- ☐ irritable ☐ dread ☐ restless
- ☐ everything feels urgent ☐ _____

THOUGHTS

- ☐ replaying conversations
- ☐ bracing for something to go wrong
- ☐ "I have to fix this now" ☐ _____

WHAT I DO

- ☐ snap ☐ talk too much ☐ stay busy or stay late
- ☐ people-please ☐ _____

WHAT OTHERS NOTICE

- ☐ "Why are you so short with me?"
- ☐ "Can you sit down for a minute?" ☐ _____

Shut down — flat, low, checked out

BODY

- ☐ heavy, tired even after sleeping
- ☐ craving sugar, or not hungry at all ☐ sleeping a lot
- ☐ numb ☐ _____

MOOD

- ☐ flat ☐ nothing sounds good ☐ hopeless
- ☐ ashamed ☐ _____

THOUGHTS

- ☐ "What's the point?" ☐ "Nobody gets it."
- ☐ "I'm the problem." ☐ _____

WHAT I DO

- ☐ scroll ☐ cancel plans
- ☐ hide in the car, the garage or a game ☐ go quiet
- ☐ _____

WHAT OTHERS NOTICE

- ☐ "You seem far away." ☐ "Are you even listening?"
- ☐ _____

2 Put them in order.

Tells come in a sequence. Pick three of yours, from the first one to show up to the last.

Early *(a whisper)* _____ _____ → **Middle** *(talking)* _____ _____ → **Late** *(yelling)* _____ _____

3 My one line.

Chapter 2 has tools for the last blank.

When I notice _____, I'm heading into _____,

and the first thing I'll do is _____

4 Ask one person.

Ask someone who sees you often: "What do you notice in me first when I'm stressed?" Write down what they say, even if it stings.

They noticed: _____

_____

When it's more than a book: if the tension hasn't let up for two weeks or more, if you're having panic attacks, if your sleep has fallen apart, or if you're leaning harder on something to take the edge off, it's time to talk to a professional.