



# A PLACE TO LAND

A THERAPEUTIC ART WORKBOOK FOR  
WOMEN LIVING FAR FROM HOME.

A creative space to process life abroad, make  
meaning, and gently come home to yourself.

BY HEALINGARTJOURNEY.COM



## JANALINE

### Therapeutic Art Facilitator

I've lived in 13 different countries, across cultures, languages, and very different stages of my life. My life abroad began just after university — **before I really knew who I was, or what I needed.**

Since then, I've learned what it means to **begin again, again and again.** To **build a life, lose parts of it, reshape it,** and keep searching for **a sense of home** that isn't tied to one place.

Living abroad looks **adventurous from the outside.**

Inside, **it can feel messy.**

There's **excitement and freedom** — and also **exhaustion, loneliness,** and the **quiet grief** of leaving **pieces of yourself** behind.

You can feel **deeply grateful** for the life you've chosen, while **still missing** what you no longer have.

**Both can exist at the same time.**

For me, **art became the place** where all of that could land.

When **words felt too heavy,** or **too complicated,** or like they would **make other people uncomfortable** — I could put it on paper.

I could **hold grief** and **gratitude** together.

I could **make sense** of constant change.

I could **come back to myself** when everything around me felt unfamiliar.

This workbook is shaped by that lived experience — and by my work as a therapeutic art facilitator.

Everything you'll find here is **something I've used myself,** again and again, **while living abroad.**

# THIS WORKBOOK IS FOR...

**Women who already live abroad** and find themselves quietly asking:

- Why does this **still feel so hard**, even after settling in?
- Why do I feel **both grateful and lonely** at the same time?
- **Where do I belong now?**

Living abroad **changes you**.

And often, there isn't space to process everything that comes with it.

And lets be honest, to get to where you are right now, you've already lived a lot.

**More than most**. Not just geographically, but **emotionally**.

There will have been **excitement and fear**.

**Confidence and doubt, belonging and loneliness, progress and setbacks**.

You might feel **proud of how far you've come**. Or **frustrated** that things don't look the way you once imagined.

Often, it's both.

This workbook offers that missing space — through **therapeutic art and gentle reflection**.

You **don't need to be** an artist.  
You don't need to **"get it right."**  
There is **no right or wrong way** to do this.

All you need is **a little curiosity** —  
and a **willingness to explore**.  
Let's gently begin this journey together.

*Janaline*



# HOW THIS WORKBOOK SUPPORTS YOU

## What this workbook offers you over time:

- ✓ More **calm, embodied awareness** in your daily life abroad
- ✓ A compassionate **record of your internal journey**
- ✓ **Creative tools** you can return to again and again
- ✓ A deeper **sense of meaning and belonging** — even when things feel uncertain

## Immediate challenges it helps you with:

- **Anxiety and overthinking** — by grounding you in sensory, body-based creative practices
- **Emotional overwhelm** — by giving feelings a place to land outside your mind
- **Feeling alone in your experience** — by validating what so many of us expat women quietly carry

This workbook is **not about fixing your life abroad**.  
It's about **understanding yourself within it**.

I created this **as a pause**.  
A moment to take stock.  
**To orient yourself**.  
To look at **where you've been** with honesty.  
To **notice where you are** — without pressure.  
And to think, gently and calmly, about **how you want to move forward next**.



# HOW TO WORK WITH THESE PAGES

There is **no right or wrong way to begin.**

Start where **you feel most comfortable.**

**These prompts are here for you:**

- when **words feel hard**
- when you're **tired of thinking**
- when you're **not even sure what you're feeling**

You don't need to **do them in order.**

You can **skip around.**

You can **come back later.**

You can even simply **sit with a page.**

**Let your body guide you.**

**Let your heart speak** — if it wants to.

**Be kind to yourself.**

This journey isn't about performance.

It's about listening inward.

At Healing Art Journey, my hope is to **gently support you in creating lasting change** —  
**building new habits of care, soft coping strategies, and a deeper connection with yourself.**

These are tools I've used **in my own healing journey.**

I share them with the hope that they **bring you some light, too.**

Because **understanding your own journey changes how you move through life and how you decide where to go next, why, how and with whom.**



HEALING ART JOURNEY

# YOUR CREATIVE JOURNEY



1. WHERE I'M COMING FROM (RIGHT NOW)
2. SENSORY SNAPSHOT
3. THE UNEXPECTED MOMENT
4. PEOPLE & ENCOUNTERS COLLAGE
5. CULTURAL COLOUR STORY
6. WHAT THIS PLACE TAUGHT ME
7. HARD PAGES & SOFT PAGES
8. HOMECOMING REFLECTION

# PROMPT 1: WHERE I'M COMING FROM (RIGHT NOW)

## Personal Note

Right now, I'm still in motion too.

Still adjusting. Still figuring out **what parts of me are arriving** — and **which ones are lagging behind**.

I've noticed that even when my suitcase is unpacked, **my body and emotions take longer to settle**.

This page is something I'm using as I go, **to acknowledge what I'm carrying today** — not to analyse it, **just to notice it**.

You're welcome to do the same.

## The Prompt

Create a **map or timeline** of where you're coming from — **emotional, not geographical**.

- Think about **where you started from**. This could be a place, a life chapter, or a moment of change.
- Start with one colour that matches how you feel today.
- Use lines, colours, shapes, symbols, or textures to **show what you've been carrying from then until now**.
- If other colours want to appear, allow them.
- Words can come in if they want — or not at all.
- 

If the page feels intimidating, **begin with one small mark**.

That's enough to start.

## Why It Helps

Putting what you're carrying onto paper **can help your body feel less alone with it**. You're not trying to solve anything here — **just letting something move instead of staying stuck inside**.

## Reflection Questions

- What feels **most present for me right now?**
- What **does my body want me** to notice?
- Is there anything asking for **release or rest?**

# PROMPT 2: SENSORY SNAPSHOT — BEING HERE, AS I AM

## Personal Note

Lately, I notice how quickly my mind jumps ahead — **to what's next, what's uncertain, what still needs figuring out.**

This practice is something I'm using right now **to come back into this moment**, in this place — **even if I don't know how long I'll be here.**

It's a small way of saying to myself: **I'm here. I'm breathing. This moment exists.**

## The Prompt

Create a page that captures how this place feels to you **right now.**

Notice:

- one thing you **can see**
- one **sound** you can hear
- one **texture** you can feel
- Is there **a smell in the air?**
- A **taste** lingering?

Choose colours or marks **that match those sensations.**

There's no need to make it look like anything recognisable.

This isn't about drawing the place — **it's about recording how it lands in you.**

Begin with a single mark, line, or colour — and let the page meet you where you are.

## Why It Helps

When you're alone **in a new country**, your senses can become **quiet companions.**

Tuning into what you can **see, hear, or touch** creates a feeling of connection — **reminding you** that even **when you feel unseen or unanchored**, you are still **in relationship with your environment**, not truly alone.

## Reflection Questions

Afterwards, take a few moments to journal, write freely, or simply sit with what you noticed.

- What feels **comforting or grounding** here?
- What **feels unfamiliar, distant, or slightly uncomfortable?**
- **What sensations stood out** the most — and why might that be?

# PROMPT 3: THE UNEXPECTED MOMENT — WHAT LANDED INSIDE ME

## Personal Note

Even now, after 20 years of being an expat, **moments catch me off guard — a feeling, an interaction, a reaction I didn't expect.**

I'm learning not to rush past those moments, but **to give them a little space.** This page is a place **to pause with something that surprised you** — without needing to explain it.

## The Prompt

Create an image of **a moment you didn't expect.** Choose a moment that feels workable to stay with — not the most intense one.

Maybe start with an unexpected moment **that turned out good** before you look at the other, **heavier moments.**

- It can be **good, hard, confusing, or somewhere in between.**
- Focus on **how it felt in your body.**
- Use **colour, pressure, movement, or shape** to express it.

Let the page hold it for you.

## Why It Helps

**Unexpected moments** often **land harder when you're far from familiar support.**

When moments go unacknowledged, they often stay active inside us.

Giving them shape helps **prevent them** from **lingering silently in the body.**

## Reflection Questions

Afterwards, take a few moments to journal, write freely, or simply sit with what you noticed.

- What **stayed with me** from this moment?
- **Where do I feel it in my body?**
- What does it need now — **attention, softness, or space?**

# PROMPT 4: PEOPLE & ENCOUNTERS — WHO TOUCHED MY JOURNEY

## Personal Note

While living abroad, it often happens that some people **pass briefly through our lives** and **still leave a mark**.

I'm noticing how true that is for me right now.

This page is a way to **honour an encounter ( good or bad)** — without needing it to mean more than it does.

## The Prompt

Create a collage or mixed-media page **about someone who impacted you**.

- Use whatever you have: **paper, tickets, paint, scribbles, words**.
- Add **marks or fragments** that show **how the encounter felt**, not what happened.
- There's no need to make it neat or complete.

I love to create these encounter collages on **postcard-sized paper**, allowing me to keep these memories in an envelope **tucked in the back of my journal**.

## Why It Helps

Acknowledging connection — even fleeting — **helps the body feel less alone**. It allows meaning to form naturally, **without forcing it**.

This practice allows **connection without obligation** — you don't have to decide what it means.

## Reflection Questions

Afterwards, take a few moments to journal, write freely, or simply sit with what you noticed.

- What did this encounter **stir in me**?
- What part of me felt **seen, challenged, or changed**?
- What does this say about **what I value or need**?

# PROMPT 5: CULTURAL COLOUR STORY — THE FEELING OF THIS PLACE

## Personal Note

Sometimes **I can't explain a place with words**. I can't describe how it makes me feel, and why I feel that way — which can be very frustrating at times. Colour feels easier — **more honest**.

This is something I'm using now **to let my body respond** before my mind tries to interpret.

## The Prompt

Choose 3–5 colours **that feel connected to where you are**.

- Let them **meet, overlap, resist, or soften**.
- Use your **hands, a brush, or whatever feels right**.
- Let colours **clash, fade, or sit side by side** — just like **your experience here**.
- Notice how your body reacts as you work.

### **There's no right balance here.**

Afterwards, you might feel curious to explore **what these colours mean** — or how they are commonly used — **in the culture where you live now**.

Notice what resonates, **what surprises you**, and what doesn't.

## Why It Helps

Colour **accesses emotion directly**, without needing language.

It can **reveal feelings** you didn't know were there.

## Reflection Questions

Afterwards, take a few moments to journal, write freely, or simply sit with what you noticed.

- **What emotions** do these colours carry?
- Which colour **feels most alive** for me?
- Did any colour **surprise you**?
- Did anything **shift** as I worked?

# PROMPT 6: WHAT THIS PLACE IS TEACHING ME (SO FAR)

## Personal Note

I don't always realise **what a place is teaching me** until I slow down.

Often, that understanding comes **just before — or only after** — I've already left.

I'm **trying something different now**.

I'm choosing to notice **what this place might be teaching me while I'm still here**.

Right now, **I'm still learning** — and that's okay.

This page isn't about conclusions.

It's about **noticing what's emerging**.

## The Prompt

Reflect on **what this place is showing you about yourself**.

You might notice:

- What feels **difficult or draining** right now
- What seems to be **showing up again and again**
- What you're finding **unexpectedly frustrating**

If insight feels far away, **notice what questions are forming instead**.

- Use fragments, symbols, lists, or drawings.
- You don't need full sentences.
- Let insight come quietly, in its own time.

## Why It Helps

Naming insight as it forms **helps build self-trust**.

It allows **learning to integrate gently**, instead of being overlooked.

## Reflection Questions

Afterwards, take a few moments to journal, write freely, or simply sit with what you noticed.

- What am I noticing **about myself here**?
- What feels **new or surprising**?
- What **strength** is quietly growing?

# PROMPT 7: HARD PAGES & SOFT PAGES — HOLDING BOTH

## Personal Note

Living as an expat is **rarely all good or all bad**.  
Some days **feel heavy**. Others **feel lighter**.  
Often, both exist at the same time.

The **language barrier, cultural differences, and endless admin** can be wearing.  
And yet, there are countless **small moments of softness** — **brief, quiet, easy to miss** — that slowly add up.

This is a practice I use **to let both have space**, without one cancelling out the other.

## The Prompt

Create two pages.

- On one page, **express what has been hard**.
- Let colour, pressure, and mark-making **show frustration, anger, sadness, or loneliness**.

There's no need to name everything — let the page speak for you.

- On the next page, **respond with softness**.
- Create **more space, gentler marks, lighter tones**.
- You might **explore what you need right now**, the small joys that are present, **and what those moments offer you**.
- Move between the pages at your own pace.

You can stop at any point.

Both pages don't need to feel complete.

## Why It Helps

Letting both **difficulty and care** exist supports emotional balance.  
It reminds your nervous system **that relief is possible alongside challenge**.

## Reflection Questions

Afterwards, take a few moments to journal, write freely, or simply sit with what you noticed.

- What felt **hardest to put down**?
- What **helped soften it**?
- **What do I need more of** right now?

# PROMPT 8: HOMECOMING REFLECTION — WHAT FEELS LIKE HOME TODAY

## Personal Note

At first, **it scared me** that I no longer **had a clear place to call home**.

**Living between worlds** as an expat meant **I didn't fully belong where I once did** — and I didn't yet have **a physical place that felt like mine**.

That **uncertainty frightened me**.

But slowly, something shifted.

**I began to find home again**.

**Home feels different** to me now.

Less like a place — **more like a feeling I carry**.

This page is something I'm using to notice what has settled, even while things are still unfolding.

## The Prompt

Create a page that **reflects where you are now**.

- You might explore **what helps you feel at home here** —
- a feeling, a colour, a word, a symbol, or a quiet landscape.

**Let it be simple**.

Let it be unfinished, if that's how it feels.

## Why It Helps

Marking where you are **helps integrate change**.

It allows you **to see what has taken root** — even temporarily.

## Reflection Questions

Afterwards, take a few moments to journal, write freely, or simply sit with what you noticed.

- What feels **more familiar or steady now**?
- Where do I **feel most at ease** within myself?
- What does **"home" mean to me today**?

# A PLACE TO CONTINUE

## HEALING ART JOURNEY



This workbook is **an introduction** — not an ending.

If something in these pages **stirred, softened, or opened something inside you**, I want you to know that you don't have to carry it alone.

If you feel called to go deeper, I invite you to book a **free connection session** with me.

This is a gentle, unhurried space where we can explore:

- what you're **carrying right now**
- where you **feel stuck or unsure**
- and how therapeutic art might **support you where you are** — not where you think you should be

You don't need clarity.

You don't need the right words.

**You just need to arrive as you are.**

# A GENTLE REMINDER

Healing **is not a straight path.**

And it's **not something you "get right" once** and then move on from.

There **will be pauses.**

There **may be spirals.**

There might be moments where **old patterns resurface.**

That **doesn't mean** you've failed.

It **doesn't mean** you're broken.

And it certainly **doesn't mean this is the end** of your healing journey.

**Healing is cyclical.** And every return, every slowing down, every moment of confusion **carries information** — not judgment.

If you find yourself **feeling overwhelmed or discouraged**, please remember this:

You **can always begin again.**

You are still **worthy of care.**

You are **not alone** in this.



# WHAT'S NEXT



If you feel like you need more support — someone **to walk beside you, help you listen** more closely to what's coming up, or **guide you** through this work at a deeper pace — **I'm here.**

Whether that's through **a single conversation** or **a longer journey together**, my role is not to fix you, but **to support you in understanding yourself** with more compassion and clarity.

This is **your healing journey.**  
I'm honored **to walk alongside you** —  
even **before the words arrive.**

If this workbook resonated with you, the connection session is simply a place to meet, talk, and explore whether working together feels right for you.

## **Healing Art Journey**

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