

the modern domestic woman



A MENTAL HEALTH GUIDE FOR
WOMEN STARTING THEIR
OWN BUSINESS



Hey, girl!

Starting your own business is often painted as an exciting, empowering adventure – and it is. But the behind-the-scenes reality can feel isolating, overwhelming, and full of emotional highs and lows. As a woman stepping into entrepreneurship, nurturing your mental health isn't a luxury – it's a necessity.

This guide is here to remind you: You are not alone. You are allowed to ask for help. You are allowed to go slow. And you are allowed to protect your dreams fiercely until you're ready to share them.

Let's walk through the emotional foundations you deserve to build alongside your business.



Giving Yourself Grace During the Process

Research from the American Psychological Association shows that self-compassion directly impacts resilience, motivation, and overall well-being – all of which are critical when starting a business.

Building something from nothing isn't a linear journey. There will be setbacks, mistakes, and "what the hell am I doing?" moments. Giving yourself grace allows you to view challenges not as failures, but as part of the process.

Tips for Giving Yourself Grace:

Expect imperfection. Nothing has to be flawless to be worthwhile.

#1 - Celebrate tiny wins. Sending an email? Win. Making a logo? Win.

#2 - Talk to yourself like you would a friend. Self-criticism can paralyze your momentum.

#3 - Schedule downtime. Your brain needs breaks to function creatively.

Action Items:

- ✓ Create a "Victory List" and add one small accomplishment every day.
- ✓ Set a daily reminder that says: "Progress, not perfection."

Journal Prompt:

"When was the last time I was proud of myself? What happened, and how can I create more moments like that?"

Finding Resources and Asking for Help

A 2021 study from SCORE (Service Corps of Retired Executives) found that entrepreneurs who used mentors and external resources were twice as likely to survive past the five-year mark. Trying to "do it all" breeds burnout and resentment. Support isn't a weakness; it's a strategy.



Types of Support to Seek:

- Business coaches or mentors.
- Virtual assistants or freelancers.
- Networking groups for women entrepreneurs.
- Mental health professionals.
- Friends/family willing to listen without offering advice unless asked.

Action Items:

- Make a list of three tasks you could delegate or ask help with.
- Research one free or low-cost resource in your area (like a small business development center or online community).

Journal Prompt:

"What would it feel like to receive support right now? What help do I most need?"

MDW Approved Business Support:



Helping women-owned businesses grow and thrive by combining expert Facebook and Instagram ad strategies with a heart-centered, empowering approach rooted in connection, clarity, and community.

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Helping people and businesses cut through the chaos and actually get stuff done through streamlining ops, picking the right tools, and seeing results across industries like marketing, IT, R&D, HR, finance, supply chain, and more.

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Read more on the [MDW blog](#).

Keeping Your Ideas Private Until You're Ready

Early criticism — even well-meaning — can crush fragile ideas. This is called "social reality testing" — when we share dreams too early, we sometimes internalize doubts that aren't our own.

Benefits of Keeping It Private:

- Builds inner confidence first.
- Protects your creative energy.
- Prevents unnecessary stress or second-guessing.

Tips for Managing This:

- Share selectively with a trusted "inner circle" only.
- Practice saying: "I'm working on something exciting! I'll share when the time is right."
- Create a "Dreams Journal" where you work through ideas privately.

Action Items:

- Identify 2-3 people you trust with early-stage ideas (if any).
- Write a "Why I'm Building This" letter to yourself for private motivation.

Journal Prompt:

"Who has earned the right to hear about my early-stage ideas, and why?" and
"How can I protect my creative energy while still allowing myself to dream big?"

How Therapy Can Help

Therapy can be a powerful anchor during the ups and downs of starting your own business. It offers support for managing the anxiety that often comes with risk-taking, while also helping you navigate the loneliness and decision fatigue that can arise when you're building something on your own.

A therapist can guide you through identity shifts — like the emotional question of, "Who am I now that I'm a business owner?" — and help you set healthy emotional and physical boundaries to protect both your well-being and your business vision.

Finding the Right Therapist:

- Look for someone who specializes in entrepreneurial mental health or career transitions.
- Use The Modern Domestic Woman [Counseling page](#) to help you connect with a therapist

Action Items:

Write a short list of what you want to get out of therapy (ex: support with confidence, handling stress, work-life balance).

Schedule a consultation call with one potential therapist, even if you're not ready to commit yet — you're just gathering information.

Journal Prompt:

"How might regular emotional support change my business journey?"



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Finding a Therapist

A therapist can help you manage stress, deal with imposter syndrome, work through fears of failure, and stay grounded during the rollercoaster of business ownership.

If you're looking for a therapist, [The Modern Domestic Woman](#) can connect you with trusted professionals who specialize in maternal mental health and personal growth.

Some of our favorite therapists:

St. Charles, IL - [Christina Oxley, LCPC](#), offers a caring and judgment-free space where individuals can deepen their self-understanding, navigate life's challenges, and build a life aligned with their true needs and desires.

Aurora, IL - [Bryton Wilson, MA](#), at Ellie Mental Health, provides a foundation of empathy and authenticity. Bryton partners with clients to foster emotional well-being, offering a safe space where children, adolescents, and individuals from all walks of life can heal, grow, and thrive.

Oswego, IL - [Ari Valdez, MA](#), at Graceful Therapy builds a foundation of empathy, authenticity, and evidence-based care to help individuals from diverse backgrounds heal from hurt, loss, and life's challenges while fostering emotional safety and personal growth.

Wheaton, IL - [Heather Hawthorne, LMFT](#), at Evergreen Counseling, walks alongside clients with empathy and hope, helping them navigate life's challenges, heal emotional wounds, and embrace deeper self-understanding through compassionate, relational therapy.

Establishing Boundaries Between Your Business and Personal Life

Without clear boundaries, burnout isn't an "if" — it's a "when." Research published in the Journal of Occupational Health Psychology shows that entrepreneurs who set work-life boundaries report higher well-being and business satisfaction. Because you deserve stability in all areas of life!

Boundaries to Consider:

- Office hours. Just because you can work all the time doesn't mean you should.
- Device-free time. Give your brain real off-hours.
- Physical space. Even a small "work corner" helps separate business from home life.
- Emotional boundaries. Not every loved one will understand your journey — that's okay.

Tips for Setting Boundaries:

- Communicate your work hours to family and friends.
- Create a "shutdown ritual" (example: close laptop, light a candle, take 3 deep breaths).
- Remember: "No" is a full sentence.

Action Items:

Write a personal "Business Hours" schedule and stick to it for one week. Choose one evening per week as a full "no business talk" night.

Journal Prompt:

"Where do I most need a boundary right now to protect my energy?"

When Your Closest People Don't Support Your New Business

It's painful when the people you thought would be your biggest cheerleaders respond with skepticism, indifference, or even discouragement. Psychologists refer to this as "non-support stress" – when a lack of support from loved ones can feel even heavier than outright opposition from strangers. You don't have to make their doubt your reality.

Why People Might Not Be Supportive:

- They're projecting their own fears or limitations.
- They don't understand entrepreneurship or the risks involved.
- Change can feel threatening – your growth might make them uncomfortable.
- They genuinely worry about you failing and getting hurt.

Healthy Ways to Cope:

- Don't personalize it. Their fears are about them, not you.
- Seek out new support systems. Mentors, entrepreneur groups, or online communities can offer validation and encouragement.
- Set communication boundaries. You don't have to discuss your business with those who don't uplift you.
- Protect your dream fiercely. Not everyone deserves access to your vision.

Action Items:

- ✓ Write a list titled "People Who Get It" – even if it's just 1-2 names for now. Focus on their energy.
- ✓ Create a simple "elevator pitch" you can use when others question you, such as: "I'm really excited about this journey, and I'm learning so much. Thanks for understanding that this is important to me."

Journal Prompt:

"What does support look like for me right now? How can I give myself the encouragement I'm not receiving from others?"



Building Your Business. Honoring Your Heart

Becoming an entrepreneur isn't just a career move — it's an emotional, mental, and spiritual journey.

Every successful woman you admire had days she doubted herself. What made the difference wasn't perfection — it was persistence, support, and radical self-compassion.

You are allowed to build your business and protect your mental health. You are allowed to succeed on your own terms.

You are doing better than you think. Keep going.

