

# Court of Hope:

A survivor's guide to caring for yourself on court days



## Why Court Feels So Hard

Courthouse visits can stir up anxiety. The space is charged with stress — families, freedom, and finances all on the line. Even when you're in the right, the energy can feel overwhelming.

## Reframing the Experience

Instead of focusing on dread, try shifting your perspective:



**You get to be there.** Each date is one step closer to resolution.



**Look for positives.** Notice small details—clothes, makeup, kindness in others—that inspire or distract you in healthy ways.



**Bring comfort with you.** A notebook, coloring pages, or a fidget tool can help you stay grounded.

### Keep Perspective

Court is business, **not a judgment on your worth**. You and the other party want different things; **court helps find resolution**. Enter with focus on what's best for you.

### Share What Works



**Talk with peers about your coping strategies.** Your experience might help someone else.

**Remember:** Court may feel heavy, but with preparation and care, it can also become a step toward healing—and even hope.

## Create a "Court Day" Care Plan

Turn court into a ritual of care:

### Ground and Center

Start with a calm morning routine and something nourishing to eat.

### Mood Music

Make two playlists—one to feel strong going in, one to relax afterward.

### Reward Yourself

Choose a post-court treat (like a favorite meal) and budget for it.

### Comfort is Key

Have cozy items ready at home (bath, candles, blanket).

## Handling Difficult Encounters

If you must interact with someone unsafe or triggering:

- **Decide ahead:** Do you need to respond, or can you walk away?
- **Use calm, firm phrases like:** "I'm not comfortable with this conversation; I'm removing myself."
- **Remember:** courthouses are built with safety in mind.
- **Stay grounded**—your peace is your power.

