A REBUILDING JOURNEY™ FIELD GUIDE

R.O.O.T.S.™

Stay anchored while you grow

For the capable person who built a life on a blueprint someone else drew.

DORCUS JULIET

Transformational Coach & Identity Strategist · Founder, TPDC Thrive · dorcusjuliet.com

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FOR YOUR FOUNDATION

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A NOTE BEFORE YOU BEGIN

Dear friend,

If this guide reached you through your Identity Reading, your lowest score was Foundation. That tells me something about you. You are not lazy, lost or ungrateful. You are carrying a life built on beliefs you were handed before you were old enough to choose them.

Most of us were. A parent's hope. A culture's script. A church's expectation. The role you took on the day the family needed someone to be strong. Those roots kept you standing. Some of them are still good. Some of them are quietly keeping you small.

This guide will not ask you to tear anything down. It will ask you to look at your roots in daylight, keep what is true, release what was never yours and grow from ground you have chosen.

Take your time. Write your answers down. Honest is better than impressive.

With belief in your becoming,

Dorcus Juliet

Transformational Coach & Identity Strategist · Founder, TPDC Thrive

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HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

Before you begin

30 to 45 minutes to read, then one step a day for a week

How to work through it

- Give yourself a quiet half hour for the first reading. Then take one step a day for a week.
- Write your answers by hand, in a journal {Most preferred} or in your phone notes. Answers you only think are easy to argue with. Answers you write are harder to unsee.
- Slow down at the questions that sting. The sting is usually where the root is.
- In 90 days, retake the Identity Clarity Audit™ and compare your Foundation score.
-

This guide is for you if

- You have achieved a lot, and you still wonder whose life you are living.
- You hear a parent's, pastor's or teacher's voice when you think you have failed.
- You are the strong one, the firstborn, the provider or the one everyone calls, and you are tired of it being your whole identity.
- You want to grow without losing yourself, and without losing the people you love.

> *This guide is a coaching tool for reflection and growth. It is not therapy, and it does not replace care from a counsellor, psychologist or doctor. If painful memories come up as you work, pause and speak to a qualified professional. Support contacts are on the last pages.*

THE DOOR

The tree that looked fine

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Picture a tree on a Nairobi street after the long rains. Full branches. Green leaves. People park under it for shade. Nobody looks at its roots until the day it starts to lean.

You may be that tree. From the outside, the life is working: the job, the title, the family responsibilities handled, the contributions sent, the WhatsApp groups answered. People rest in your shade.

But some mornings you sit in the car before going in, and you cannot remember choosing any of this. You took the course your parents could be proud of. You became the one who never needs help, because someone had to be. You believe things about money, rest, marriage, God and yourself that you have never once questioned out loud.

None of that makes you a fraud. It makes you a person whose roots were planted by other hands. This guide asks one simple, uncomfortable question: **which of your roots are yours?**

THE NAME

What is really happening

I call the slow, invisible loss of self while still functioning **Identity Drift**. It rarely starts with a crisis. It starts with a foundation you never inspected. Three patterns usually grow from borrowed roots:

Performance Dissociation	Permission Debt	Productive Paralysis
Looking fine on the outside, gone on the inside.	The backlog of things you never let yourself want or feel, because the script you inherited had no room for them.	So much to do that it feels like nothing to do. Busy, praised and stuck.

If you recognised yourself in even one of these, your foundation is asking for attention. That is not bad news. A foundation you can see is a foundation you can rebuild.

A HARD TRUTH

A belief does not become yours because you have carried it for a long time. It becomes yours when you choose it with your eyes open.

THE WORD

Roots that reach for water

> *But blessed is the one who trusts in the LORD, whose confidence is in him. They will be like a tree planted by the water that sends out its roots by the stream. It does not fear when heat comes; its leaves are always green. It has no worries in a year of drought and never fails to bear fruit.*
>
> JEREMIAH 17:7–8 (NIV)

Notice what the tree does. It *sends out* its roots. Roots are not only inherited. They are sent, on purpose, toward water.

Notice, too, what the tree is not promised. Heat still comes. Drought still comes. The promise is not an easy year. The promise is that a well-rooted life keeps bearing fruit in a hard one.

For many of us, faith was part of what we inherited. This guide does not ask you to throw it away. It invites you to move from a faith you were handed to a faith you hold. Paul writes of being "rooted and built up" (Colossians 2:7). Both describe growth that is chosen and tended.

If faith is not part of your story, read this page as old wisdom about roots and water. The work that follows is the same.

THE WIRING

What research shows about borrowed roots

Psychology has studied this for more than fifty years. Four findings matter for you.

Who	What they found
James Marcia	People who commit to an identity without first exploring the alternatives are in what Marcia called **foreclosure**. Their commitments usually come from parents or community, unexamined. Identity achievement comes after real exploration, and is linked with steadier, more self-directed choices.
Robert Kegan	Many capable adults run on what Kegan called a **socialised mind**: their sense of self is shaped by what important people expect of them. The shift to a self-authoring mind comes when you can hold those expectations at arm's length, examine them and write your own. He observed that many adults never fully make this shift.
Edward Deci & Richard Ryan	Self-determination theory separates values we follow out of guilt or fear of disapproval from values we have examined and made our own. Owned values are consistently linked with greater wellbeing and persistence.
Murray Bowen	Differentiation of self is the ability to stay emotionally connected to your family while holding your own position. Low differentiation looks like cutting people off, or being run by them. Growth does not require leaving your people. It requires not disappearing among them.

Put together: you do not need new roots everywhere. You need to inspect the ones you have, choose them on purpose, and stay connected while you do. That is what R.O.O.T.S.™ walks you through.

Research describes patterns and associations, not guarantees. You remain the expert on your own life.

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THE FRAMEWORK

R.O.O.T.S.™ in five steps

Work through one step a day, or all five in one sitting. Keep the order. Each step stands on the one before it.

	Step	What it means
R	Release	Name what you were handed, and loosen what was never yours.
O	Orient	Find your true north: who you are before the roles.
O	Own	Claim your story and your choices in your own words.
T	Tether	Anchor to what holds you while you grow.
S	Step	Take one small action that proves the new root.

R Release

STEP 1 OF 5

Name what you were handed, and loosen what was never yours.

Release does not mean rejecting your family, your culture or your faith. It means taking every belief and role out of the dark, holding it up to the light, and deciding what to do with it. Some you will keep gladly. Some you will reshape. Some you will put down for the first time in years.

ASK YOURSELF

1. Whose voice do you hear when you think you have failed?
2. What were you praised for as a child, and what did that teach you that you must keep doing to be loved?
3. What are you still performing for someone who is no longer watching?
4. If you put this belief down, who would be disappointed? Could you survive their disappointment?

YOUR ANSWERS

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TRY THIS

The Inheritance Inventory

List five beliefs or roles you carry. For each one, write who handed it to you, whether it still serves you, and your decision: Keep, Reshape or Release.

Belief or role I carry	Who handed it to me	Does it still serve me?	Keep, Reshape or Release
Example: I must never need help.	*My mother, by example*	*It kept me going. It also keeps me alone.*	*Reshape*

WATCH FOR Releasing in anger. If writing a belief down brings up rage toward the person who handed it to you, pause. They were often handed it too. You can release a belief and still honour the person.

> *If this step brings up memories of harm, you do not have to work through them alone or all at once. Pause, and consider speaking to a counsellor. That is strength, not weakness.*

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O Orient

STEP 2 OF 5

Find your true north: who you are before the roles.

Roles are real, and many are holy: parent, spouse, firstborn, leader, provider, servant of God. But a role is something you do. When the role becomes the whole identity, losing the role feels like losing yourself. To orient is to find the self underneath the roles, and the values that self wants to live by.

ASK YOURSELF

5. Who are you when nobody needs anything from you?
6. If your life keeps going in its current direction for five more years, where will you be? Do you want to arrive there?
7. Which of your values has never cost you anything? If you would not pay for it, it may be a preference, not a value.

YOUR ANSWERS

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TRY THIS

Before the Roles

First, list every role you carry: firstborn, provider, manager, wife, husband, pastor, the dependable friend. Then imagine none of them were needed for a day, and finish the sentence. Last, circle five values you would pay a real price for.

MY ROLES

WHEN NONE OF THESE ROLES ARE NEEDED, I AM SOMEONE WHO…

CIRCLE FIVE VALUES

Faith · Honesty · Freedom · Family · Rest · Excellence · Justice · Generosity · Creativity · Courage · Learning · Peace · Service · Adventure · Stewardship · Health · Joy · Loyalty · Legacy · Simplicity

MY FIVE VALUES

WATCH FOR Choosing values you admire instead of values you live. Check each one against your calendar and your bank statement.

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O Own

STEP 3 OF 5

Claim your story and your choices in your own words.

To own your identity is to stop waiting for permission to be who you are. It means telling your story, including the chapters you are ashamed of, and making choices you can explain without saying "they expect it." Many high achievers carry a large Permission Debt: years of things they never let themselves want, say or feel. Owning is where you start paying it back to yourself.

ASK YOURSELF

8. What decision are you still waiting for someone's permission to make?
9. What would change if you stopped apologising for wanting more?
10. Which part of your story do you edit out when you introduce yourself? What would it cost you to stop hiding it?

YOUR ANSWERS

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TRY THIS

Rewrite the Sentence

Take three beliefs you marked Reshape or Release. Rewrite each one as a sentence you choose, in the first person and the present tense.

The sentence I inherited	The sentence I choose
Example: I must always be the strong one.	*I am strong, and I am allowed to be carried.*

MY PERMISSION SLIP: I GIVE MYSELF PERMISSION TO…

WATCH FOR Owning everything at once. Choose one owned sentence to live by this week. One lived sentence is worth more than ten written ones.

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T Tether

STEP 4 OF 5

Anchor to what holds you while you grow.

A tree that grows taller needs deeper roots, not fewer. As you change, some people will cheer and some will feel threatened. Bowen's research is a gift here: you can stay connected to the people you love without being run by them. A tether is anything that holds you steady while you grow: faith, a few honest people, daily practices, and places that bring you back to yourself.

ASK YOURSELF

11. Who knows the real you, and not just the useful you?
12. If you disappeared from all your roles for a month, who would check on you, and not on what you do for them?
13. Which relationship do you only survive by shrinking?

YOUR ANSWERS

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TRY THIS

Your Tether Map

Fill in each anchor. Be specific: names, days, places.

Anchor	Mine
Faith or meaning: what reminds me who I am	
People: two or three who know the real me	
Practices: what I do daily or weekly to stay grounded	
Places: where I come back to myself	
One boundary I will protect	

WATCH FOR Tethering only to people who need you. Being needed is not the same as being known.

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S Step

STEP 5 OF 5

Take one small action that proves the new root.

Roots are invisible, but they show up in what grows. Every small action is evidence for the identity you are choosing; James Clear describes each one as a vote for the person you want to become. Psychologist Peter Gollwitzer found that people who decide exactly when and where they will act are more likely to follow through than people who only intend to.

ASK YOURSELF

14. What is the smallest action the person you are becoming would take today?
15. What will you stop doing, so the new root has room to grow?
16. Who will notice the difference first?

YOUR ANSWERS

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TRY THIS

This Week's Root Step

Choose one action small enough to finish in under an hour. Write it as: When [day, time or situation], I will [action].

MY ROOT STEP: WHEN…, I WILL…

TO MAKE ROOM, I WILL STOP…

I WILL TELL THIS PERSON ABOUT MY STEP

DONE ON (DATE)

WATCH FOR A step that is really a speech. Announcing your new boundary is not the step. Keeping it is.

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KEEP THIS PAGE

R.O.O.T.S.™ at a glance

Screenshot this page. Come back to it whenever you feel yourself drifting.

R **Release**
Whose voice am I obeying right now?

O **Orient**
Who am I when nobody needs anything from me?

O **Own**
What would I choose if I did not need permission?

T **Tether**
Who knows the real me this week?

S **Step**
What is one small action that proves the new root?

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THE PROOF

What this looks like in a life

A composite, drawn from patterns I see in coaching. Names and details are changed.

Otieno is a civil engineer, 41, and the firstborn of six. Since his father died he has paid two sets of school fees, a hospital bill and most of his mother's rent. He is respected at church and trusted at work. He came to coaching because he could not sleep, and could not say why.

His Inheritance Inventory had one line that took him twenty minutes to write: *A real man carries everyone and complains to no one.* He marked it Reshape. His owned sentence became: *I carry my family with love, and I let my siblings carry with me.*

His root step was one phone call. He asked his brother to take over their mother's rent for three months. His brother agreed in under five minutes. Otieno had carried it alone for six years without once asking.

FROM MY OWN GROUND

In 2023 I wrote a four-year arc for my own life: Shedding, Foundation from ashes, Rebuilding, Becoming with intention.

In December 2024 I founded TPDC Thrive from a mabati house, the sixth shelter in fourteen months. I did not have a stable roof. I had roots I had chosen. Much of what I teach about foundations, I learned on ground that kept moving.

Dorcus Juliet

THE RETURN

Your R.O.O.T.S.™ declaration

I honour the roots I was given.
I keep what is true.
I release what was never mine.
I choose my values with my eyes open.
I stay connected without disappearing.
I am rooted, and I am growing.

Signed _____ Date _____

Your seven days

Day	Focus	Do this (about 15 minutes)	Done
Day 1	Release	Complete the Inheritance Inventory.	☐
Day 2	Release	Talk to one safe person about one belief you are reshaping.	☐
Day 3	Orient	Complete Before the Roles and choose your five values.	☐
Day 4	Own	Rewrite three sentences and write your permission slip.	☐
Day 5	Tether	Complete your Tether Map and contact one person on it.	☐
Day 6	Step	Take your root step.	☐
Day 7	Return	Read your declaration aloud. Write down what shifted and what still pulls.	☐

Come back in 90 days. Retake the Identity Clarity Audit™ and compare your Foundation score and your Identity Shape. Growth you can see is growth you can trust.

YOUR NEXT STEP

When you want someone beside you

A guide can show you your roots. It cannot sit with you while you decide what to do with the one that hurts.

That is what the Deep Dive™ is for. In ninety minutes, one to one, we look at your Identity Reading and your answers in this guide and we name the pattern underneath them. You leave with your Clarity Mirror, a written reflection of what we uncovered, and one agreed Power Move for your next season.

90 minutes One to one with Dorcus, online
Your Clarity Mirror A written reflection of what we uncover, yours to keep
One Power Move A single agreed action for your next season
KES 2,500 · USD 20 One session

WhatsApp the word NAME to +254 734 878148
Scan the code, or send NAME on WhatsApp. Bring this guide with you.

PASS IT ON

Who came to mind as you read this?

Someone you love may be carrying more than they show. Send them the Identity Clarity Audit™. It takes seven minutes, it is free, and their Identity Reading is private to them.

dorcusjuliet.com/theidentityclarityaudit

You may share this guide whole and free of charge, with credit to Dorcus Juliet. Please do not sell it or change it.

If you need more support

Coaching is for growth. If you are in crisis, if you feel unsafe or if you are thinking about harming yourself, please reach out to someone now. You do not have to carry this alone.

Where	Contact
Emergency in Kenya	999 or 112
Kenya Red Cross, free mental health helpline	1199
Befrienders Kenya (call, SMS or WhatsApp)	+254 722 178 177
Outside Kenya	findahelpline.com lists free helplines by country

SOURCES

Where these ideas come from

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Research describes patterns and associations, not guarantees. You remain the expert on your own life.

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Dorcus Juliet is a Transformational Coach and Identity Strategist based in Nairobi, Kenya. She helps capable men and women rebuild their identity, heal deeply and grow with clarity.

She is the founder of TPDC Thrive, a community movement for personal development founded in December 2024, and the creator of The Rebuilding Journey™ and the Becoming More Experience™. She holds a BDS Training of Trainers certification and is ranked among the top 1–2% of LinkedIn creators in Kenya by Favikon.

She is a co-author of When to Walk Away: The Power of Knowing When to Let Go (ZionPearl, 2026) and the author of the forthcoming Identity Drift: Take Yourself Back.

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