



The **soft girl era** Guidebook

“Steps to Step Into Your Soft Girl Era”

...for Black Women, by Black Women, with Love and Community

Designed to accompany the
“Soft Girl Era - Reclaiming Rest, Redefining Strength: The Truth About the Soft Girl Era”
Mental Health Panel Discussion presented by
Zeta Phi Beta Sorority, Inc. - Eta Upsilon Zeta Chapter in Fort Wayne, IN on April 25, 2025

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The “Soft Girl Era” is YOURS to define. It is not about fitting someone else’s aesthetic. It’s about reclaiming ease, tenderness, healing, and JOY — even in a world that tries to deny us these things. It’s also about making sure we don’t leave our sisters behind. Stepping into our Soft Girl Era requires that we create spaces for us to feel safe, seen and supported as a collective. This guidebook is designed with you in mind. Cheers to stepping into your Soft Girl Era, sis!

Step 1: Make It Your Own — What Does Softness Mean to You?

Take a moment to reflect:

- When I hear “soft life,” I feel...
- The emotions or practices I want more of in my life are...
- The parts of myself I want to nourish are...
- I know I’m in my Soft Era when I...

Write your thoughts below, on a separate sheet of paper, or in your journal:

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Step 2: Building Your Soft Life (Personally)

Here are some ways to create softness for yourself. Choose what feels right for you:

1. Protect your peace: Say no without explaining yourself.
2. Prioritize rest: Nap, sleep, daydream without guilt.
3. Curate joy: Make space for things that feel good just because.
4. Move your body lovingly: Stretch, dance, walk, breathe.
5. Create beauty: In your space, your clothing, your spirit.
6. Nourish yourself: Food, water, skin care, self-affirmations.
7. Therapy + emotional check-ins: Normalize tending to your mind.
8. Set boundaries: Let people know where you end and they begin.

Pick 1-3 actions you'll start this month. Can you think of any other ways to create your soft life? Be as creative and true to yourself as your soul and imagination will allow you!

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Step 3: Softness in Sisterhood — Community Care

Softness isn't selfish — it's contagious. Here's how we can bring each other along:

1. Check in on your sister friends: Ask “How's your heart?” not just “How are you?”
2. Share resources: Therapy directories, wellness grants, self-care events.
3. Create accessible moments of joy: Potlucks, movie nights, healing circles.
4. Support Black women-owned businesses: Especially wellness brands, bookstores, artists.
5. Mentor and uplift: Pass along what you learn, no gatekeeping.
6. Advocate: Fight for equitable access — healing is a right, not a luxury.

Who is one sister you can uplift this week? How will you do it?

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Step 4: Book Recommendations — Wisdom from Our Own

Here are some books by Black women — especially therapists and wellness experts — to ground and inspire you:

“Sister Outsider” by Audre Lorde

“All About Love” by bell hooks

“Rest Is Resistance: A Manifesto” by Tricia Hersey (founder of The Nap Ministry)

“Sisterhood Heals: The Transformative Power of Healing in Community”
by Dr. Joy Harden Bradford

“The Unapologetic Guide to Black Mental Health” by Dr. Rheeda Walker

“Set Boundaries, Find Peace” by Nedra Glover Tawwab

“Matters of the Heart” by Dr. Thema Bryant

“The Garden Within” by Dr. Anita Phillips

“What Happened to You?” by Dr. Bruce Perry and Oprah Winfrey

“Self-Care for Black Women” by Oludara Adeeyo

“Healing Rage” by Ruth King

“The Body Is Not An Apology” by Sonya Renee Taylor

“The Light We Carry” by Michelle Obama

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Step 4: Therapy Resources

Here is a list of Black women licensed and pre-licensed mental health therapists in Fort Wayne, IN, as well as some national directories, if you'd like to go even deeper into creating your soft life, by utilizing the power of therapy... for us, by us!

*Please note, this is not an exhaustive list. There may be some Black women therapists in the city that we have not captured here. We did our best to do our due diligence to compile as complete of a list as we could.

Bernadine Payton, LMHC
Crystal Kelly, LMHC
Dayla Robinson, LCSW
Darla Nave, LMFT
Dawn Smith, LMHCA
Doreen Huddleston, MSW
Erica Woodward, LCSW
Fatima Washington, Master's Level Intern
Frederica Rogers, LCSW
Ifeoma Turner, MSW
Janell Lane, LMHC
Jacqueline Vedder, LMFT
Kyla Neely, LCSW
Dr. Lakeya Stewart, LMHCA
LaToya Griffin, LMFTA
Maegan Hayes, MSW
Marie Love, LMHCA
Melanie King, LMSW
Michelle Rowland, Pre-Licensed Counselor
Migonette Daniels, LMSW
Ogechi Uju-Eke, LMHCA
Olinka Clark, LCSW
Rachel Busche, MSW
Raven Morton, LMHCA
Robin Crawford, LMHC
Sashelle Rose, LMHCA
Shameka Royal, LMHCA
Shannon Walters-Harvey, LMHC
Stephanie Burton, LMHC
Tamia Parker, Master's Level Intern
Tawanna Scruggs-Cottrell, Pre-Licensed Counselor
Tonisha King, LMHCA
Wanda Faye Demeke, LMHCA

Psychology Today Directory: www.psychologytoday.com/indiana/therapists

Therapy for Black Girls Directory: www.therapyforblackgirls.com