STRESS REGULATION GUIDE

The Oh Sh!t Tool Kit

A rapid stress regulation guide for when you're totally not okay & need something that works right now.

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YOUR MIND IS FULL OF SHIFT

Introduction

Alright. Whatever brought you here, whether it's thoughts stuck on repeat or that full-body tension that makes you feel like a human clenched fist, it sucks. I get it (believe me, I get it). And it shouldn't get to hijack your whole afternoon, or an hour, or even the next 10 minutes. You've got sh*t to do, and unraveling in the bathroom probably wasn't on the list.

Knowing even a little bit of the "why" behind what your brain is doing makes the tools make a lot more sense and helps you identify when they start to “work.” What you're feeling is the result of a pattern your brain built, and the first and fastest step to start weakening that pattern is by interrupting it, over and over, until the result is a lot less debilitating. So here's the nitty gritty...

Over your lifetime, your brain has filed certain things away as threats: sounds, experiences, thoughts, situations, places, you name it. It memorized "triggers" for each one so it can sound the alarm and get you ready for battle. The problem is that your brain's definition of "threat" and the logical definition of "threat" are wildly different. Your brain is totally the person who sees a spider and burns the house down. We won't go all the way down that rabbit hole here. For now, just know that what you're feeling is your brain's desperate, well-meaning, and slightly (sometimes hugely) unhinged attempt to keep you safe based on a story it never updated. FYI - just like its definition of “threat” is illogical, it’s definition of “safe” is just as bad. You’ll see in a sec.

A lot of those stories it based your patterns on got written when you were little. Picture this: you're in kindergarten and your teacher asks you to write the number 5 on the board in front of the whole class, and your mind goes completely blank. Somebody laughs and you’re so embarrassed you want to bolt out the door. Your brain recorded that moment, because getting laughed at felt bad (rejection), and your brain counts rejection as a threat. Fast forward to present day, and every time you have to speak in front of people, you feel like you're having a legit heart attack... all because 6-year-old you blanked on a number. That 5 has been living rent-free in your nervous system for decades and you probably didn’t even know it was there. See? Un-updated story.

And you're running these stories for way more than you realize. Habits? Yup. Reactions? Yup. Things you like? Yup. Things that piss you off? Yup. Decisions, good and bad? Yuuuup. All of it. You formed beliefs about a whole lot of things at a very young age, and you've been kinda living your reality through that lens ever since. Basically, a kindergartner has been running your life, and they don't even know how to tie their shoes yet. No wonder we all need so much mental health support, right? It's normal human development, yes, but that doesn't make it suck any less.

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Remember how I said your brain is like that person who sees a spider and burns down the house? When your brain spots one of those stories playing out, it assumes the position and slams the panic button (Voila! Fire). All those lovely physical symptoms (nausea, tension, shortness of breath, headaches, chest pressure, dizziness, and the rest of the greatest hits) come from the surge your body creates to survive a fight-or-flight situation. Fun fact: it's 2026, and saber-tooth tigers aren't hunting us anymore, but that part of our brain never got an evolutionary update. So it treats a 10-minute work presentation like a predator just walked into the conference room. Fun times...

Your brain (everyone's brain, so you're in good company) is also pretty bad at telling the difference between something that's actually happening and something that's imagined. So the second you start picturing yourself bombing on stage, your body reacts like it's real, like it's happening right now, and you're definitely gonna die. Probably in front of everyone. Possibly while someone's filming. I know that all sounds like a pretty crappy way to evolve, but this is actually where it starts to get good. Ready? It turns out we can use it to our advantage!

See, we can't go at this part of the brain logically, because it's anything but logical (remember its lack of logic with threat and safety?). It's basing your entire safety plan for public speaking on the time you forgot how to make the number 5. That's the security guard we're working with here. We also can't force it to do what we want, because it's stronger than we are. Well, technically we can, but who wants to spend their life in a wrestling match with themselves? I know I don't, I got tired of that years ago. I have to much other sh*t to do to spend time fighting myself. Don’t you?

So how do we do it? We find ways "in" that let us do the change work using this part of the brain's strengths, and we do it without tripping the alarm (aka burning down the house).

Remember when I said our patterns are automatic? That's because your brain loves the path of least resistance. It's efficient, and also kind of (super) lazy. If you've done something repeatedly, it's created an "if this happens, we do that" shortcut, because that's what's worked in the past (or at least, it hasn't killed you yet). When you interrupt that shortcut, and you do it often enough, you weaken it. It stops being the path of least resistance, and your brain has to actually stop before the reaction and decide what needs to happen. Creating that pause is exactly where this work begins.

We aren't getting into the deep work in this book, but the quick hits you'll learn here WILL help you build the pause that lays the foundation for the change you

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want. That said, reading them once and never doing them won't get you anywhere, the same way buying a gym membership doesn't give you abs. The more you practice these, the more effective they'll get. Your brain learned the habits it has now through repetition, and it can learn new ones through the exact same process. It's stubborn, illogical, melodramatic, and an alarmist, yes - but it's trainable. So, let's get into the good stuff, shall we?

How This Works
This tool comes in two parts, so you don't have to make (yet another) decision while your brain is burning the house down.

Part One: Instant Interrupts
Use these first, when things are starting to amp up or are already all the way amped. They're for when your mind is racing and you can't think clearly (yet). Each prompt gives your brain one small, specific thing to do, which takes some of the steam out of the spiral. The goal is to move your brain from "react" mode back into "think" mode, which gets you out of fight-or-flight (aka panic mode).

Part Two: Reflection
These are for after the spike has eased up a little and you can actually think again. Each prompt asks you something meant to be sat with, so take your time with it. They help you see the worry more clearly: what's real, what's an assumption, and how to go a little easier on yourself while you're in the middle of it.

Use this however it works for you. Flip to whatever page matches where you are. Some days Part One will be plenty, and other days you'll want both.

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Part One
Instant Interrupt Tools

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Part One - Instant Interrupt Tools - Attention

- Look around the room. Find 5 things you can see. For each one - what color is it, exactly? Is it rough or smooth? Would it feel warm or cold if you touched it?

- Find something cold and hold it. Water, ice, a metal surface - anything works. Where do you feel the cold first? Does it stay in one spot or spread?

- Press your feet flat into the floor. Push down like you're trying to leave footprints. What do you feel first - your heels, your toes, or the whole foot at once?

- Pick one object near you and touch it. Is it smooth, rough, bumpy, soft? Does it feel the same in every spot, or different in different places?

- Close your eyes and listen. What's the loudest sound you hear? What's the quietest one underneath it? Is either one getting louder or fading?

- Run cold water over your wrists. Let it run for 10 seconds. Does it feel different on one wrist than the other? Does the feeling change the longer it runs?

- Smell something strong nearby. Coffee, soap, anything with a scent. What does it remind you of - a place, a person, a memory?

- Put one hand on your chest, one on your stomach. Which hand moves more when you breathe in? Can you make the bottom hand move more than the top one?

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Instant Interrupt Tools - Attention

- Find every red thing in the room. Count them out loud. Which one did you notice last? Is there more red than you expected?

- Pick up your phone or keys and just hold them. How much do they weigh in your hand? Is the surface warm from your pocket or cool?

- Bite into something sour or minty. A piece of gum, a mint, anything with a strong taste. Where on your tongue do you feel it most?

- Squeeze your hands into fists, then let go. Do this 3 times. What changes in your hands between the squeeze and the release - temperature, tingling, heaviness?

- Notice the temperature of the air on your skin. Is it warmer or cooler than your hands right now? Is it the same everywhere, or does it change near a window or vent?

- Trace the outline of an object with your finger. A phone, a mug, a book - anything. Does the edge feel sharp, rounded, or uneven?

- Count how many things in the room are a different shape than a rectangle. What's the roundest thing you can see? What's the most oddly shaped?

- Put on a piece of clothing or grab a blanket and notice the fabric. Is it soft, scratchy, thick, thin? Does it feel different where it touches skin versus where it doesn't?

- Find something in the room that makes a sound if you move it. Keys, a zipper, paper. Move it once. What does the sound remind you of?

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Part One - Instant Interrupt Tools - Attention

- Hold something heavier than you'd expect - a book, a bag, a shoe. How does your arm feel holding it for 10 seconds? Where does the weight pull first?

- Notice your tongue in your mouth right now. Is it resting on the roof of your mouth or the bottom? Is your jaw tight or loose?

- Find the brightest and the dimmest spot in the room. What's making each one bright or dim? Which one is easier to look directly at?

- Rub your palms together fast for 5 seconds, then stop. What do you feel - heat, tingling, pulsing? Does one palm feel different from the other?

- Pick a drink nearby and take a sip. Is it hot, cold, sweet, bitter? Where do you feel the temperature first - lips, tongue, or throat?

- Notice what your back is touching right now. A chair, a wall, a cushion. Is it firm or soft? Is the pressure even across your back or stronger in one spot?

- Look at your hands for 10 seconds. What's one detail you don't usually notice - a vein, a scar, a callus, the shape of a knuckle?

- Tap each finger to your thumb, one at a time. Which finger feels the most sensitive? Does the pace feel steady or does it want to speed up?

- Listen for a sound outside the room. Traffic, wind, voices, machinery. Can you tell how far away it is? Is it steady or does it start and stop?

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Part One - Instant Interrupt Tools - Attention

- Notice the weight of your body in the chair or on your feet. Is more weight on one side than the other? Does it change if you shift slightly?

- Smell the inside of your wrist. Most people carry a faint scent of soap, lotion, or skin. Can you name it? Is it stronger or fainter than you expected?

- Look for the smallest object you can see from where you're sitting. What is it? Could you pick it up with two fingers?

- Press your palm flat against a wall or table. Is the surface cool or warm? Smooth or textured? Does the feeling change the longer you hold it there?

- Notice 3 different textures you're touching right now - clothing, furniture, skin, hair. Which one is softest? Which one is roughest?

- Take a slow sip of water and pay attention only to swallowing. Where do you feel it move - throat, chest, stomach? How long does it take to feel it in your stomach?

- Find something near you with writing on it. Read the words slowly. How many words are there? Is any letter repeated a lot? Read the letters backwards (out loud if you can).

- Notice the sensation of your clothes against your skin. Where is it tightest? Where is it loosest? Is there a spot you weren't aware of until now?

- Pick up an ice cube if you have one, or imagine holding one. How long can you hold it before it's uncomfortable? Where does the cold spread to first?

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Part One - Instant Interrupt Tools - Attention

- Listen to your own breathing for 15 seconds without changing it. Is it fast or slow? Loud or quiet? Even or uneven? Can you make your exhale last longer than your inhale? By how much?

- Find the coolest surface within reach and press your cheek or forehead to it. How does the temperature change over 10 seconds? Does the feeling spread?

- Notice what's directly above your head right now. A ceiling, sky, light fixture. What color is it? Is there any texture or pattern you hadn't noticed?

- Chew a piece of food slowly, noticing only the texture. Is it crunchy, soft, chewy? How many times do you chew before it changes texture?

- Stretch your arms above your head and hold for 5 seconds. Where do you feel the stretch most - shoulders, back, ribs? Does it feel good or uncomfortable?

- Find two objects the same color. How close in shade are they - exact match or just similar? Which one is bigger?

- Notice the sound of your own movement - footsteps, a chair creaking, fabric shifting. Is it louder than you expected? Does it change based on how you move?

- Hold your own hand - right hand holding left, or left holding right. Is one hand warmer or more relaxed than the other?

- Look out a window (or at a picture of outside) for 10 seconds. What's moving - clouds, leaves, cars, people? What's completely still? Name 5 colors you see and 3 things that would be smooth.

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Part One - Instant Interrupt Tools - Attention

- Press your thumbnail gently into the pad of your pointer finger. How much pressure before you feel it clearly? Does letting go feel like relief?

- Notice the last thing you ate or drank - the aftertaste. Is it sweet, bitter, still there, already fading? Would you want more of it right now?

- Find something transparent or reflective nearby - a window, phone screen, glass. What do you see in it that you don't normally notice?

- Roll your shoulders backward slowly 3 times. Where do you feel tension release, if anywhere? Does your neck feel different after?

- Notice the sensation of air moving in and out of your nose. Is it cooler going in than going out? Is one nostril more open than the other right now?

- Pick the quietest object in the room and imagine picking it up. How would it feel - light, heavy, smooth, cold? What sound, if any, would it make?

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Part One - Instant Interrupt Tools - Body Focus

- Breathe in for 4 counts, hold it for 7, then out for 8. Notice which part is harder to control, the inhale, the hold, or the long exhale. Does your chest or belly move more?

- Place both hands on your ribs and breathe in deep. Do your ribs expand out to the sides, or mostly up and down? Which direction feels more natural?

- Sigh out loud, like you really mean it. Do it twice more. Does your body feel any different after the third one, looser, heavier, calmer?

- Clench your jaw for 3 seconds, then let it go slack. Where do you feel the release, jaw, temples, neck? Is your jaw naturally tight right now?

- Shake out your hands for 10 seconds like you're air-drying them. Does the shaking feel silly, satisfying, or both? What do your hands feel like when you stop?

- Spin like a washing machine. Stand up and swing your torso left to right, let your arms flop with the motion. How far can you get them to go? How high can you get them to go?

- Roll your neck slowly in one direction, then the other. Is one side more restricted than the other? Where is it the tightest?

- Press your tongue to the roof of your mouth and breathe through your nose for 5 breaths. Does this change your breathing pace? Is it harder or easier than breathing normally?

- Stand up, or sit up taller, and plant both feet. Notice your spine stacking up. Does your body want to slouch back down, or does taller feel steadier?

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Part One - Instant Interrupt Tools - Body Focus

- Breathe in through your nose for 4 counts, hold for 4, breathe out for 4 and hold that exhale for 4. Which part feels the most unnatural, the hold or the release? Do you want to rush any part of it?

- Drop your shoulders away from your ears and let your arms hang heavy. How far did your shoulders actually drop? Were they higher than you realized?

- Take one breath and try to make it silent, no sound at all - one through your mouth and then one through your nose. Was that easy or surprisingly hard? What did you notice about your breath that you don't usually pay attention to? Which way was easiest to stay silent?

- Yawn on purpose, even if it feels fake. Does a real yawn follow? What happens to your eyes and jaw right after?

- Press your feet into the ground and squeeze your leg muscles for 5 seconds, then release. Where do you feel the release most, thighs, calves, or feet? Does the release spread anywhere else?

- Put a hand on your stomach and breathe so only that hand moves. Can you keep your chest still while you do it? How many breaths before it feels natural?

- Open your mouth wide like a big yawn and hold for 3 seconds. What happens in your ears or jaw? Does anything pop or release?

- Cross your arms over your chest and give yourself a firm squeeze. Hold for 5 seconds. Does the pressure feel calming or does it make you want to let go sooner?

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Part One - Instant Interrupt Tools - Body Focus

- Breathe in through your nose and out through pursed lips, like blowing out a candle slowly. Does the exhale take longer than expected? Where do you feel it, lips, chest, or belly?

- Curl your toes tightly for 5 seconds, then release them. What do your feet feel like right after, tingly, warm, relaxed? Is one foot more tense than the other?

- Take a breath and count how many seconds the inhale naturally lasts. Now count the exhale. Which one is longer without you trying to control it?

- Rub your hands together until they feel warm, then cup them over your closed eyes. What does the warmth feel like against your eyelids? Does your breathing slow down at all?

- Tense your entire body, arms, legs, stomach, face, for 5 seconds, then let it all go at once. What's the first place you feel the release? Does your breath change right after?

- Breathe in slowly while raising both arms overhead, then breathe out while lowering them. Does the movement make the breath feel bigger or smaller? Which direction feels more natural to move on the exhale?

- Place two fingers on your neck or wrist and just notice your pulse for 15 seconds. Is it fast, slow, steady, uneven? Does noticing it change it at all?

- Push your palms together hard in front of your chest and hold for 5 seconds. Where do you feel the effort most, hands, arms, or shoulders? What happens when you release the pressure?

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Part One - Instant Interrupt Tools - Body Focus

- Breathe in for 4 counts and imagine the air filling your belly like a balloon. Breathe out for 6 and imagine the balloon slowly deflating. Does picturing it change how the breath feels?

- Massage your temples in small circles for 10 seconds. Does the pressure feel good? Is there tension you hadn't noticed?

- Drop your chin to your chest and let the back of your neck stretch. Hold for 5 seconds. Where do you feel it most, upper back, base of the skull, or shoulders?

- Take a breath and hum on the exhale, any note. Does the humming vibrate anywhere, your chest, throat, or lips? Does it feel strange or soothing?

- Open and close your hands as wide as you can, 5 times slowly. Do your fingers feel stiff at first or loose right away? Does anything crack or release?

- Breathe in normally, then on the exhale make it twice as long as usual. Do you run out of air before the exhale is done? What does your body do to compensate?

- Press your lips together firmly for 3 seconds, then relax them completely. Does your jaw relax along with your lips? Where else in your face feels different after?

- Lean your head to one shoulder and hold for 5 seconds, then switch sides. Which side felt tighter? Did one side stretch more easily than the other?

- What's the temperature of your left foot right now? Your right hand? Your left ear? Your upper back? Where else do you have sensations that you weren't paying attention to before?

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Part One - Instant Interrupt Tools - Body Focus

- Breathe in and lift your eyebrows as high as they'll go, then breathe out and let your whole face go slack. What does your forehead feel like right after? Is it hard to keep your face fully relaxed?

- Plant your feet and gently sway side to side for a few seconds. Does the movement change your breathing pace? Which direction, left or right, feels more comfortable to lean into?

- Squeeze your shoulder blades together like you're pinching a pencil between them, then release. Where do you feel the squeeze, upper back, chest, or arms? What changes when you let go?

- Take three breaths and try to make each one slightly slower than the last. Was the third breath noticeably slower than the first? Which one felt the most natural?

- Press your hands flat against your thighs and push down for 5 seconds. Where do you feel the effort, palms, arms, or legs? What does releasing the pressure feel like?

- Open your mouth and stick out your tongue for 3 seconds, like a silly face. Does your jaw feel any different after? Did it make you want to laugh or just feel odd?

- Breathe in through your nose and imagine the air is a color. What color did you picture? Does the exhale feel like it carries a different color out?

- Bounce gently on your heels a few times if you're standing, or tap your feet if seated. Does the rhythm match your breathing at all? Does it feel calming or restless?

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Part Two Reflection Prompts

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Part Two - Reflection Prompts - Gain Perspective

- What would you tell a friend who came to you with this exact worry? Write out the actual words you'd use. Now write out what you're telling yourself - notice how different that is. How could you be more ___ to yourself like you are to your friend?

- What's the evidence this fear is based on, versus what your mind is assuming? List out what you actually *know* for certain, separate from what you're predicting will happen.

- What's within your control right now, and what isn't? For the part that isn't, describe what it would look like to set it down until it's actually time to deal with it.

- What's the absolute worst-case outcome, specifically? Be super dramatic and totally illogical. Walk through exactly what you'd do, step by step, if it happened. What resources or people would you lean on?

- Think of three times you've worried about something in the past. How many of them *actually* happened the way you feared? What happened instead?

- Describe this thought as a feeling rather than a fact. What words would you use to describe it as "a feeling I'm having right now is___" instead of "the truth"?

- If this anxiety were trying to protect you from something, what would that be? Pretend if you don't know, and describe what it's guarding against, and whether that protection is still useful.

- Separate what you know for certain right now from what you're predicting about the future. Write out each one. Describe how much of your anxiety belongs to the present moment versus a moment that hasn't happened yet.

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Part Two - Reflection Prompts - Gain Perspective

- Imagine explaining this worry to someone who has no context at all. What details would you include to make them understand? What details would you leave out because, deep down, you know they're just assumptions?

- Think about how you'll likely feel about this a week from now. Describe what might feel different by then, and what, if anything, will still feel just as urgent. Then do it for a month and a year from now.

- Name the story your mind is telling you about what this means. Now describe an entirely different story that could explain the same facts, one that isn't rooted in fear.

- Describe what you'd do differently in the next hour if you weren't anxious about this. What does that gap tell you about how much this feeling is steering your actions right now?

- Think of someone you respect who handles pressure well. Describe how you imagine they'd approach this exact situation, step by step.

- Break this worry down into the part that's actually happening and the part your mind has added on top. Describe each part separately, and notice which one is doing most of the damage.

- Describe what "handling this well" would actually look like for you, in specific terms. What would you be doing, saying, or thinking if you were handling it the way you want to?

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Part Two - Reflection Prompts - Gain Perspective

- Think about this exact worry one year from now. Describe how much space you imagine it will still take up in your mind, and what you'll likely remember most about how you got through it.

- Picture yourself five years from now looking back at this moment. Describe what advice that version of you would give, and what they'd want you to know that you can't see right now.

- Think about the last thing that felt this urgent a month ago. Describe where that worry is now, and what changed between then and now.

- Imagine describing this worry to yourself as it will feel in one week. Describe what details will have faded and what, if anything, will still matter.

- Think about how much of today you've spent on this worry so far. Describe what that time could have gone toward instead, and how you'd feel having spent it differently.

- Picture the version of you an hour from now, once this wave has passed. Describe what they'd want to say to you right now, in this exact moment.

- Think about a worry from a year ago that felt unbearable at the time. Describe how you got through it, and what that process looked like day by day.

- Imagine this moment as a single point on a much longer timeline of your life. Describe what comes before and after it, and how small or large this point actually looks in that bigger picture.

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Part Two - Reflection Prompts - Gain Perspective

- Think about what you were worried about on this same date last year. Describe whether you can even remember the details clearly, and what that tells you about how this one might fade too.

- Picture yourself explaining this whole situation to your future self once it's resolved. Describe how you imagine that conversation going, and what tone you'd use looking back on it.

- Think about the next hour, not the next month or year. Describe one small thing you could do in just this next hour that would move you forward, regardless of how the bigger picture unfolds.

- Imagine you could fast forward to the moment this worry is fully behind you. Describe what that relief feels like, and what you imagine finally let it go.

- Think about how many days you've survived so far in your life, including hard ones. Describe what that number tells you about your ability to get through today too.

- Picture a future version of you giving a talk about how they got through this exact period. Describe what they'd say was the turning point.

- Think about what you'll likely be focused on a year from now that has nothing to do with this. Describe what that shift in focus might look like, and how it might already be starting.

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Part Two - Reflection Prompts - Values Based

- What matters most to you in how you handle hard moments? Describe what it would look like to act in line with that right now, even while anxious.

- Picture the kind of person you want to be five years. Describe how that person would move through this exact situation, and what's stopping you from moving that way today.

- Think about what you'd want people close to you to say about how you handle difficulty. Describe what you're doing right now that lines up with that, and what doesn't.

- Consider what this anxiety is telling you that you care about. Describe the thing underneath the fear, the person, goal, or outcome you actually value that's driving this worry.

- Think about a value you hold, like honesty, courage, or connection. Describe one small action you could take in the next few minutes that honors that value, regardless of how anxious you feel.

- Picture yourself having handled this moment in a way you're proud of, whatever the outcome. Describe what that would look like, specifically, in terms of your actions rather than your feelings.

- Think about what you'd regret more, taking a risk that doesn't work out, or not trying at all. Describe which one actually goes against what you value more.

- Consider what "enough" looks like for you in this situation, not perfect, just enough. Describe what meeting that bar would actually require of you right now.

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Part Two - Reflection Prompts - Values Based

- Think about someone whose character you deeply admire. Describe what they value that you also value, and how that shared value might guide you through this moment.

- Consider the difference between what your anxiety wants you to do and what your values want you to do. Describe a moment where those two things point in different directions right now.

- Think about a time you acted according to your values even though it was hard. Describe what that took from you, and how you found it in yourself to do it anyway.

- Picture your life five years from now if you consistently chose courage over comfort in moments like this. Describe what might be different about where you are.

- Consider what you're actually protecting by staying anxious, safety, control, avoiding disappointment. Describe whether that protection is serving you or costing you something you value more.

- Think about what "showing up" for yourself would look like in this exact situation. Describe what that support would sound like if you offered it to yourself the way you would to someone you love.

- Consider a value you sometimes lose sight of when you're anxious, like trust, patience, or self-respect. Describe one way you could reconnect with that value in the next five minutes.

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Part Two - Reflection Prompts - Self Compassion

- Think about how you'd comfort a close friend who felt exactly this anxious. Describe the words, tone, and gestures you'd use, and notice how different that is from how you're treating yourself right now.

- Consider what it means that you're struggling right now. Describe what changes if you think of this as a hard *moment* rather than a personal failure.

- Think about what you needed to hear the last time you felt this way. Describe what that message was, and whether you can offer it to yourself right now.

- Consider how many other people, right now, in this exact moment, are feeling something similar. Describe how it feels to know you're not the only one going through this.

- Think about a mistake or flaw you're being hard on yourself about right now. Describe how you'd talk about it if it belonged to someone you loved instead of you.

- Consider what your body has done for you today, even while anxious. Describe a few specific things it's carried you through, breathing, moving, staying upright, without you even asking it.

- Think about the part of you that's anxious right now as if it were a scared, younger version of yourself. Describe what that part needs to hear from you to feel a little safer.

- Consider what "being kind to yourself" would actually look like in the next ten minutes. Describe one specific thing you could do or say to yourself that qualifies as real kindness, not just a platitude.

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Part Two - Reflection Prompts - Self Compassion

- Think about the standard you're holding yourself to right now. Describe whether you'd hold anyone else in your life to that same standard, and what a fairer one might look like.

- Consider what you've already survived that once felt impossible. Describe what that version of you would want to tell the version of you struggling right now.

- Think about the tone of voice in your head right now. Describe what it would sound like if you softened it, even slightly, the way you would for someone you were trying to comfort.

- Consider what forgiving yourself for feeling this way, instead of judging yourself for it, might open up. Describe what you'd feel free to do differently if you weren't also fighting the anxiety about the anxiety.

- Think about a time someone showed you real patience while you struggled. Describe what that felt like to receive, and what it might look like to offer that same patience to yourself right now.

- Consider what you'd say to yourself if you truly believed you were doing the best you could with what you have right now. Describe how that belief changes the way you're speaking to yourself.

- Think about the difference between "I'm failing" and "I'm having a hard time." Describe which one is actually true right now, and what shifts when you use the more accurate one.

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Thank you!

I hope you enjoyed the content and have found some different perspectives and new tools to help you in your movement forward.

Small businesses benefit tremendously from reviews. Please take a moment to send me your honest review so I can anonymously add it to my site. It would be so appreciated and ensure future customers will know if this is the tool for them.

If you're interested in other topics, or would like to get in touch, please reach out.

With Grit & Gratitude,

Cari Mae ♡

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