

COME BACK, BRAIN:



THE EMERGENCY ADHD KIT FOR ADHD OVERWHELM

A LIFELINE FOR WHEN YOUR BRAIN GOES OFFLINE

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Scripts, tools, and lifelines
Brain-dead tools for when
you just. can't. even.

About This Book: Boundaries, Care & Contact

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⚠ Medical Disclaimer

This book is intended for emotional validation and recognition, not clinical instruction.

It is not a substitute for therapy, diagnosis, or professional treatment.

If you're struggling, please seek support from a licensed mental health professional.

You are worthy of help, and you don't have to carry this alone.

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CHAPTER 1

YOU'RE NOT LAZY, YOU'RE FULL

LET'S BE
HONEST.
IF YOU HAVE
ADHD, YOU'VE
PROBABLY
BEEN CALLED
LAZY
OR CALLED
YOURSELF
THAT MORE
TIMES THAN
YOU CAN
COUNT.



I don't want to 'fix' my ADHD.
I want a world that stops breaking people
like me.

But here's the truth:
You're not lazy. You're full.

Full of tabs open in your brain.
Full of thoughts colliding mid-
sentence. Full of to-dos and half-
dones. Full of emotional residue
from things you couldn't finish.
Full of decisions, so many decisions
that your brain never got to close.

You're not lazy. You're maxed out.
ADHD isn't a motivation deficit. It's a
regulation challenge. Which means
some days, it takes Herculean effort
just to shower.

Or check email. Or remember where
your keys are... again.

If your brain feels like it's buffering
all the time, it's not because you
don't care. It's because you've been
living without a pause button.
And here's what no one tells you:
You don't need to push through.
You need to offload.

So this chapter is your offload
station.

We're not fixing everything today.
We're just clearing the table.

TOOL 1: **THE FULL-BRAIN CHECK-IN**

When everything feels impossible, it's rarely because you're unmotivated. More often? You're overstimulated, under-supported, and emotionally saturated.

The Full-Brain Check-In is a short script that helps you see what's on your mental dashboard and creates a gentle pause.

Say (or write):

"Right now, I am feeling..."

(Name the emotion)

"Right now, I am needing..."

(Name the unmet need)

"Right now, I am holding..."

(Name one thought or pressure that's weighing on you)

Don't overthink it.
Let it be messy.

Then add:

"And it makes sense. Because..."

(Offer yourself a compassionate truth, e.g. "I've been juggling too much" or "No one helped me regulate today.")

You're not just checking in.
You're giving yourself context.
And context is the antidote to shame.



**Your ADHD isn't a character flaw.
It's a nervous system begging for softer instructions.**

TOOL 2: **THE OVERSTIMULATION SCAN**

ADHD brains are highly sensitive to input. Sensory, emotional, and mental. Often, what looks like procrastination is really overstimulation. This scan helps you identify what's pushing your system into freeze mode.

Pause and ask:

- What's loud?
- What's bright?
- What's poking me (physically or emotionally)?
- What's buzzing in the background?
- What's unclosed (a conversation, a notification, a decision)?

Then, pick just one thing to soften.

Lower a light. Change your shirt. Close one tab.
Put on socks. Turn off one notification.

You're not resetting your life.
You're downshifting your nervous system.



You are not the mess. You are the page where the mess finds safety to land.

TOOL 3: THE NEUROKINDNESS STATEMENT

You've been told the solution is discipline. But your brain responds better to permission.

This tool rewrites the story you're telling yourself in moments of shutdown.

Complete this sentence:

"It's okay that I'm _____. My brain is _____, and I am allowed to _____."

Examples: "It's okay that I'm frozen. My brain is overloaded, and I am allowed to start with one sock." "It's okay that I'm spiralling. My brain is protecting me, and I am allowed to pause without finishing the thought."

This isn't about giving up.

It's about giving grace.

And for ADHD minds, grace is not optional. It's essential.



You didn't grow up lazy.
You grew up misnamed,
but names can change
and so can stories.

Remember this:
Be kind to your mind.

You're not lazy.
You're layered.
And every layer deserves language,
not labels.

Let this be your new baseline:
You are not a problem to be solved.
You are a system to be supported.





CHAPTER 2

THE LOOP VS. THE LADDER

**Some days you are
fire. Other days,
you're ash. But even
ash remembers what
it meant to burn.**

You want to get out of the stuckness. You want to climb out. But what if your brain doesn't use ladders?

Here's what no one told you: ADHD brains often move in loops, not lines. They revisit. Rethink. Replay. Not because they're slow, but because they're scanning for safety.

So let's stop shaming the loop. And start learning how to walk with it.

TOOL 1: THE LOOP MAP

When you're in a loop, overthinking, replaying, circling a stuck task, draw it.

Literally.

Draw a small spiral. At the center, write: "What I keep returning to." On each layer of the spiral, write what shows up next:

- A thought?
- A body sensation?
- A fear?
- A rule?



You don't need to be the most consistent. You need to be the most kind to the version of you that showed up anyway.

This isn't a productivity hack. It's a visibility tool. Because loops lose their power when you see their shape.

Now ask: "What is this loop protecting me from?" "What does this loop need before it can soften?"

Sometimes, it's not motivation you need. It's acknowledgement.

TOOL 2: THE SAFETY SIGNAL INSERT

Loops are often the brain saying: "I'm not safe enough to move forward." Not physical danger but emotional risk.

You can't logic your way out of that. But you can signal safety.

Try this:

- Look around and name 3 safe things (a wall, a mug, a plant).
- Touch your chest and say: "I'm allowed to move slowly."
- Add a micro-movement: Adjust posture, stretch fingers, rub your hands.

It tells your brain:
This is now. Not then.

It doesn't fix the loop.
But it opens the gate.



You're a Meaning-Seeker, Not a Mess

TOOL 3: THE LOOP EXIT LINE

When a loop feels endless, give it a gentle exit, not a push.

Try whispering:

"This thought can finish later." "This question doesn't need an answer now." "This moment is safe to leave."

Then do a grounding anchor:

- Change location (move rooms)
- Change texture (touch water, fabric, ground)
- Change light (open a curtain or dim a screen)

ADHD loops need soft landings, not sharp ends.
This is how we teach the brain: Not all loops are danger. Some are just drafts.

And you're allowed to move on, even with the draft unfinished.



CHAPTER 3

THE VOICE IN THE STATIC

YOU DON'T NEED TO BE FIXED. YOU JUST NEED ROOM TO UNFOLD WITHOUT APOLOGY.

**ADHD doesn't just
scramble your focus.
It scrambles your
self-talk.**

Especially when your brain is loud.
The static gets so intense, you can't find
your own voice.

But buried in that noise is something
softer. More true. A voice that doesn't
shame, it shelters.

Let's help you hear it.

TOOL 1: THE STATIC SPOTTER

When your mind is spinning with fear,
judgment, or confusion, pause and ask:
"What part of me is speaking right now?"
Now identify the tone:

- Is it angry?
- Is it afraid?
- Is it repeating something I once heard
from someone else?

Label it gently: "That's the anxious
protector." "That's the critical echo."
"That's a younger me trying to stay safe."
You're not silencing them.
You're recognising that you are not them.

This softens the static without denying it.



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You didn't forget
because you didn't
care. You forgot
because your brain
was on fire and still
cooking dinner.

You keep calling it failure.
But I see persistence
in a language no one taught you,
against odds no one saw.



TOOL 2: THE TRUE VOICE ANCHOR

Once you've identified the noise,
now we find signal.

Say aloud: "I'm looking for my voice
underneath this."

Then try a truth anchor, a short
sentence that feels kind and
grounded.

Examples: "This is hard, but I am still
here." "I don't need to believe every
thought I think." "My worth is not in
question."

Pick just one. Whisper it slowly.

Repeat it like a friend who refuses to
walk away.

You're not faking positivity.

You're reminding your brain what's
real.



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TOOL 3: THE INTERCOM SWITCH

This tool gives you an active role in changing your internal broadcast. Visualize your inner world like a room with an intercom. Now say: "I'm switching channels. Static off. Signal on."

Then take a physical action:

- Change the temperature (open a window, sip something warm)
- Change your posture (stand up, curl into a blanket)
- Change the soundtrack (play soft music or white noise)

That action tells your brain:

We're safe enough to choose a new sound.

You can't erase the static.

But you can turn up the signal.



It's not that I can't start. It's that I've already started... in 12 different tabs... with no exit ramp.

ADHD isn't a focus problem.
it's a regulation problem.
And you can't organize chaos
by yelling at it.



TOOL 4: THE “Voice Memo to Future Me” Ritual

When you feel disconnected from yourself, your future can feel like a stranger.

This tool builds trust between versions of you, even if you're unsure which voice to believe today.

Here's how to do it:

- Grab your phone or a voice recorder.
- Start with: “Hey, this is me... and I just want to say —”
- Speak gently. Messy is okay.
 - Tell future-you one thing you believe (even a little).
 - Share one thing that hurts.
 - End with one line of warmth.

For example,

“I'm proud of you for listening.”

“You're not broken, you're blooming weird.”

“We're figuring it out together.”

- Save it. Name it something like “Voice From a Softer Me.”



**ADHD didn't make you broken.
It made you sensitive to storms.
But that's how you learned
to build shelter, not just for you,
but for others too**

Why it works:

- It bypasses perfectionism (no writing, no edits).
- It turns emotional regulation into something you can hear.
- And when the static returns? You won't have to remember anything, just press play.

Some days, your own voice will be the one thing that brings you back.
Record it for the days you forget.



An illustration of a woman with long, flowing white hair, seen from the back and slightly to the side. She is looking towards a large, bright yellow full moon in a dark blue night sky. The sky is filled with soft, pinkish-purple clouds. Below the sky is a red silhouette of a city skyline. The woman is wearing a yellow top with a small pattern and a green skirt with large white and purple polka dots. She is standing on a brown ledge, and there are some dark green plants on either side of her. The overall style is painterly and artistic.

CHAPTER 4

HOW TO BEGIN AGAIN

YOU DON'T GET STUCK BECAUSE YOU'RE INDECISIVE.

You get stuck because your brain is building infinite tabs of options, and you don't know which one is "safe" to click.



Starting again isn't just about motivation. For ADHD brains, it's about transition, and transitions are neurological cliffs.

You're not avoiding work.
You're stuck at the border.
So let's build a bridge.

TOOL 1: THE TRANSITION SANDBOX

When your brain freezes before a task, the problem usually isn't the task. It's the leap.
This tool softens the entry.

Before beginning anything, even brushing your teeth, do something for 30 seconds that's in the neighborhood of the task:

- Lay out the object.
- Open the browser tab.
- Sit near the task and do nothing.

You're warming the space.
You're not starting.
You're orbiting.

ADHD brains often need proximity before productivity.

You don't need to find the path.
You are the path.
Messy. Winding. Glorious.
Still moving forward
even when you pause.

With ADHD, the hardest part isn't doing the task. It's starting without drowning in shame first.

TOOL 2: THE MICRO-CUE JUMPSTART

When executive function is frozen, external cues are jet fuel. Pick a cue you see every day, like your kettle, your phone charger, or your socks.

Assign it a micro-action:

- Kettle = write one line
- Socks = press play on a podcast
- Phone charger = reply to one text

That cue becomes a soft whisper: "Hey. Let's nudge forward."

It's not about results.

It's about momentum.

TOOL 3: THE INTERRUPTED START

Sometimes, starting is too big.

So we break it.

Set a timer for 2 minutes.

Begin your task, fully expecting to stop.

When the timer rings?

You can walk away.

Or you can ride the momentum.

Either way, you started.

This trains your brain:

Starting doesn't equal being trapped.



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TOOL 4: THE “FUTURE-ME HAS PROOF” WALL

ADHD often erases our wins.
So when we try to begin again, we feel like
we’ve never done it before.
Let’s change that.

Create a “Proof Wall.”

- Sticky notes with tasks you completed
- Screenshots of feedback
- Photos of small victories

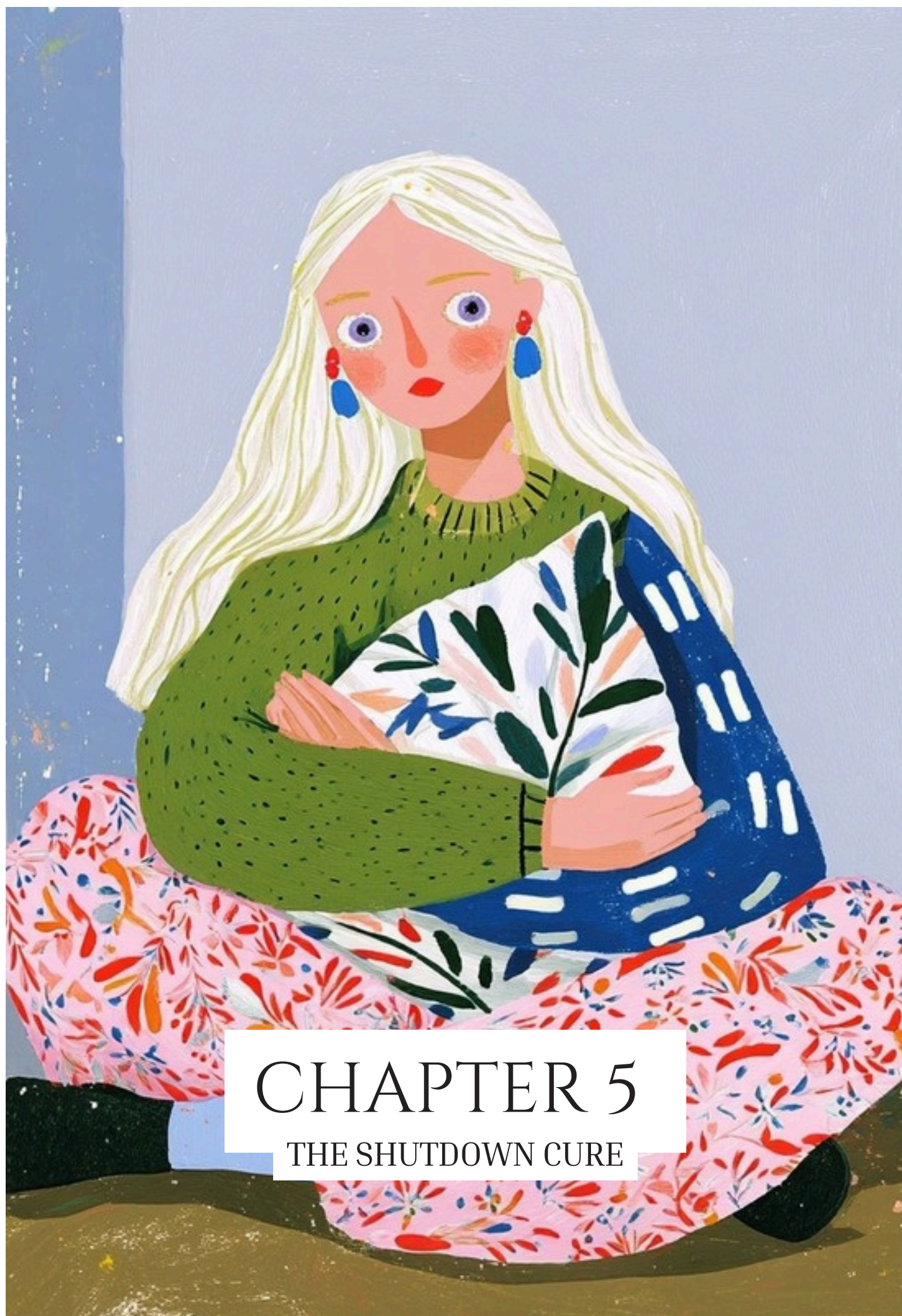
Place it where you’ll see it in low
moments.

Every time you look, your brain hears:
“I’ve done hard things. I can begin again.”

You’re not new to this.
You’re just returning.
And you’ve done it before.

That counts.





CHAPTER 5

THE SHUTDOWN CURE

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Even when your brain
forgets, your heart
remembers how to stay.
That's your real brilliance.
Not the task, but the return.

There's a moment when your brain
doesn't yell...
It just disappears.
You're not spiralling.
You're not fighting.
You're gone.
This is shutdown.
And it's not laziness, weakness,
or giving up.

It's the emergency brake of a
nervous system that couldn't find
the exit ramp in time.
Let's give it one now.

TOOL 1: THE WALL-LEANING STARTER

When you're in shutdown,
momentum feels impossible.
So don't start with "doing."
Start with leaning.
Go to a wall, door, or solid surface.
Stand or sit.

Lean your back or shoulder into it.
Feel the weight transfer.
Let gravity do what your willpower
can't.



Now, say:
"I'm not starting my day.
I'm starting a shift."

Hold that for 10 seconds.
Then choose one micro-move from
your list (like socks, splash water,
move to the edge of bed).

Shutdown doesn't need a spark.
It needs anchoring.

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TOOL 2: THE “SOFT TARGET” LIST

Don't ask: “What should I do?”

Ask: “What feels safe to touch?”

Create a “soft target” list, actions that feel achievable, soothing, or low-pressure.

Use categories:

- **Body** → Socks. Stretch. Hug a pillow.
- **Environment** → Open the curtain. Turn on the lamp. Light a candle.
- **Connection** → Text a friend “Just saying hi, no need to reply.”
- **Sound** → Play ambient noise. One song that doesn't demand energy.

Write 3 options per category.

Post it on your wall or phone.

Use it only when your brain says “I can't.”

It's not a to-do list.

It's a can-survive list.



Some days you'll
move mountains.
Other days, you'll
sit beside them
and learn how
not to run.



**Your meltdown wasn't madness.
It was the cost of masking.
And if that's how your soul
screamed, then maybe it finally
felt safe enough to ask for help.**

TOOL 3: THE BODY-SOURCE CHECK

Thoughts in shutdown lie.
But they lie with confidence.
Instead of arguing with them, ask:
"Is this thought coming from a regulated
or dysregulated body?"

If the answer is dysregulated...
Don't fight the thought.
Don't fix the thought.
Just delay belief.
Say: "I'll revisit this later, when my body
feels safer."

Then redirect focus to something
sensory:

- Rinse your hands in warm water
- Change your shirt
- Lie down on the floor and notice
pressure

You're not escaping the thought.
You're changing the source.

**You were never too much.
Just too tender for a
world that handed you
noise instead of notes.**



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TOOL 4: ONE THOUGHT FOR SAFETY

In shutdown, abstract positivity
doesn't work.

Your brain needs a single lifeline.

Ask yourself: "What's one word that
feels like a warm room?"

Don't force an answer.

Wait.

Maybe it's:

"Held."

"Possible."

"Soft."

"Blanket."

"Pause."

Whisper it.

Repeat it like a lullaby.

Let that one word be your thread
back.

You don't need motivation.

You need a moment of felt safety.



Your brain wasn't
meant to sprint all
day. It was built to
notice the wind and
rest in its rhythm.

You're not broken.
You're just overdue
for a softer pace.

You weren't made for constant clarity.
You were made for colors.
For sparks.
For every time you stayed
even when your brain left the room.

TOOL 5: INNER DEFENSE ATTORNEY PROMPT

Shutdown can sound like this:

"You're useless."

"Everyone else is fine."

"You're always like this."

Imagine someone who loves you
overheard that...

And hired a defense attorney on your
behalf.

Now, answer:

"What would they say to defend me?"

You don't need a speech. Just one line.

Examples:

"She didn't get this way for no reason."

"He's carrying invisible weight."

"They've survived harder than you think."

Let that voice take the mic for a while.

It doesn't invalidate your pain.

It just challenges the prosecution.

Shutdown isn't failure.

It's a pause your body didn't schedule,
but needed anyway.

Let's stop blaming the crash...

And start learning how to land softer.

You don't have to reboot.

You just have to return, one gentle signal
at a time.





CHAPTER 6

REGULATION RITUALS FOR DAILY LIFE

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You were never hard to love.
You were just easy to
misunderstand.
But love isn't scared of
detours. It finds you even
here.

You can't live your life in
emergency mode.
The real magic?
Is in the rituals you return to.
ADHD brains don't need routines
that run on rigidity.

We need rituals that run
on rhythm.

Your brain doesn't want
structure. It wants safety dressed
as repetition.



WHY RITUALS WORK FOR ADHD BRAINS

Routine demands discipline. But
ritual offers comfort. Symbol. Cue.
ADHD regulation improves not with
complexity, but with consistency and
emotion.

A good ritual acts like a soft
boundary your brain begins to trust.
And the more your brain trusts
your day?

The less it panics.

ORIGINAL INSIGHT: AN ADHD RITUAL IS A "SENSORY SIGNATURE"

Every ritual should include a sensory
anchor:

- A smell
- A temperature
- A movement
- A phrase
- A texture

Your nervous system associates
these with safety and predictability.

When your life feels unpredictable,
anchor it in sensations.

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THE RITUAL MENU METHOD

Design rituals like menus, not mandates.

This respects choice and reduces resistance.

Create 3 menus:

Morning / Midday / Evening

Each menu should include
3 categories:

1. Body Ritual: Movement, breath, stillness
2. Space Ritual: Light, scent, clutter check
3. Mind Ritual: Mantra, focus song, visualisation

Pick one item per category per session.

Done.



EXAMPLES: NON-REPEATING RITUAL OPTIONS

MORNING MENU

- Body: Lay on floor with feet on wall for 2 min
- Space: Open a window + say "I start fresh"
- Mind: Listen to one favourite track, eyes closed

MIDDAY MENU

- Body: Press palms together for 10 seconds, release
- Space: Light a match, blow it out slowly
- Mind: Whisper: "I return to now" 3x

EVENING MENU

- Body: Apply balm to hands with slow massage
- Space: Dim lights while humming one note
- Mind: Write 2 sentences: "Today, I noticed..."



Even when your brain won't slow
down, your breath can.
Even when you can't start the
task, you can start again.
You are always allowed to begin.

THE LOW-MID-HIGH RITUAL PLAN (ENERGY-SENSITIVE FRAMEWORK)

ADHD isn't consistent.

Neither is your energy.

Use this modular model:

- LOW Energy Day: Pick just one ritual from any menu. Nothing else.
- MID Energy Day: Choose one ritual from each menu (morning, midday, evening).
- HIGH Energy Day: Layer multiple rituals throughout your day. Add notes or reflections to track how each one felt.

You don't have to be consistent.

You have to be kind.

This plan flexes with your bandwidth and removes all-or-nothing thinking.



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BUILDING YOUR NERVOUS SYSTEM'S "HOME BASE"

Rituals give your brain a predictable path home. They create patterned safety that becomes self-anchoring.

Create a visual cue list near your bed,
desk, or phone.
This isn't a to-do list.
It's a sensory sanctuary.

Example Cue List:

- A small card that says: "Breathe, then begin."
- A post-it that reads: "Your brain comes back in pieces."
- A picture of a lighthouse, taped to your desk
- A short poem that calms you when read aloud
- A tactile object like a stone, coin, or bead

Your environment becomes a partner in
your regulation.
Your rituals are not chores.
They are nervous system love notes.

Consistency won't save you.
But patterned safety will.
You don't need routines that punish.
You need rituals that protect.

Let your rituals be:

- Small
- Sensory
- Repeatable
- Optional
- Comforting

And let that be enough.





CHAPTER 7

EMERGENCY THOUGHT REPLACEMENTS

ADHD is a full-time job with no lunch break. And somehow, you're still showing up.

ADHD isn't just about focus.
It's also about the thoughts that
flood your brain when it's not
regulated.

And in those moments?
Your thoughts aren't helpful.
They're hostile.

You're not battling thoughts.
You're battling inner scripts
written during dysregulation.



WHY THIS MATTERS

ADHD brains are story creators.
When things go wrong, your brain
rushes to make meaning.

And that meaning often sounds like:

- “I mess everything up.”
- “Why can’t I just be normal?”
- “Everyone else manages fine.”
- “I’ll never catch up.”

These aren’t thoughts.
They’re emergency lies.
We don’t silence them with logic.
We replace them with better scripts.

THE EMERGENCY THOUGHT REPLACEMENT TOOLKIT

You don’t need affirmations that feel
fake.

You need grounded, believable,
regulation-friendly replacements.

Here’s how: ➡

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TOOL 1: THE "I'M IN A MOMENT" STATEMENT

Why it works:

ADHD brains often globalise emotion: "If I feel this now, I always will."

This tool introduces a break in that permanence.

Original Thought: "I'm always like this."

Replacement: "I'm in a moment. It won't last. I've exited moments before."

How to use it:

- Whisper it like a fact, not a pep talk.
- Anchor it with a gesture (e.g., touch your chest or breathe out slowly).
- Let your brain register: "This is now. It is not forever."

You are not your worst moment.
You are someone having one.



TOOL 2: BRAIN IS LOUD ISN'T THE TRUTH

Why it works:

When ADHD brains spiral, volume equals truth. But intensity is not accuracy.

Original Thought: "Everyone is disappointed in me."

Replacement: "My brain is loud. That doesn't make it right."

How to use it:

- Say it when intrusive thoughts spike.
- Use it as a boundary against spirals, like a mental earplug.
- Optional visual: imagine lowering the "volume dial" on your thoughts.

Your brain is allowed to be loud.
You are allowed to ignore it.
This statement separates emotional noise from internal truth.



TOOL 3: THE BODY-SOURCE CHECK

When a thought spins, ask:
“Is this coming from a regulated or
dysregulated body?”

If the answer is dysregulated, you
delay believing the thought.

Don't fight it.
Don't argue it.
Just delay belief.

How to delay belief:

- Picture your thought like a spam email. Don't open it. Don't reply. Just mark it “review later.”
- Say aloud: “This might not be the truth, it might just be my body in distress.”
- Imagine placing the thought on a shelf and saying, “I'll come back to this once I've had water, rest, or regulation.”

It's not avoidance.

It's thought triage, protect your
system until clarity returns.



TOOL 4: I CHOOSE A GENTLER THOUGHT" DECLARATION

Why it works:

Spiralling often feels like being held hostage by your own mind.

This tool gives you back authorship without forcing positivity.

What to say: "I see the storm. But I choose a gentler thought."

Examples of gentler thoughts:

- "I'm trying my best in a hard moment."
- "My pace today is valid."
- "I can soften here."

How to use it:

- Say it aloud to interrupt a negative loop.
- Write down three gentler versions of a thought that's hurting you.
- Let the act of choosing be the regulation.

The gentler thought isn't fake.
It's just kinder.



TOOL 5: THE TRUTH-ANCHORED COUNTER

Create one-liners grounded in truth, not hype:

- "I've survived every bad day so far."
- "Rest is part of regulation."
- "No one is tracking my to-do list but me."
- "I matter even if I'm late."
- "Trying counts, even when I don't finish."
- "One hard hour doesn't define the whole day."
- "I've figured things out before, and I will again."
- "Forgetting isn't failure, it's a cue to reset."
- "Slowness is not the same as weakness."
- "My value isn't measured by output."

TOOL 6: "BRAIN IS BORROWING OLD SCRIPTS" AWARENESS

Recognise when a voice is from a past version of you:

"This is a borrowed script.

I can choose a new narrator."

What does a new narrator sound like?

Old narrator: "You're lazy. You always mess up."

New narrator: "You've been carrying a lot. No wonder you're tired."

Old narrator: "You should've done more today."

New narrator: "You protected your energy. That counts, too."

Old narrator: "Everyone's judging you."

New narrator: "They're probably just living their own story. I can focus on mine."

Think of the new narrator as a wiser, kinder version of your current self, the one who knows you're not broken, just overwhelmed.

Every time you hear an inner voice, ask: "Is this my voice... or one I borrowed from fear?"

Choose your narrator.

Choose your story.



COME BACK, BRAIN:

THE EMERGENCY ADHD KIT
FOR ADHD OVERWHELM

You weren't built for 9-to-5
silence. You were built for
sparks. Curves. Moments that
taste like music. You were
never the problem. Just the
wrong setting.



COME BACK, BRAIN:

THE EMERGENCY ADHD KIT
FOR ADHD OVERWHELM

TOOL 7: "ONE THOUGHT FOR SAFETY" PRACTICE

In a panic moment, whisper:
"What's one thought that feels like a warm room?"

Let your brain offer even one word or image and sit with it.
Repeat it.
Let it soften the internal noise.

Here are more "warm room" thoughts you can borrow:

- "I am safe enough right now."
- "I am still here."
- "This will pass."
- "Held."
- "Kindness lives here."
- "I don't have to fix everything today."
- "I can come back later."
- "Breathe now. Decide later."
- "I'm not alone in this feeling."
- "There is time."
- "Small is enough."
- "One quiet corner is enough."
- "Pause is powerful."
- "Soft is strong."

It's not therapy.
It's neural pattern interruption.

TOOL 8: INNER DEFENSE ATTORNEY

Your inner critic is loud, relentless, and always convinced it has evidence. But what if someone stood up for you in court?

Imagine this: Your best friend hears your inner spiral and hires a defence attorney to fight it. This attorney has one mission: to prove the voice in your head is wrong.
Ask yourself: "If someone defended me right now, what would they say?"

Then either write or speak the response out loud.
For example: "I'm lazy and a burden." Inner Defence Attorney would say: "My client isn't lazy, she's overwhelmed and hasn't had proper support. She's carrying things no one else can see and still shows up with heart. That's not laziness. That's resilience."

This technique allows you to:

- Access self-compassion through role-play
- Externalize shame and examine it
- Generate alternate narratives without invalidating your feelings

Bonus Tip: Try doing this in the third person for more distance:
"She's doing her best in a hard moment. That matters."
This isn't toxic positivity.
It's cognitive reparenting the voice you needed, now showing up for you.

COME BACK, BRAIN:

THE EMERGENCY ADHD KIT
FOR ADHD OVERWHELM



TOOL 9: THE COMEDY INTERRUPTION TRICK

When your thoughts start spiralling, your brain is likely stuck in a threat loop.

That loop thrives on seriousness and catastrophizing. Laughter doesn't dismiss your pain. It disrupts the panic.

Humour activates dopamine, down-regulates cortisol, and gives your brain a much-needed breath of levity.

How to use it: The moment you notice an intense or dramatic thought, throw in an absurd or ridiculous response. For example: "I'll never fix my life." Comedy Interrupt: "Okay, but have you tried bribing your future self with lasagna and a cape?"

More Comedy Interrupts:

- "That's it. I'm declaring myself a houseplant now."
- "I've decided to flee to the mountains and live among squirrels."
- "If chaos were an Olympic sport, I'd already have a medal."
- "I'm one to-do list away from being crowned Queen of Functioning."



The trick? Say it like it's serious. Straight-faced. Dry. Let it land.

When the inner critic screams, let absurdity walk in wearing a glitter suit.

This isn't mockery.

It's a pattern interruption through play. Because when your brain is spinning doom stories, sometimes the best counterpunch... is comedy.

COME BACK, BRAIN:

THE EMERGENCY ADHD KIT
FOR ADHD OVERWHELM

If your brain won't sit still,
don't punish it. Walk with it.
Wander with it.
Trust that even
the wildest
minds know
how to find
their way
home.



TOOL 10: THE 1-BELIEVABLE-LAYER REFRAME

Not every thought can be fully flipped. Sometimes the gap between panic and peace is too wide. But you don't need a leap. You just need one believable layer.

Instead of trying to jump from negative to positive, shift slightly:

- "I'm a disaster" → "I had a rough hour."
- "Everyone hates me" → "I haven't checked in with anyone today."
- "I'll never get it together" → "I'm figuring out what works for me."

Why it works:

The ADHD brain craves truth that feels reachable.

When a reframe feels real, your brain accepts it. When it feels fake, your brain resists it.

How to use it:

1. Name the hard thought (without judging it).
2. Ask: "What's one softer version that still feels true?"
3. Say it out loud or write it down.

Your nervous system isn't asking for positivity.

It's asking for the possibility.

This isn't a mindset trick.

It's a nervous system bridge.

Believability is the ladder.

Gentleness is the grip.

✗ Thought:

"I'm so behind. I'll never catch up."

✓ Bridge: "I'm behind because I'm overwhelmed, not because I'm broken."

"What if I only need to catch one breath before the next step?"

✗ Thought:

"Everyone else is functioning. Why can't I?"

✓ Bridge: "Other people's capacity doesn't cancel mine."

"I function differently, not less."

✗ Thought:

"I ruined everything. Again."

✓ Bridge: "This mistake hurts... but it doesn't mean I'm a mistake."

"It's okay to repair instead of disappear."

✗ Thought:

"I have no idea what I'm doing with my life."

✓ Bridge: "It's okay to pause, clarity doesn't come from panic."

"Confusion means I'm asking deeper questions."

✗ Thought:

"I'll never be consistent. I'm a mess."

✓ Bridge: "My inconsistency isn't failure, it's feedback."

"Maybe I don't need consistency. Maybe I need compassion."

This isn't mindset work.

This is safety work.

You don't need to flip the thought just soften its grip.



WRAP-UP: WHEN YOUR THOUGHTS TURN ON YOU

Your thoughts don't
define your worth.
They reflect your state.

ADHD minds don't need perfect
mantras or fake optimism.
They need tools that feel possible.
Real. Gentle.

What you've just built is a library of
lifelines. Ways to meet your loudest
thoughts with clarity, not cruelty.
When the spiral starts:

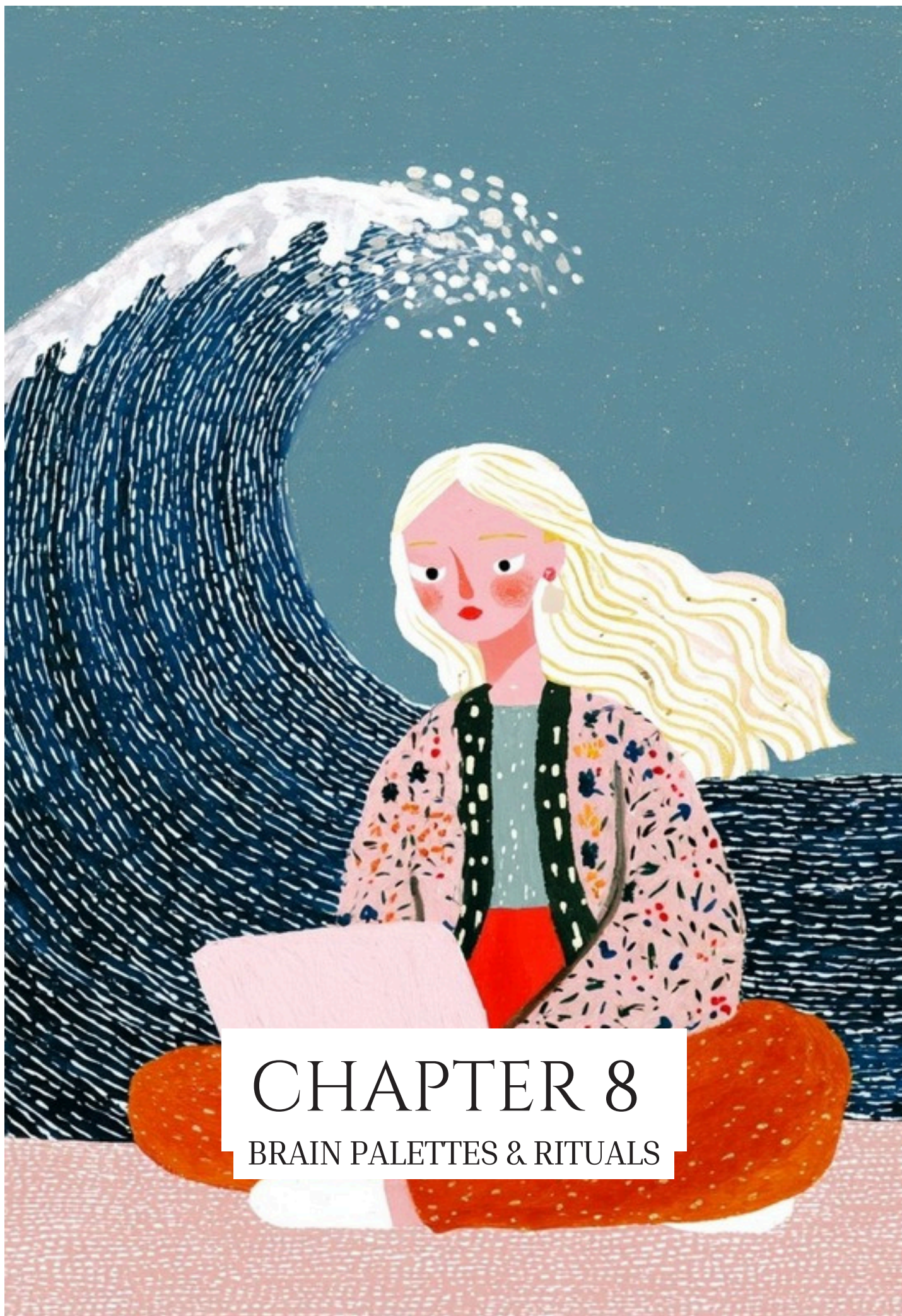
- Delay belief.
- Shift the narrator.
- Say something warm.
- Or make it absurd.

Each one of those steps is you
choosing regulation over
rumination.

Even when your thoughts go dark,
You are the light that stays.

These aren't just tools.
They're exits.
And now?

You know where the door is.



CHAPTER 8

BRAIN PALETTES & RITUALS

COME BACK, BRAIN:

THE EMERGENCY ADHD KIT
FOR ADHD OVERWHELM

When you hear the word “ritual,”
you might think of perfect routines
and quiet mornings.

But for ADHD brains,
rituals aren’t about getting it right.
They’re about getting back to
yourself.

Rituals aren’t performance.
They’re preloaded compassion.
This chapter introduces a fresh way
to think about self-regulation:
Brain Palettes.

Instead of one fixed routine,
you’ll create small menus of tools
that match how your brain feels
right now.

WHAT IS A BRAIN PALETTE?

Think of a painter’s palette,
a mix of colors they can choose
from depending on the mood of the
painting.

Now imagine your brain as needing
different tools based on your
mental state.

You’ll learn 3 common ADHD brain
states, and a set of rituals for each
one.

These rituals are short, simple, and
sensory, made for the days when
you feel anything but functional.



COME BACK, BRAIN:

THE EMERGENCY ADHD KIT
FOR ADHD OVERWHELM

THE 3 BRAIN STATES AND WHAT TO DO IN EACH

STATE 1: BUZZED & OVERWHELMED

How it feels:

- You can't slow down
- Your thoughts are racing
- Sounds, lights, and people feel too much

What to do: Use slow, quiet, repetitive actions that ground your senses.

Try one of these:

Sock Sort Meditation

1. Dump out a pile of socks.
2. Slowly sort them.
3. **Count out loud as you go. No pressure to finish. Just move.**

3-Sound Reset

1. Close your eyes.
2. Name 3 sounds you can hear right now.
3. Match your breath to the quietest one.

Loop Walk

1. Walk a small circle in your home 5 times.
2. Say "Here" with each step.
3. Barefoot is best. Feel the floor.

When your mind races,
give it something slow to hold.



COME BACK, BRAIN:

THE EMERGENCY ADHD KIT
FOR ADHD OVERWHELM

STATE 2: SHUT DOWN & BLANK

How it feels:

- You can't start anything
- You feel numb or frozen
- Time disappears

What to do:

Use contrast, motion, and micro-curiosity.

Try one of these:

Temperature Touch

1. Fill one bowl with warm water, one with cool.
2. Dip your fingers in each, back and forth 3 times.
3. Say: "I return to now."

Object Hunt

1. Set a timer for 2 minutes.
2. Find 3 yellow or round objects in your space.
3. Hold each for 10 seconds. Notice texture.

Light Flick Shift

1. Stand up.
2. Slowly flip a light switch on and off 3 times.
3. Tap your chest gently while humming.

The brain that feels numb needs gentle contrast, not pressure.



COME BACK, BRAIN:

THE EMERGENCY ADHD KIT
FOR ADHD OVERWHELM

STATE 3: DRAINED & FLAT

How it feels:

- You're tired in your bones
- Nothing feels interesting
- Even rest feels dull

What to do:

Bring in warmth, scent, softness.

Try one of these:

Tactile Tuck

1. Wrap yourself in a blanket like a cocoon.
2. Breathe in deeply.
3. Say: "I deserve pause."

Scent Recall

1. Smell something familiar, tea, spice, balm.
2. Close your eyes.
3. Think of one safe memory it brings up.

Tiny Nourishment Stack

1. Sip something warm.
2. Hold something soft.
3. Whisper: "This moment is enough."

Exhaustion doesn't need fixing.
It needs tending."



COME BACK, BRAIN:

THE EMERGENCY ADHD KIT
FOR ADHD OVERWHELM



COME BACK, BRAIN:

THE EMERGENCY ADHD KIT
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HOW TO BUILD YOUR OWN BRAIN PALETTE

Step 1: Notice how you feel.

Are you Buzzed, Frozen, or Flat?

Step 2: Pick one ritual from the matching set.

Step 3: Do the ritual slowly, without rushing.

Step 4: Aim for a 5% shift, not perfect, just better.

BONUS: Make a cheat sheet or index card with one ritual per state.

Stick it on your wall, desk, or fridge.

You don't need the perfect routine.
You need a ritual that fits this moment.

Let your rituals be:

- Visual
- Flexible
- Simple
- Soothing
- Repeatable

Your brain will thank you.



CHAPTER 9

ROUTINES THAT RESPECT YOUR REALITY



You've heard it a thousand times:

"Just build a routine."

But ADHD brains don't just need structure. They need repairable, re-enterable, and reality-based systems.

You don't need more consistency.

You need kinder scaffolding.

This chapter is not about how to survive a shutdown.

This is about building rituals and habits that don't collapse every time life gets weird.

No pressure.

No perfect mornings.

No shame.

Just smart, flexible systems that serve your actual life.

WHY THESE ROUTINES MATTER

These rituals aren't just about "getting things done."

They're how ADHD brains re-access clarity, capacity, and self-trust.

Here's what they really help you do:

✓ Rebuild momentum without overwhelm

→ You don't have to "start over."

You just pick one small ritual and return.

✓ Anchor yourself on chaotic days

→ Simple, sensory steps provide comfort when everything feels scrambled.

COME BACK, BRAIN:

THE EMERGENCY ADHD KIT
FOR ADHD OVERWHELM



✓ Repair your relationship with structure
→ No more all-or-nothing routines. These rituals invite you back without judgment.

✓ Reconnect with your own rhythm
→ They meet you where you are, not where you “should” be.

You don’t need to be functional to start. You need to start to feel functional.

Let’s build you a system that keeps the door open, even when your brain walks out.

COME BACK, BRAIN:

THE EMERGENCY ADHD KIT
FOR ADHD OVERWHELM

TOOL 1: THE MODULAR MORNING MENU

Instead of one fixed morning plan, create a buffet of gentle actions you can pick from based on how you feel each day.

How to build your menu:

1. Make 3 columns: Low, Medium, High energy
2. Add 3–4 small activities per column
3. Post it somewhere visible (bathroom mirror, phone background)

Here's an example of the menu:

- **Low**: Sit in sunlight. Stretch in bed. Sip warm water.
- **Medium**: Wash face. Play music. Do a 3-minute tidy.
- **High**: Walk outside. Prep a fun drink. Plan one priority task.

You're not choosing failure vs. success. You're choosing what fits today.

Routine isn't what you do every day. It's what you return to.



COME BACK, BRAIN:

THE EMERGENCY ADHD KIT
FOR ADHD OVERWHELM

TOOL 2: THE “RE-ENTRY WITHOUT SHAME” CHECKLIST

Your routine will be interrupted. That’s not a flaw. It’s a feature of being alive with ADHD.

Instead of starting over, try this:

1. Say aloud: “This is a pause, not a failure.”
2. Pick one anchoring action: brush hair, light a candle, stand in place.
3. Drink water and change rooms (movement matters)
4. Glance at your Modular Menu, pick the smallest action
5. Do just that. Then stop or keep going. No catching up.
6. Print it. Keep it near your bed or desk.

You don’t need a comeback.
You need a door back in.

TOOL 3: THE “START IN THE MIDDLE” STRATEGY

ADHD brains love novelty, but routines feel repetitive.

So when the flow breaks, most people say: “I’ll start again tomorrow.”

This tool gives you instant re-entry, midstream.

How to do it:

- Identify 4–5 daily anchors (e.g., tea, tidy, email, meal, walk)



- If the routine breaks, ask: “What’s the next one I can jump into?”
- Don’t backtrack. Don’t reset. Just pick up mid-loop.

Why it works:

- Avoids all-or-nothing trap
- Leverages novelty (a new entry point)
- Keeps forward motion possible

Perfection wants you to restart.
Progress just wants you to re-enter.

COME BACK, BRAIN:

THE EMERGENCY ADHD KIT
FOR ADHD OVERWHELM

TOOL 4: THE LOOP-INSTEAD-OF-LADDER FRAMEWORK

Most routines follow a ladder model: You go step by step, and if you miss one? You fall.

But ADHD-friendly routines are better built as loops.

Why loops work:

- There's no top, no bottom, no falling off
- You can re-enter from any direction
- It supports non-linear, energy-fluctuating days
-

How to build yours:

➡ Draw a circle.

Divide it into 4–5 zones:

- Body (stretch, wash face)
- Space (put away 3 things)
- Nourishment (eat or sip)
- Mind (2-min read or brain dump)
- Connection (message a friend)

➡ Add one action per zone

➡ Move through the loop in any order, any time

You're not "starting your day", you're stepping into your loop.

The loop doesn't judge when you arrive. It's just glad you came.



TOOL 5: THE FRAGILE DAY PROTOCOL

Some days you can't do "routine." You can only do barely-holding-it-together. That still counts.

Here's a routine for that kind of day:

1. Sit wrapped in something warm. Touch a soft object.
2. Drink something comforting. Eat one bite of anything.
3. Say out loud: "This day is allowed to be fragile. So am I."

That's it.

No tracking. No streaks. Just presence.

Even if all you did was survive, you practiced a routine: one of self-permission.

CHAPTER 10

YOU'RE NOT A PROJECT,
YOU'RE A PERSON



ADHD OFTEN TURNS HEALING INTO HOMEWORK

You start out looking for tools, but end
up with pressure.
To fix. To track.
To optimize.

But you are not a problem to be solved.
You are not a project.
You are a person.

ADHD doesn't make you a fixer-upper.
It makes you someone who needs a
different kind of house.

This chapter helps you:

- Drop the pressure to be productive at your healing
- Break up with self-improvement shame cycles
- Build safety without spreadsheets

And mostly:

To come back to yourself without
turning it into a checklist.



COME BACK, BRAIN:

THE EMERGENCY ADHD KIT
FOR ADHD OVERWHELM

TOOL 1: THE “SELF-COMPASS, NOT SELF-TRACKER” REFRAME

Tracking every emotion, behavior, or task might sound helpful... But for ADHD, it often becomes a loop of surveillance and shame. Instead of obsessively monitoring yourself, create a self-compass. Something that gently orients you, but doesn't audit you.

Build your Self-Compass:

- Write one sentence you want to return to when you feel lost → e.g. “I want to move toward peace, not proof.”
- Pick 3 guiding feelings instead of goals (e.g., Connected, Light, Safe)
- Each day, ask: “Which direction do I want to face today?” → No data. No points. Just direction.

This isn't about achieving.
It's about returning.
You don't need to be monitored.
You need to feel met.



TOOL 2: THE “ENOUGHNESS SNAPSHOT” EXERCISE

When your brain runs on “not enough,” it will never let you rest. This tool grounds you in proof of presence, not progress.

How to do it: At the end of the day (even a messy one):

1. Write down 3 moments you showed up, even if it wasn't perfect:
 - “I replied to that text, even though I wanted to hide.”
 - “I fed myself something.”
 - “I paused before spiraling.”
2. Underneath, write: “I was already enough when I did these.”

Why it works:

- It interrupts self-fixing compulsion
- It reframes presence as success
- It trains your brain to notice adequacy, not just achievement

Let your evidence of being enough include your smallest acts.



TOOL 3: THE SHAME LOOP INTERRUPTER SCRIPT

ADHD shame is sneaky.
It doesn't just say, "You messed up."
It says, "You are the mess."

This tool gives you a verbal
interruption when that loop starts
running.

Try this script (out loud if possible):

- "Wait, this feels familiar."
- "This isn't insight. This is inflammation."
- "I don't need to solve myself. I need to soothe myself."

Say it even if you don't believe it yet.
Say it until your nervous system
hears you.

You can't heal while hating the thing
you're trying to heal.



COME BACK, BRAIN:

THE EMERGENCY ADHD KIT
FOR ADHD OVERWHELM

TOOL 4: THE “NON-PERFORMATIVE REST” RITUAL

Most ADHD rest is performative:
Lying down, but planning.
Watching TV, but spiralling.

This ritual creates real rest, without
guilt or productivity.

Here's how:

1. Pick one sensory item (blanket, candle, soft pillow, warm drink)
2. Put away screens for 15 minutes
3. Choose one word to hold in your mind. For example. “melt,” “slow,” “float”
4. Sit or lie still. Breathe slowly. You're not “off track.” You're on pause.

Repeat regularly. Let rest become
part of your rhythm, not a reward.

You don't need to earn a break from
yourself. You are allowed to rest, just
because you exist.



TOOL 5: THE “FRIEND FILTER” CLARITY CHECK

ADHD can distort how you speak to yourself.

This tool brings in a lens of external compassion.

Ask: “If my best friend said this about herself, what would I tell her?”

Now say that exact thing, to yourself.
Then ask: “What would I never let someone say to her?”

If your inner critic is saying it to you, it doesn’t get to stay.

You deserve the tone you’d use with someone you love, even if that person is you.

You are not a self-help project.
You’re not here to be optimized.
You’re not an error report waiting to be closed.

You are allowed to stop fixing and start witnessing.
You are already enough, even while still learning.

You are not a project.
You are a person.



CHAPTER 11

HOW TO ASK FOR HELP WHEN YOU
FORGET HOW TO SPEAK



COME BACK, BRAIN:

THE EMERGENCY ADHD KIT
FOR ADHD OVERWHELM

WHEN ADHD SPIRALS HIT, ASKING FOR HELP FEELS IMPOSSIBLE.

You freeze.
You fawn.
You forget what you needed.

“I need support” turns into
“I’ll just disappear.”
This chapter is your language bridge,
a way back to connection when your
words vanish.

No performative vulnerability.
No emotional essays.
Just real, safe, actionable tools to
reach someone when you’re at
your limit.



COME BACK, BRAIN:

THE EMERGENCY ADHD KIT
FOR ADHD OVERWHELM

TOOL 1: THE 5-WORD DISTRESS SIGNAL

When your brain is shut down, even texting feels like climbing a mountain.

This tool gives you a pre-written message that says what you can't say.

Build your own 5-word signal:

1. Pick one person who's safe
2. Agree on this message ahead of time: → "I can't talk. I need [word]."

→ Fill in: presence, check-in, food, break, quiet

Examples:

- "Can't talk. Need presence."
- "Can't talk. Need voice memo."

Let them know ahead of time:
They don't need to fix you.
Just witness you.

Support doesn't need to be eloquent. It just needs to be reachable.



TOOL 2: THE "SAFE WORDS FOR SUPPORT" MENU

Sometimes, "help me" feels too raw. Create a menu of coded language that feels safer.

How to make yours:

➡ Choose 3 low-stakes phrases that secretly mean: "I need support."

- "Can you send a meme?" = I'm spiralling
- "Do you have a cat pic?" = I feel alone
- "What are you watching?" = I need to feel connected

➡ Share the key with 1–2 trusted people.

- Tell them what each phrase really means
- Let them know what kind of reply helps

This protects your privacy while still opening a door.
Some of us need help without having to say the word 'help.'



COME BACK, BRAIN:

THE EMERGENCY ADHD KIT
FOR ADHD OVERWHELM

TOOL 3: THE SPEECHLESS TEXT BANK + "ASK FOR ASK" BRIDGE

When you're frozen or can't find the words, use these ready-to-send messages.

They let others know what you need even if you don't quite know it yourself.

TEXT BANK: I feel disconnected:

- "Can I be near you in silence?"
- "I'm not okay, but I don't want to explain. Can you just sit with me virtually?"

I'm spiralling:

- "I'm stuck in my head. Just need someone to exist next to me."
- "Please don't ask questions. Just say something grounding."

I need support but I don't know how:

- "I want to ask for something but I'm not ready yet. Can you stay close?"
- "I think I need support but my brain's not giving me the words."
- "I don't know what to ask for. But I don't want to disappear."

You're allowed to need, even if you're not ready to explain why.



TOOL 4: THE “CO-REGULATION BUDDY PLAN”

Don't wait until a shutdown to build support. Choose a buddy who understands ADHD panic and build a simple co-reg plan together.

Steps to create it:

- ➡ Ask: “Can we make a support plan for our ADHD spiral moments?”
- ➡ Decide together:
 - What kind of message = “I'm in a shutdown”
 - What kind of reply = “I'm here. You're safe. You're not broken.”
- ➡ Agree on response roles:
 - Do you want presence? Silence? Distraction? Validation?

Optional: Make a short “help-me” card or emoji code you can send with no words at all.

Co-regulation isn't a rescue.
It's a rhythm, one brain saying
'you're safe' to another.



COME BACK, BRAIN:

THE EMERGENCY ADHD KIT
FOR ADHD OVERWHELM

You don't have to face the flood
alone. You don't need eloquence to
ask for care.

Your pain doesn't have to be
packaged to be met.

You are not too much.
You are not a burden.

You are someone who deserves to be
found, even when you feel lost.



CHAPTER 12

THE KIND PLAN WHAT COMES NEXT
(WHEN YOU'RE STILL FIGURING IT OUT)



LET'S TAKE A BREATH

Not the kind you force,
the kind that finds you after you've
stopped holding everything so tight.

You don't need a master plan.
You just need a soft place to land.

This isn't a wrap-up.
It's a permission slip to keep going
gently.

There's no final exam.
No checklist to ace.
No final version of you is waiting
to be unlocked.

There is only the next moment,
and your ability to meet it with
less panic, more presence.

This final chapter offers:
· A kind plan (not a rigid one)
·

Tools that travel with you
· A practice of return, not repair

You're not at the end.
You're at a different kind of beginning.



COME BACK, BRAIN:

THE EMERGENCY ADHD KIT
FOR ADHD OVERWHELM



TOOL 1: THE “TOMORROW STARTS SMALL” CARD

Purpose: Give your future self a soft launch pad.

What to do:

1. Write this on a card, sticky note, or phone background: → “Tomorrow starts with _____.” → Fill in ONE thing: warm drink, walk, light, water
2. Put it where you’ll see it in the morning.
3. The goal isn’t to complete a routine. It’s to offer direction, not pressure.

ADHD doesn’t need force.
It needs friendly reminders
that it’s safe to start.

TOOL 2: THE “TRUST TREK” JOURNAL PROMPT

Purpose: Rebuild trust with your rhythm over time.

What to do:

Once a week (or month), answer this:

- What did I do last week that helped me feel more like myself?”
- “What made things worse?”
- “What do I want to carry forward?”

No score.

No critique.

Just a data point for kindness.

You are not tracking to optimise.

You are reflecting on reconnecting.

The goal isn’t better results.
It’s deeper relationship.



TOOL 3: THE “SELF-WITNESS DAY” RITUAL

Purpose: Let yourself be seen by yourself with no agenda.

What to do:

Choose one day a month.

On that day:

1. Set a 10-minute timer
2. Sit. Observe. Don't analyze. Don't journal. Just be.
3. End by saying aloud: “I was here.”

No productivity.

No planning.

Just presence.

Some days don't need meaning.
They just need witnessing.



TOOL 4: THE “REGULATION REMINDER” LETTER

Purpose: Create an anchor for your future dysregulated self.

What to do:

Write a short letter to the version of you who forgets she can come back:
“Hi, Love.

If you're reading this, you probably feel broken. You're not.

You're just flooded.

Everything will feel far away.

But it comes back.

You come back. You always do.

Try water, light, breath.

Do one soft thing.

You're not late.

You're not wrong.

You're still here.

And you're not alone.”

Save it in your Notes.

Or record it as a voice memo.

Read or play it when you need it.

Regulation isn't a skill. It's a relationship. Keep showing up to it

COME BACK, BRAIN:

THE EMERGENCY ADHD KIT
FOR ADHD OVERWHELM

A FINAL WORD

You don't need to remember everything in this book.

Just remember this:

- You are not failing. You are responding.
- You are not broken. You are braver than you know.
- You are not behind. You are on a detour and it's still a path.

This wasn't a manual.

It was a map.

To remind you: Your brain may disappear, but you always come back.

Take your tools.

Take your breath.

And when the flood comes again as it sometimes will, open this book and say: "Come back, brain. I'm still here."

