



The Settled *Mind* Kit

Five two-minute practices for when your mind won't settle. Printable cards and guided audio, one small step at a time.



- The long exhale
- Kind hands
- The sigh reset
- Drop anchor
- Four elements
- + one gentle email a week



How to use *this kit*

Each card is one practice that takes about two minutes.
Every card has a guided audio version in your download.

FOUR SIMPLE RULES

- 1 **Pick the one that fits the moment.** Each card says when it helps most.
- 2 **Practise when you feel okay first.** A practice you know is easier to reach for on a hard day.
- 3 **Two minutes is enough.** Small and often beats long and rare.
- 4 **Go gently.** If a practice does not feel right today, stop and try another.

Education, not therapy. These practices come from well-known books on anxiety, trauma and self-compassion, which are credited on each card. They support, but never replace, care from a doctor or therapist.



The long exhale

2 minutes



WHEN IT HELPS

When your body feels revved up: a racing heart, a tight chest, or a mind that will not slow down.

STEPS

- 1 Sit or lie comfortably and let your shoulders drop.
- 2 Breathe in gently through your nose for a count of 4.
- 3 Breathe out slowly for a count of 8, as if through a straw.
- 4 Repeat for about ten breaths.
- 5 Notice how your body feels now.

Why it works. Breathing out for longer than you breathe in switches on your body's relaxation response.

Go gently. If 4 and 8 feel like a strain, try in for 3 and out for 6. Stop if you feel light-headed.

Based on Arielle Schwartz, The Complex PTSD Workbook, ch. 3 (Restorative Breath). Paraphrased; please read the original book for the full practice.

Education, not therapy. If you are in crisis: UK Samaritans 116 123 · US 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline (call or text 988) · or your local emergency number.



Drop anchor

3 minutes



WHEN IT HELPS

When a wave of emotion or a storm of thoughts sweeps you away.

STEPS

- 1 Acknowledge: silently name what is here. "I'm noticing worry." "Here is sadness."
- 2 Come back into your body: press your feet into the floor, straighten your back, press your hands together.
- 3 Engage with the world: notice five things you can see and three things you can hear. Notice what you are doing.
- 4 Go round this cycle three or four times, slowly.

Why it works. An anchor does not stop the storm. It holds you steady while the storm passes.

Go gently. Do not skip the first step. Naming what is here is what makes this work; without it, it becomes distraction.

Based on Russ Harris, *The Happiness Trap*, ch. 5 (Dropping anchor). Paraphrased; please read the original book for the full practice.

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Kind hands

2 minutes



WHEN IT HELPS

When something hurts and your inner voice turns harsh.

STEPS

- 1 Notice where the feeling sits in your body, and give it a name: hurt, sadness, shame.
- 2 Turn one hand palm up and imagine filling it with warmth and kindness.
- 3 Rest that hand gently where the feeling is, or over your heart.
- 4 Hold it softly, the way you would hold something small and fragile.
- 5 Say to yourself: "This really hurts. Be kind."
- 6 Stay for a few breaths, then stretch and look around the room.

Why it works. A kind tone and a warm touch calm the body's threat system; the harsh inner critic does the opposite.

Go gently. Kindness can bring up tears or old feelings at first. That is normal. Go gently, and stop if it becomes too much.

Based on Russ Harris, *The Happiness Trap*, ch. 11 and 15; *Handbook of Self-Compassion*, ch. 20 (soothing touch). Paraphrased; please read the original book for the full practice.

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Four elements

2 minutes

WHEN IT HELPS

When stress builds up during the day and you need a quick reset.



STEPS

- 1 Rate your stress from 0 to 10.
- 2 Earth: feel your feet on the ground and notice three new things you can see.
- 3 Air: breathe in for 4, hold for 2, out for 4. About a dozen breaths.
- 4 Water: notice the saliva in your mouth. Imagining a slice of lemon helps.
- 5 Fire: bring to mind a place where you feel calm and safe.
- 6 Rate your stress again.

Why it works. Each element settles a different part of you: your senses, your breath, your body's relaxation response and your imagination.

Go gently. If no place feels calm or safe right now, skip Fire and stay with your breath. Drop the breath hold if it makes you anxious.

Based on Francine Shapiro, *Getting Past Your Past*, ch. 10 (Four Elements). Paraphrased; please read the original book for the full practice.

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The sigh reset

2 minutes



WHEN IT HELPS

When you feel tense, shut down or stuck, and your body needs a gentle reset.

STEPS

- 1 Lie on your back, or sit. Interlace your fingers and rest the back of your head in your hands.
- 2 Keep your head still and look to the right with your eyes only.
- 3 Stay there, up to 30 to 60 seconds, until you naturally swallow, yawn or sigh.
- 4 Bring your eyes back to the centre.
- 5 Now look to the left with your eyes only, until you swallow, yawn or sigh again.
- 6 Rest your hands down and sit up slowly.

Why it works. The swallow, yawn or sigh is a sign that your nervous system is settling.

Go gently. If you feel dizzy when you get up, wait a minute or two. These exercises do not replace medical care.

Based on Stanley Rosenberg, *Accessing the Healing Power of the Vagus Nerve, Part Two (the Basic Exercise)*. Paraphrased; please read the original book for the full practice.

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