



ANXIETY TOOLKIT

Quick, Easy to Find
Calming Tools & Techniques



The CalmSynergy Toolkit

Quick, easy-to-reference exercises and anxiety-soothing techniques from the book—all in one place. Ideal for printing out, or saving to your phone for those times when you need help to regain your calm.

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Set Yourself Up For The Journey Ahead - Create Your Calm Sanctuary

I encourage you to create your calm sanctuary at home—a space where your mind and body know it's okay to slow down. This could be:

- A quiet corner with a cosy chair
- A spot by a window with natural light
- A cushion on the floor with a candle nearby

The important thing is how it *feels*: peaceful, private, and free from judgment. A place where you can return again and again to reconnect with your breath, your body, and your sense of control.

Even five minutes in your sanctuary can begin to shift your energy. It's not about escape—it's about *recalibration*.

Monitor Your Auto-Pilots

Mastering the Mind's Default Settings

Create a simple check-in routine:

- “What Auto-Pilot is trying to take over right now?”
- “What response would serve me better?”
- “How can I return to calm—gently and quickly?”

Awareness gives you a choice. Choice gives you freedom.

Interrupt Anxious Thoughts

Here are three powerful ways to break the cycle before it gains momentum:

1. Name the Thought – “This Is Anxiety Talking”

As soon as you catch yourself spiralling, pause and say:

“This is just anxiety. I don't have to follow this thought.”

Naming the thought for what it is separates *you* from the anxiety.

It's like turning on the lights in a dark room—suddenly, everything becomes clearer.

2. Flip the Script – Gentle Questioning

Ask yourself:

- Is this thought based on facts or fear?
- What's the *most likely* outcome, not the worst case?
- What would I say to a friend feeling this way?



By gently challenging the thought, you engage your rational brain—and give yourself a chance to respond with calm rather than react with panic.

3. Thought Releasing – The “Write and Let Go” Method

Write the anxious thought down.

Then, underneath it, write a more balanced response:

Anxious Thought:

“I’m going to mess this up.”

Reframe:

“I’ve handled tough things before. I can prepare and do my best.”

Writing helps move the thought out of your head and onto the page, where it loses its grip. You can even crumple the paper, tear it up, or throw it away—a physical symbol of taking your power back.

Deep Breathing

Activate Your Vagus Nerve - Your Built-in Calm Switch

This simple technique is your reset button—accessible anytime, anywhere. The more often you use it, the more natural it becomes. Over time, deep breathing transforms from a tool into a way of life.

- Inhale deeply through your nose, allowing your belly to rise
- Hold the breath gently for a few seconds
- Exhale slowly and fully through your mouth
- Repeat as needed, continuing until you feel a sense of calm returning

Box Breathing

Calm, One Square Breath at a Time

Each round of box breathing gives your body a chance to reset and your mind a chance to reframe. The pauses between breaths are not just stillness—they’re power. They create mental space, clarity, and control when everything feels overwhelming.

1. Inhale slowly through your nose for a count of 4
2. Hold your breath for a count of 4
3. Exhale slowly through your mouth for a count of 4
4. Hold again for a count of 4
5. Repeat this cycle for several minutes



4-7-8 Breathing

Calm Your Mind, Reset Your Body

This isn't just about breathing—it's about training your body to relax and teaching your mind to pause. As you settle into the rhythm, you may begin to feel a gentle wave of calm washing over you.

1. Exhale completely through your mouth, making a soft whooshing sound
2. Inhale quietly through your nose for a count of 4
3. Hold your breath for a count of 7, allowing your body to settle into stillness
4. Exhale slowly through your mouth for a count of 8
5. Repeat the cycle 4 times, increasing gradually as it becomes more comfortable

Breath & Body Awareness (5 mins)

- Sit or lie down comfortably.
- Begin a Body Scan Meditation: Close your eyes. Bring your attention to your toes. Slowly scan up your body, noticing any tension or sensations. As you breathe in, silently say: *"I feel."* As you exhale, silently say, *"I release."* Continue through each area of your body, from feet to face.

Anxiety Calming Movements

Move Your Body, Shift Your Mind

These quick cardio bursts boost your heart rate, release feel-good endorphins, and signal to your body that you are strong, safe, and in control.

- Jumping jacks
- High knees
- A brisk walk around the block
- Marching in place
- Gentle stretching with deep breathing

Progressive Muscle Relaxation (5–7 mins)

(Use a guided PMR audio if you're just starting out—it will walk you through every step.)

- Starting with your feet, gently tense each muscle group for 5 seconds, then fully release.
- Feet → Legs → Stomach → Chest → Arms → Shoulders → Face
- After each release, exhale deeply and release any remaining tension.



Managing Overwhelm

These steps are designed to slow the spin, clear the fog, and bring your nervous system back into balance:

1. Ground First—Breathe Before You Do Anything

Before making a to-do list, solving a problem, or answering a message—pause. Use your breath to signal to your brain that you're safe:

- Inhale slowly for 4 seconds
- Hold for 4
- Exhale for 6–8 seconds
- Repeat for 1–2 minutes

This lowers cortisol, slows your heart rate, and clears your mind.

2. Label It to Lessen It

Say out loud or write down:

“I'm feeling overwhelmed. This is a temporary state, not a permanent condition.”

Naming the feeling reduces its power. It gives your emotional brain a voice—and your rational brain a chance to step in.

3. Break It Down—Small Wins First

Overwhelm thrives on vagueness. The more things feel undefined, the bigger they seem.

Ask yourself:

- What's one small thing I can do right now to feel a little more in control?
- What can be put off until tomorrow or next week?

Create a brief list of three small, manageable actions. Then, take one step. Just one. Momentum breaks paralysis.

4. Create Calm in Your Environment

External chaos feeds internal stress. Reset your space, even if it's just:

- Making your bed
- Tidying your desk
- Stepping outside for fresh air
- Putting on calming music or lighting a candle

A 2-minute shift in your environment can have a 20-minute effect on your mood.

5. Use the 3-Bucket Rule -

This is a quick triage method to use when everything feels urgent. Sort your mental load into three categories:



Imagine placing every thought, worry, or responsibility into one of three mental buckets:



Bucket 1: Things I Can Directly Control

This is where your energy and focus belong.

These are things that are within your power to influence or change right now.

Examples include:

- Your actions and behaviour
- What you eat, how you move, and how you speak to yourself
- Your routines, boundaries, and the choices you make
- How you respond to stress or triggers
- Whether you ask for help or seek support

Empowering yourself by identifying what's in your control is calming and clarifying. This is where anxiety loses its grip, and confidence takes its place.



Bucket 2: Things I Can Influence but Not Fully Control

This bucket holds things you can impact but not completely dictate. It's the grey area—where effort helps, but outcomes aren't guaranteed.

Examples include:

- A loved one's reaction to your honesty
- The tone of a difficult conversation
- A job interview you've prepared for
- Your child's behaviour or your partner's mood
- The success of something you've worked hard on

You can influence these by showing up well, communicating clearly, and setting positive intentions—but you can't force the outcome. The key here is effort without attachment.

Bucket 3: Things I Cannot Control and Must Accept

This is where many anxious thoughts live—*until you consciously release them.*

These include:

- Other people's opinions
- The past
- Global events
- Unexpected setbacks or delays
- The future's uncertainty

Trying to control these is exhausting. Instead, **acknowledge, accept, and release.** Redirect your focus to what is within reach (Bucket 1), and practice mindfulness or self-compassion when thoughts from this bucket arise.

Overcoming Avoidance Behavior

Stop Running. Start Reclaiming. Avoidance vs. Exposure: A Mindset Shift

How to Start Reclaiming What You've Been Avoiding

1. Identify One Area You've Been Avoiding

Choose something small. Manageable. Not the scariest thing—just something you've been putting off.

Examples:

- Responding to an email
- Making a phone call
- Going to the grocery store
- Saying no to a request
- Asking for help



2. Ask: What Am I Really Avoiding?

Sometimes, we're not avoiding the task—we're avoiding the feeling behind it:

- Fear of failure?
- Fear of judgment?
- Fear of discomfort?

Name it. You can't heal what you don't acknowledge.

3. Break It Down Into Micro-Steps

Avoidance shrinks when we shrink the task.

If "go to the gym" feels overwhelming, break it down:

1. Put on workout clothes
2. Drive by the gym
3. Step inside for 2 minutes

Every step you take **proves to your brain that you're safe**. That's how you build new associations—ones based on courage, not fear.

4. Pair It with Calming Techniques

Before or after you face the thing you've been avoiding, practice a calming tool:

- Deep breathing
- 4-7-8 breathwork
- Grounding exercises. This helps reset your nervous system and anchor safety to action.

5. Celebrate Immediately

Even the smallest step is a massive win. Don't wait to feel "fully better" before you validate your progress. Say to yourself:

"That took courage—and I did it anyway."

***CalmSynergy* Tip: Avoidance Isn't Safety. Action Is Freedom.**

Mindful Journaling

Write Your Way to Calm, Clarity, and Emotional Strength

Journaling Prompts to Unlock Calm and Clarity

If you're not sure where to start, use these **powerful prompts** to guide your reflection:

For Processing Anxiety

- *What am I feeling right now?*
- *What's been weighing me down?*
- *What thoughts have been repeating on a loop?*
- *What do I need most in this moment?*



These questions gently invite you to look inward with compassion and understanding. Writing about your fears gives them structure—and structure gives you power.

For Building Resilience

- *What challenge did I face today, and how did I respond?*
- *What inner strength did I use to get through it?*
- *What am I grateful for right now?*
- *How can I reframe this experience as a learning opportunity rather than a setback?*

These prompts help you shift from feeling overwhelmed to taking ownership. They remind you that you are not your struggle—you are *the one navigating it*.

Journaling as Self-Care

Journaling isn't just about reflection. It's about **reconnection**—with yourself, your needs, and your strength.

Try this gentle check-in prompt:

- *What do I need right now?*

Maybe it's rest. Perhaps it's movement. Maybe it's a moment of silence.

Let your response guide your self-care—whether it's deep breathing, a walk in nature, or a calming cup of tea. When you listen to your inner voice, you naturally begin to make choices that support your calm.

Journaling Prompts for Self-Connection

Use the following prompts to write freely—without censoring, editing, or judging what comes up. Let the words flow.

1. *“How am I really feeling right now?”*
2. *“What do I need—emotionally, mentally, or physically?”*
3. *“What have I been avoiding feeling or acknowledging?”*
4. *“What is one small, kind thing I can do for myself today?”*
5. *“What would I say to myself if I were my own best friend?”*

Take your time with each one. Even a single sentence is enough. You're not writing a report—you're holding space for truth.

Simple Ways to Infuse Mindfulness Into Your Day

Here are easy, effective ways to weave mindfulness into the moments you're already living:



Morning Anchor

Before checking your phone or jumping into your to-do list, take one minute to breathe deeply and ask:

“How do I feel right now—and what do I need today?”

That moment of stillness sets the tone for your day.

Mindful Movement

Whether you’re walking the dog, stretching, or cleaning the kitchen, move with awareness.

Feel your feet on the ground. Notice the rhythm of your breath. Let the motion anchor you in the now.

Present-Moment Meals

Put down the distractions and focus on your food.

Notice textures, flavours, and colours. Chew slowly. Let each bite remind you of the joy of simple nourishment.

Pause Before You Scroll

Before diving into social media, take 3 slow breaths.

Ask yourself: *“Am I seeking connection, distraction, or calm?”*

Mindfulness helps you use technology with intention rather than impulse.

Evening Check-In

As your day ends, reflect gently:

- *What went well today?*
- *What am I grateful for?*
- *What do I want to carry into tomorrow?*

This practice grounds you in reflection instead of rumination.

Daily Mindfulness + Affirmations

Combining Thought and Presence to Rewire Your Inner World

The CalmSynergy Approach: Affirm & Anchor

Remember, affirmations are not about denying your feelings. They are about offering your mind *new, safe pathways*—especially in moments of fear, doubt, or overwhelm.

You are not ignoring anxiety—you are **retraining your brain to respond to it with wisdom and calm**. And like any skill, affirming calm takes practice. But each repetition is a brick in the foundation of your inner peace.

Let your words build the world you want to live in—starting with the one inside you.



Morning Anchor: Begin with Intention

- Before checking your phone, take 3 slow, deep breaths.
- Choose one affirmation that supports how you want to feel today. For example: *“I met today with calm and confidence.” “I am grounded, even when the world feels uncertain.”*
- Repeat it 3–5 times slowly, out loud or silently. Place your hand over your heart or belly for a deeper connection.

Midday Reset: Recalibrate With Breath

- Pause, breathe, and check in.
- Ask yourself: *“What do I need to hear right now?”*
- Use a supportive affirmation, such as: *“I give myself permission to pause.” “I don’t have to do it all to be enough.”*
- Pair the affirmation with mindful breathing: Inhale slowly... repeat the first half. Exhale slowly... repeat the second half.

Evening Wind-Down: Affirm Safety and Rest

- As part of your sleep routine, dim the lights and take a few deep breaths.
- Choose an affirmation to end the day with ease: *“I did enough. I am enough. I can rest now.” “My body and mind know how to let go.”*
- Whisper it as you prepare for bed, allowing it to sink in.

Creating Positive Affirmations

Rewriting the Story, You Tell Yourself

“I am safe. I am capable. I am enough.”

“I return to myself with compassion and care.”

“I met today with calm and confidence.”

“I am grounded, even when the world feels uncertain.”

“I can stay grounded in who I am, even when connection feels hard.”

“The way I want to show up in my relationships is grounded and open.”

“My voice is calm, clear, and valid.”

“I can be kind and clear. I am worthy of being heard.”

“I connect through presence, not pressure.”

“My pace is perfect.”

“I give myself permission to pause.”

“I don’t have to do it all to be enough.”

“I did enough. I am enough. I can rest now.”

“My body and mind know how to let go.”

“I don’t have to be perfect to be at peace.”

“I am worthy of my own love.”

“I deserve compassion.”

“I’m here. I’ve got you.”



A Daily Affirmation to Carry With You

Write it on a sticky note, keep it on your phone lock screen, or whisper it throughout the day.

- *“I trust myself.”*
- *“I am worthy of my own love.”*
- *“My pace is perfect.”*
- *“I don’t have to be perfect to be at peace.”*

The Mirror Moment

Stand or sit in front of a mirror. Look into your eyes—not to judge your appearance, but to see the person behind them. Gently place a hand on your heart or cheek.

Whisper to yourself:

- *“You’re doing your best.”*
- *“You deserve compassion.”*
- *“I’m here. I’ve got you.”*

(If this feels too hard, start with eye contact. Even that is an act of courage.)

Active Listening

Active listening is one of the greatest gifts you can offer—and receive. It creates the emotional foundation that calm relationships are built on. And it begins with a single, intentional choice: *to truly be with someone in their moment.*

- **Presence** – Putting away distractions and focusing your attention
- **Reflection** – Repeating or paraphrasing what you’ve heard to show understanding
- **Validation** – Acknowledging the other person’s feelings without jumping to judgment or advice
- **Patience** – Allowing silence or emotion to arise without rushing to fill the space

Assertive Communication

Being assertive isn’t selfish—it’s essential. Because when you communicate clearly, you build relationships where both people can be seen, supported, and safe.

- Express your needs and boundaries clearly without guilt
- Say no without apology or over-explaining
- Handle difficult conversations with calm and control
- Use “I” statements to share your feelings without blame
- Maintain emotional safety for yourself and the other person



The Healing Power of Gratitude (Vitamin G)

Grow What's Good—Even In Small Moments

Try this every day:

- “Today, I’m grateful for...” (3 things—no matter how small)
- “Something I did well today...”
- “One thing I’m looking forward to tomorrow...”

Gratitude makes the calm you already have easier to feel—and the life you’re building easier to love.

Visualization Meditation (5–10 mins)

(Optional: Use a guided visualization track to support you.)

- Envision a place that feels completely safe and calming—your “inner retreat” (beach, forest, mountain, etc.).
- Engage all your senses:
- What do you see, hear, smell, feel, and taste?
- Stay in this mental space for a few minutes, breathing deeply.

Loving-Kindness Practice (2–3 mins)

After a few rounds, extend the same wishes to someone you care about... then to someone you feel neutral toward... and finally to someone you’ve struggled with.

- Silently repeat the following:
- “May I be calm.”
- “May I be safe.”
- “May I rest.”

Everyday, Do Your Future Self a Favour

Tiny Acts of Kindness That Multiply Over Time

Ask: “*What would make things easier for me tomorrow?*”

Maybe it’s:

- Prepping a nourishing breakfast
- Journaling before bed
- Saying no to one unnecessary commitment
- Stepping outside for 5 minutes of fresh air

Calm is a gift your present self gives your future self.



Finding Purpose: What Would You Do If You Had No Fear?

Let Calm Open the Door to Meaning

Once anxiety begins to soften, something incredible starts to emerge: **clarity**.

In the quiet, we start to hear what we actually want—what lights us up, what we're here for.

Step 8 invites you to go deeper. Ask yourself:

- *What would I do more of if I wasn't afraid of failing, being judged, or falling short?*
- *What am I curious about, drawn to, or inspired by?*
- *What small step could I take toward it—today?*

You don't need to know your whole "life purpose." Just follow the **threads of calm curiosity**. What energizes you? What aligns with your values? What feels expansive? When you live with purpose, anxiety loses its grip. You no longer live from fear—you live from meaning.

Calm isn't the end goal—it's the foundation for a life that's truly yours.

*In 2024 I set up **CalmEvolve.com***

If you are ready to explore new possibilities for yourself, you may find some answers and direction there.

Above all

Stay Calm, Kind & Curious.

Kind Regards,

Simon Reason

