

## PRACTICAL SKILLS FOR HARD MOMENTS

# Your Calming Toolkit

When the body's stress response activates, thinking clearly becomes harder. These four practices gently calm your nervous system so you can return to choice rather than reaction. Try them in any order.

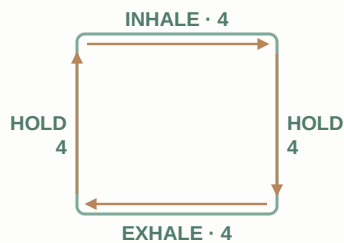


**Take 60 seconds.** Each of these tools can be done in about a minute. You do not need a quiet room or special equipment — just a moment of intention.

1

## Box Breathing

FOUR COUNTS ON EACH SIDE



Repeat for 4–6 cycles. Lengthen the exhale slightly if it feels natural — long exhales activate the body's calming response.

2

## 5–4–3–2–1 Grounding

BRING YOURSELF TO THE PRESENT

Look around and slowly name:

- 5 things you can **see**
- 4 things you can **touch**
- 3 things you can **hear**
- 2 things you can **smell**
- 1 thing you can **taste**

*This anchors your attention in the present moment, where most stress is no longer happening.*

3

## Body Anchors

SOOTHE THROUGH SENSATION

The body responds to safety cues faster than the mind. Try one:

- Place a hand on your chest, the other on your belly
- Press your feet firmly into the floor
- Splash cool water on your face or wrists
- Wrap yourself in a blanket or hug a pillow
- Hum, sigh, or gently sing a phrase

4

## A Self-Compassion Pause

THREE SENTENCES, ONE BREATH EACH

Place a hand on your heart and say to yourself, slowly:

*"This is a moment of difficulty."*

*"Difficulty is part of being human."*

*"May I offer myself the kindness I need."*

### A REMINDER

*These tools do not eliminate distress — they make it more workable. Practiced regularly, even when you feel calm, they become more available to you in difficult moments. This is your nervous system learning a new pattern.*