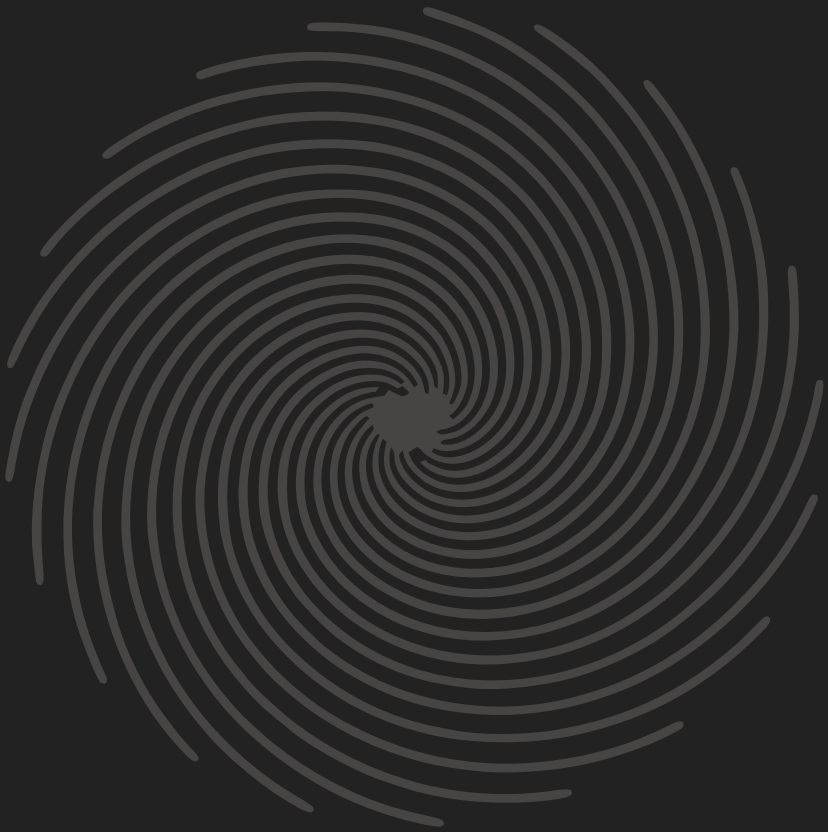
A 20-MINUTE RESET FOR WHEN YOU ARE ABOUT TO MAKE A BAD SITUATION WORSE

BEFORE YOU SPIRAL



FOR ADHD AND NEURODIVERGENT ADULTS WHO ARE TIRED OF THEIR EMOTIONS RUNNING THE SHOW

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Hey! I'm Julianna

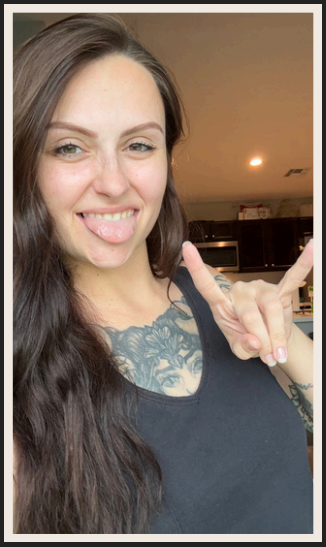
If you're reading this, it probably means you've had at least one moment where you thought:

"Why did I have to go and make that worse?" Yeah... I have, too. More times than I can count.

For most of my life, I thought I just had an intense personality.

Too dramatic, too reactive, too all-or-nothing.

I would white-knuckle my way through stress until one small thing tipped me over the edge. Then I'd say something I couldn't unsay. Do something I couldn't undo. Quit something I cared about. Numb out. Pick a fight. Burn progress I worked hard for.



And the shame hangover is the real silent killer.

It took me years to understand that what I was calling "self sabotage" was actually a dysregulated nervous system paired with an ADHD brain that runs hot and masks hard.

Nobody ever taught me what to do in the five minutes before the blow-up.

Well, I got tired of picking up the pieces of my explosive reactions and hating myself afterwards, so I learned.

I tested tools, I kept what worked, I threw out what didn't. And I built myself a reset I could use in real time, not in theory.

This guide is that reset.

Not to fix you. Not to make you calmer than you are (I don't think that'll be happening for any of us). But to give you something solid to grab onto before you spiral and make a hard moment harder.

You are not a bad person, and you are not defined by your emotions. Your electric meat just needs better instructions and a safer way to release the pressure.

Let's get into it!

- That Swamp Mom

@THAT.SWAMPMOM

WHAT'S ACTUALLY HAPPENING WHEN YOU SPIRAL

When you spiral, the electric meat inside your skull is not trying to ruin your life.

It's trying to survive.

ADHD brains especially do this thing where they:

- run hot
- mask hard
- push through
- either don't notice or ignore early warning signs

And then suddenly...

You can't prioritize the long term goal, you can't prioritize the progress, and you are struggling to care about the consequences.

In that state, your brain is screaming for one thing, and one thing only... relief.

And unfortunately, sometimes that relief might look like:

- quitting
- snapping
- canceling
- numbing out
- self sabotaging

From the outside, it looks reckless. But underneath that, it really feels like "I cannot do one more thing."

That is a nervous system that has hit its limit.

THE DANGER ZONE SIGNS

This is the window. Catch it here if you can.

EARLY SIGNS:

- everything feels unusually intense
- your chest feels tight
- your thoughts are running a million miles an hour
- you feel misunderstood
- small things feel personal

LATER WARNING SIGNS:

- you want to fix everything RIGHT NOW
- you're rehearsing arguments
- you want to send THAT message
- you're thinking in extremes

If you're here right now, good.

That means we still have leverage, and there are several ways to de-escalate this.

THE GOLDEN RULE:

Do not try to confront any situations or try to be productive right now.

When your brain is fried, you do not fix your life.

You need to lower the pressure in your body first.

"You can't stop the waves, but you can learn to surf"

-Jon Kabat-Zinn

PHASE 1

Right now, there is stress energy in your body. If you don't give it somewhere safe to go, it will go somewhere unsafe.

We need to allow a healthy outlet to give away this energy, and then we can move on to decompressing our nervous system.

Pick the one (only one) that feels like it would satisfy you the most.

- Write the message you want to send with everything you are thinking, but **do not hit send**. Delete it immediately.
- Scream into a pillow. Yes, really.
- Go into your car or in a private room and pretend you are ranting to someone completely unfiltered about whats bothering you.
- Grab a handful of ice and go throw it at the ground outside in a safe place.
- Grab an empty cardboard box and rip it up.

Set a timer on your phone and spend **no more than 5 minutes** doing ONE of these.

When the timer is up, it's time to move on to Phase 2.

PHASE 2

Now it's time to lower the pressure. Pick the one that most fits what you are currently experiencing. When the intensity drops even 20%, move on to the next phase. You don't need to be calm, you just need to not be climbing.

1. COLD RESET

What to do:
Cold pack, ice cube, or cold washcloth on your face or neck for 30-60 seconds. You can even dunk your face in ice water.

Why this works:
Cold exposure triggers the dive reflex and slows your heart rate. Your nervous system gets forced out of threat mode.

Use when:
You feel flooded or literally on the verge of exploding.

2. EXTENDED EXHALE

What to do:
Inhale for 4 seconds. Exhale for 6-8 seconds. Do it 6-10 times.

Why this works:
Longer exhales activate calming pathways in your nervous system and reduce stress hormones.

Use when:
Your chest is tight and your thoughts are racing.

3. WALL PUSH (ISOMETRIC HOLD)

What to do:
Stand facing a wall. Push hard for 10-15 seconds. Release. Repeat 3-4 times.

Why this works:
Strong muscle engagement burns off stress energy and helps discharge tension.

Use when:
You feel agitated and physically restless.

PHASE 2 CONTINUED

4. SOMATIC SOUND

What to do:
Inhale. On the exhale, sigh loudly or hum low while placing pressure on your chest.

Why this works:
Vocal vibration + long exhale signals safety to your nervous system.

Use when:
You feel like you might cry or snap.

5. SENSORY ANCHOR

What to do:
Name out loud:

- one thing you see
- one thing you feel
- one thing you hear
- one thing you smell
- one thing you taste

Why this works:
This shifts attention from threat processing to present sensory input.

Use when:
Your thoughts feel catastrophic and you need to come back to earth.

6. EYE MOVEMENT RESET

What to do:
Sit somewhere still. Slowly move your eyes all the way to the left without moving your head. Hold for 5–10 seconds. Then slowly move them all the way to the right. Hold again. Repeat 3–5 times. Keep your breathing slow while you do it.

If you feel a spontaneous deep breath or a yawn, that's a good sign.

Why this works:
Stress narrows your vision and locks your brain into threat mode. Slow side-to-side eye movement helps interrupt that loop and signal safety.

Use when:
Your thoughts are looping and you can feel yourself escalating.

PHASE 3

You lowered the pressure, now it's time to protect the progress.

This is the part where a lot of people mess up.

They calm down a little... and then immediately:

- send the text (don't you dare!!!!!)
- make the decision
- quit the thing
- start the fight
- delete the account
- do the thing that can't be undone
- say the thing that can't be unsaid

Nooooo my friend!

When your electric meat just came down from threat mode, you are in adult timeout, and therefore not allowed to make irreversible decisions.

Here are your rules:

1. **NO PERMANENT DECISIONS FOR 24 HOURS.**

   If it would change a relationship, a job, your reputation, or your trajectory, **it waits.**

2. **NO "PROVE A POINT" BEHAVIOR.**

   If your motivation is to be understood, validated, or finally heard, pause.

3. **NO DRAMATIC RESETS.**

   You are not quitting everything (or anything for that matter), you are not reinventing your life tonight, you are not cutting 6 inches off of your hair, you are not moving to Hawaii and going no contact with your family.

When stress hormones spike, your prefrontal cortex essentially shuts down. That happens to be the portion of your brain responsible for planning and long term thinking. It takes time to come fully back to life.

Just because you are calmer does not mean you're fully regulated.

WHAT DO I DO, THEN?

Choose one stabilizing move.
Not productive. **Stabilizing.**

- [ ] Shower
- [ ] Walk outside
- [ ] Have a snack
- [ ] Read something neutral
- [ ] Play a game
- [ ] Sit in silence
- [ ] Online window shopping



THE 5 MINUTE DEBRIEF

This is not about going into a shame spiral, committing character assassination, analyzing your childhood, or trying to figure out how all of this is actually your fault (spoiler: it's seriously not).

24 hours after you have completed phase 3, ask yourself:

- What set this off?
- What did my body feel first?
- What tool helped the most?

Write it down in one or two sentences. I really want to encourage you to use an actual pen and paper for this step.

Research shows that writing by hand improves memory more than typing because it engages more brain regions and forces deeper processing of information, which strengthens learning and recall.

In other words... using a pen and paper might save you a lot sooner next time. Repitition is key and will train your brain over time.

When you're done, close it.

I know it's easier said than done, but try to not replay the situation 47 times in your head.

And if your shame is yelling at you, tattoo this on your brain:

You gathered data, you used a tool, and you didn't blow your life up.

That is progress. That is how you rebuild trust with yourself.

The fact that you are here in the first place means you are doing your best. That means something.