



# THE CALM-DOWN TOOLKIT

10 INSTANT WAYS TO RESET YOUR ANXIETY

**you** reclaimed

BY MADALINA PODGOREAN

# WELCOME

*Hi There!*

Anxiety feels overwhelming because it tricks you into thinking there's nothing you can do to stop it.

This toolkit exists to prove that wrong.

Inside, you'll find 10 simple, proven techniques that can interrupt spiraling anxiety and panic attacks, and help you come back to calm—even in the middle of chaos.

These are not complicated. You can do them anytime, anywhere. They help you get out of your head and back into your body, where safety and regulation live.

## **How to use this toolkit:**

- Pick any tool.
- Try it gently.
- Repeat as needed. You'll find that certain tools work better for you than others. That's normal. Keep what works, leave what doesn't.

 **Important:** This is not a replacement for therapy or medical care. These are supportive self-regulation practices you can start using today.

*Madalina Podgorean*

## ABOUT ME

Hi, I'm Madalina—coach, educator, and creator of You, Reclaimed.

I help people reclaim calm, confidence, and emotional freedom with simple, real-world tools that work.



# BOX BREATHING (4-4-4-4 METHOD)

## ***What it does:***

*Calms your nervous system by slowing your breathing rhythm and reducing panic.*



## **How to do it:**

- 01** Breathe in through your nose for 4 counts
- 02** Hold your breath for 4 counts
- 03** Exhale slowly for 4 counts
- 04** Hold your breath again for 4 counts

Repeat this cycle 4–6 times. Imagine tracing the sides of a box as you breathe.

### **Gentle reminder:**

Your body knows how to calm itself. You're just giving it permission.

# 5-4-3-2-1 GROUNDING EXERCISE

## ***What it does:***

*Pulls you out of racing thoughts by shifting your attention to your senses.*



## **How to do it:**

Notice and name:

- 5** things you see
- 4** things you can touch
- 3** things you hear
- 2** things you smell
- 1** thing you can taste (or something positive you tell yourself)

Go slow. Let each sense anchor you back into your body.

### **Gentle reminder:**

You are safe. You are in this present moment.

# COLD WATER SPLASH OR ICE CUBE HOLD

## ***What it does:***

*“Snaps” you out of spiraling anxiety by activating your parasympathetic nervous system.*



## **How to do it:**

- ▶ Splash cold water on your face

**OR**

- ▶ Hold an ice cube in your hand and focus on the sensation as it melts

This sensory shock signals to your body that it's time to reset.

### **Gentle reminder:**

This feeling will pass. You are already interrupting the pattern of spiraling anxiety or panic.

# PROGRESSIVE MUSCLE RELAXATION

## ***What it does:***

*Releases tension from your body, which tells your brain “we are safe.”*



## **How to do it:**

- 1** Sit or lie somewhere comfortable.
- 2** Start at your toes. Tense the muscles hard (but not painfully) for 5 seconds.
- 3** Release and feel the tension melt away.
- 4** Move up to your calves → thighs → stomach → chest → hands → arms → shoulders → face.
- 5** Slowly work through the whole body.

Breathe deeply as you move through the steps.

### **Gentle reminder:**

Tension leaves your body first—calm follows right behind.

# BUTTERFLY HUG (SELF-HOLDING)

## ***What it does:***

*Creates a sense of safety and self-comfort through gentle rhythmic touch (this is a powerful trauma therapy tool.)*



## **How to do it:**

- 1** Cross your arms over your chest so your right hand rests on your left upper arm and your left hand rests on your right upper arm.
- 2** Gently tap or pat your arms alternately (left-right-left-right).
- 3** Breathe slowly and deeply as you tap.
- 4** Let your body soften with each breath.

Do this for 1–2 minutes or as long as it feels good.

**Optional:** To feel even more grounded, press your back lightly against a wall as you tap—it helps to further anchor you physically.

### **Gentle reminder:**

You are here. You are safe. You are supporting your body and your nervous system beautifully right now.

# "NAME IT TO TAME IT" EXERCISE

## ***What it does:***

*Reduces overwhelming emotion by giving it a name.  
The brain relaxes once it identifies what it's feeling.*



## **How to do it:**

- 1** Pause and take a slow breath.
- 2** Ask yourself: "What emotion am I feeling right now?"
- 3** Say it out loud (or write it down). Example: "I feel panicked."
- 4** Remind yourself: "Feeling [emotion] is allowed. It will pass."

You can repeat this for secondary feelings if needed.

### **Gentle reminder:**

Naming your feelings doesn't make them bigger—it makes them manageable. You are taking control to come back to a calm state.

# “SAFE PLACE” VISUALIZATION

## ***What it does:***

*Helps your mind and body calm down by mentally “escaping” to a soothing, safe environment.*



## **How to do it:**

- 1** Close your eyes and breathe slowly.
- 2** Imagine a place where you feel completely safe and calm. It could be a beach, forest, cozy room—anywhere.
- 3** Picture every detail: the colors, sounds, textures, scents.
- 4** Stay in your safe place for a few minutes. Let your body relax as your mind explores.

### **Gentle reminder:**

You can visit your safe place any time, anywhere. It's always inside you.

# TAPPING (EFT BASIC POINTS)

## ***What it does:***

*Stimulates calming acupressure points while repeating soothing statements. Tapping helps interrupt anxiety and panic by combining touch + thought.*



## **How to do it:**

**1** Using your fingertips, tap gently on these areas, in this order, starting with the side of your hand:

Side of the hand (karate chop spot) → top of head → eyebrow → side of eye → under eye → under nose → chin → collarbone → under arm

**Visual instructions on next page.**

**2** As you tap, repeat a calming phrase like:  
"Even though I feel anxious, I deeply love and accept myself."

**3** Cycle through points 2–3 times.

### **Gentle reminder:**

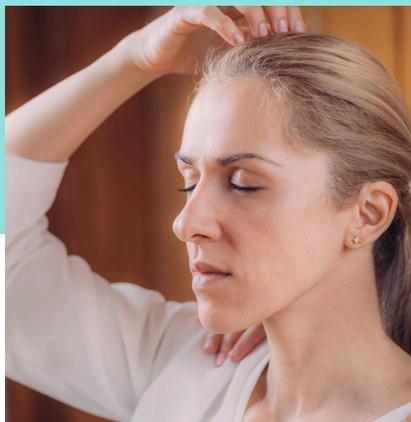
Tapping calms your nervous system and gives you back a sense of control. Try it—you might be surprised how well it works.

# TAPPING POINTS VISUAL GUIDE

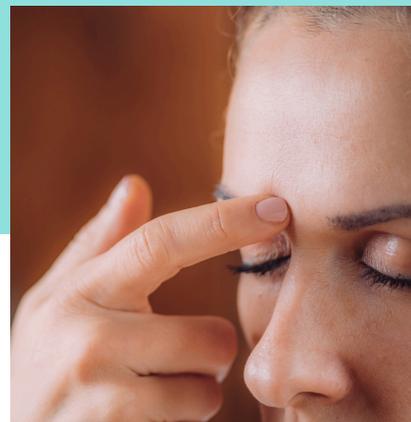
*Use this visual guide to help you locate the main tapping points. There's no perfect way to do this—just follow the sequence gently and breathe.*



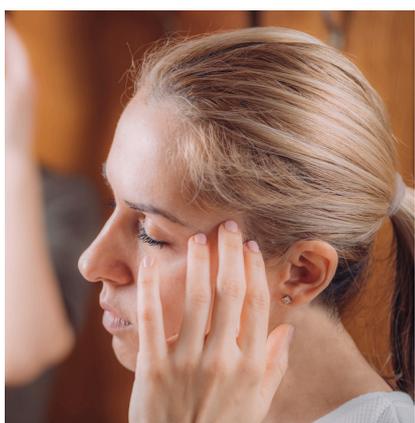
Side of hand



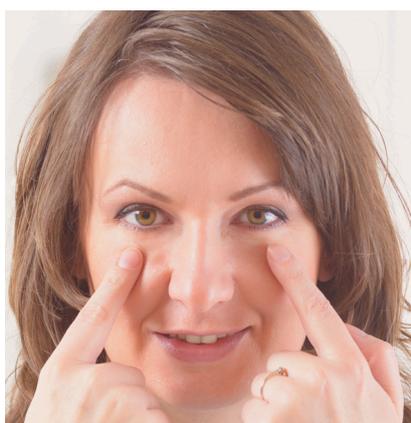
Top of head



Eyebrow (inner ridge)



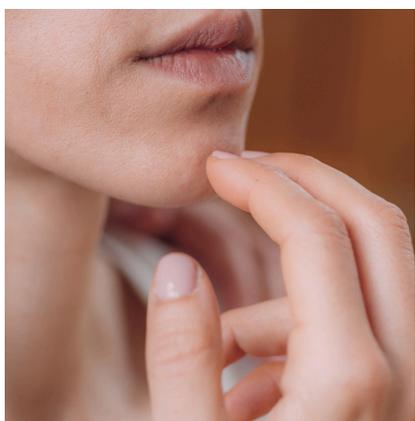
Side of eye



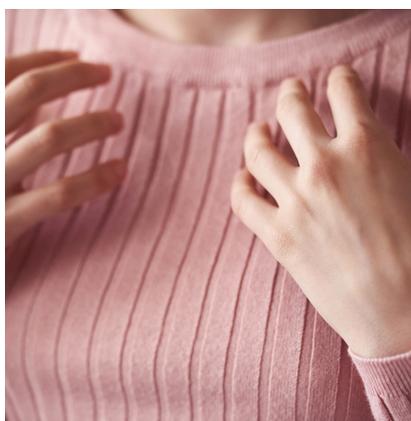
Under eye



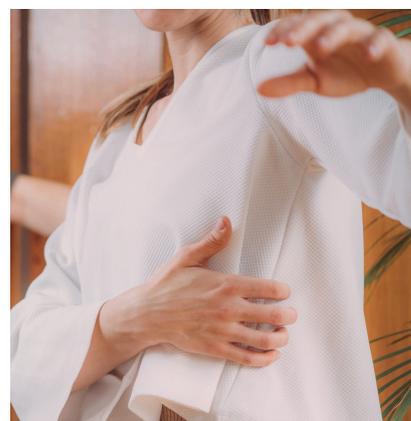
Under nose



Chin (below lip crease)



Collarbone



Under arm

# SLOW WALKING OR PACING WITH INTENTION

## ***What it does:***

*Walking slowly can regulate energy + calm racing thoughts.  
Movement helps the body “burn off” anxious energy.*



## **How to do it:**

- 1** Walk slowly around your room, home, or outside.
- 2** Focus on the sensation of each step: heel → toe → heel → toe.
- 3** Sync your steps with your breath: Inhale... step... exhale... step.
- 4** Let your thoughts slow down with your movement.

### **Gentle reminder:**

Every step grounds you back into the present moment. Keep walking until you feel your body settle.

# MANTRA REPETITION + HAND ON HEART

## ***What it does:***

*Self-soothing touch + calming words reset your nervous system and reduce panic.*



## **How to do it:**

- 1** Place one or both hands over your heart.
- 2** Take a deep breath and say a comforting mantra either aloud or silently.  
  
Examples:  
"I am safe."  
"This feeling will pass."  
"I am doing the best I can."
- 3** Repeat as needed.

### **Gentle reminder:**

Your body responds to gentle touch and kindness. Even the smallest act of comfort makes a difference.

# YOU'RE DOING BETTER THAN YOU THINK

The fact that you're holding this guide means you're already showing up for yourself in a powerful way.

Not every tool will work for every moment—and that's OK. Healing isn't about perfection. It's about returning to calm over and over, one small step at a time.

Whenever you feel stuck, remember this:

- ♥ You are safe.
- ♥ You are strong.
- ♥ You have choices.
- ♥ You are reclaiming your calm, your power, and your peace.

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Stay connected with me for more support + next steps:  
[youreclaimedproject.com](https://youreclaimedproject.com)

The logo for 'youreclaimed' features the word 'you' in a teal color with a black heart shape inside the letter 'o', followed by the word 'reclaimed' in a bold, black, sans-serif font.



## KEEP GROWING WITH ME



You've just taken an amazing step toward calming your anxiety and reclaiming your sense of safety. I've got so much more to share with you.

If you want ongoing tools, guidance, and support, come join me:



YouTube →

<https://www.youtube.com/@YouReclaimedProject>



Website →

[YouReclaimedProject.com](https://www.YouReclaimedProject.com)

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We're building a community of people just like you—working toward calm, confidence, and emotional freedom.

I'd love for you to be part of it. ❤️