

## **How Do I Come Back to Myself When I Feel Overwhelmed, Anxious, or Overstimulated?**

### **QUESTION:**

Why do I feel like I disappear into the chaos? Why can't I find myself when everything feels loud, urgent, or out of control?

### **ANSWER:**

Because your nervous system doesn't feel safe, and when safety is gone, so is your centre. You don't need perfect peace to come back to yourself; you just need an anchor. Coming back to yourself is not about controlling everything around you; it's about reconnecting with what's already steady inside you. Here's how:

### **1. Overwhelm Isn't a Weakness, It's a Signal**

When you feel overstimulated, it's not a flaw in your design, it's your body saying: this is too much, too fast, too loud. Your mind may say: push through, perform, please everyone, but your body is saying: stop, soften, and soothe. Don't silence the signal, answer it. Start with:

- One hand on your chest.
- One slow deep breath.
- One reminder: I'm not in danger. I'm just temporarily dysregulated.

## **2. Shrink the World Back to What You Can Control**

When everything feels like too much, the focus of the healing habit is to make things smaller. Instead of fixing the whole situation, try noticing the sensation of your feet on the floor or your bottom in the chair, then identify 3 objects around you and concentrate deeply on their colour, shape, and purpose. **Overstimulation disconnects you from the present, reconnection happens through the senses.** Use what you see, hear, taste, touch, or smell to ground you in the present moment

## **3. Remind Yourself: I Am Not the Chaos I Feel**

When you're anxious, you may think, 'I can't handle this, something bad is about to happen, I'm spiralling again.' But you're not the spiral, you're the person observing the spiral. Tell the observer, 'you've been here before, you got through it, and you will again.'

## **4. Create a Simple 'Come-Back Plan' for Next Time**

Coming back to yourself works best when it's already practiced so design yourself a go-to grounding script and practice using it even when you're calm. You could say, 'when I feel overwhelmed, I will step away if I can. I will breathe deeply for 30 seconds. I will touch something grounding (a cool surface, a soft fabric). I will remind myself: in this moment I am safe.' Keep it somewhere

visible. Make it your nervous system's permission slip to embrace calm.

## **5. Know the Difference Between Stimulation and Threat**

Your brain may read fast environments, loud people, or big emotions as danger, but not all intensity is threat. The goal is to teach your body that this may not feel good, but it isn't unsafe, I'm allowed to slow down, even if the world is still spinning.' You're not failing if you need space. You're not broken if you need silence. You're not weak if you pause mid-chaos. You're just honouring your capacity and that is what 'coming back' looks like.

### **Affirmation:**

I am allowed to slow down. I am safe in my own body. I can come back to myself.

### **Journal Prompts:**

1. What environments overstimulate me, and what helps me recover?
2. What does it feel like in my body when I'm close to overwhelm?
3. What are 3 things that help me feel anchored, calm, or soothed?
4. When was the last time I came back to myself and how did I do it?

**Conclusion:**

You can't always be calm, you can't always avoid overwhelm, you can't shelter from every storm, but you can learn to come back to yourself whatever the weather outside of you. To breathe deeper, to soften the panic, to find your way home. Every return makes you stronger.

**Final Thought:**

You are not the storm. You are not the noise. You are not the spinning thoughts or the racing heart. You are the anchor beneath it all. Still there. Still whole. Still reachable.