

A.C.A.L.M.E.R.M.E

THREE LITTLE WORDS

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We've known each other a while now and there are three little words I want to whisper in your ear: breathe, truth, reassure. I know, and I mean every word.

First up, I'd like to share a deep-breathing technique that enhances everything you've just learned in A.C.A.L.M.E.R.M.E. After that, we'll look at how a simple truth phrase, and a reassuring affirmation, round off our empowering new way of managing anyone and anything.

THE FIRST LITTLE WORD: BREATHE

I used to roll my eyes whenever I heard anyone talk about the 'calming and healing benefits' of deep breathing. One day, feeling desperate, I tried it - and I've never looked back.

When our fear-based memories are provoked our breathing quickens to pump more blood into our muscles preparing us for flight or fight. When we breathe slowly and more deeply, we're sending a message to our brain that says: 'It's OK, we're cool. We don't need a coping mechanism or an escape route.'

Slow, deep breathing is a sign that we've got this, everything's under control. Even when our fear response

starts revving its engine, our slow, deep breathing allows us to reclaim conscious self-control.

As we focus on slow, deep breathing - also called diaphragmatic breathing - we allow more air to flow into our body, which decreases our stress and anxiety. Through our slow, deep breathing our flight-or-fight response - which is always active to some degree - is desensitised. We can't turn it off completely, but slowing and deepening our breathing turns the volume right down. As you continue along your path to emotional freedom, the following breathing technique will be your new best friend:

HOW TO BREATHE: 555

- Breathe in deeply for 5 seconds.
- Hold your breath for a count of 5 seconds.
- Breathe out slowly for 5 seconds.
- Repeat steps 1, 2, and 3 until you feel calm and regulated.
- Sense the awareness and self-control you're now feeling.

PRACTICE MAKES GOOD ENOUGH

I find this breathing technique particularly effective when I can't sleep. Combined with the affirmation 'I have permission to rest and sleep', you'll be out like a light in no time.

As with everything else on this road to emotional freedom, practice the 555 Breathing Method as often as possible - even when you're not feeling stressed or anxious. The more you practice when you're calm, the easier it will be to access when you're not.

THE ONE WITH ROSS'S TAN

Any Friends fans among you will know that you count to 5 like this:

1 Mississippi 2 Mississippi 3 Mississippi 4 Mississippi 5
Mississippi

And that's *exactly* how we need to breathe for maximum benefit when calming our nervous system.

THE SECOND LITTLE WORD: TRUTH

I KNOW WHY I FEEL THIS WAY.

I'M NOT IN DANGER.

THIS IS MY TRUTH.

In those moments of overwhelm and anxiety when our fear-based memories are provoked, this truth statement acknowledges the source of our distress. It lifts us out of overwhelm, grounds us in the present, and restores our sense of calm. It knows there's nothing wrong with us - but

it also knows there's a reason why we feel the way we do.
This is not delusion or denial. This is truth.

Repeat it until it becomes a dominant belief. Write it down,
type it up, print it out, record it, film yourself saying it, get
it printed on a T-shirt, a shot glass, a coffee mug...
whatever it takes - just remember it.

I KNOW WHY I FEEL THIS WAY.

I'M NOT IN DANGER.

THIS IS MY TRUTH.

BREATHE 555 AND PRACTICE YOUR TRUTH.

STEP 1: BREATHE IN

I know why I feel this way.

STEP 2: HOLD

I'm not in danger.

STEP 3: BREATHE OUT

This is my truth.

Breathe it.

Believe it.

Become it.

THE THIRD LITTLE WORD: REASSURE

When panic and anxiety threaten to overwhelm us, we must reach out and reassure our wounded inner child that all is well, they *are* safe. What would you say to your wounded inner child, or to your struggling teenage self, in that moment of dread and panic? Would you tell them to pull themselves together and grow up? Or would you reach out, put your arm around them, and tell them everything's OK and you've got them?

Be there for them like no one else ever was. Your role now, as the kind supporter - even if you never had one to show you how it's done - is to step up and consciously restore harmony with calm words and calm actions.

Give yourself the time, attention, and compassion you didn't get. See yourself. Hear yourself. Tell your wounded inner child or struggling teenage self:

- You're OK. I've got you.
- You're not in danger anymore.

A NOTE ABOUT MY TEENAGE SELF

Hmm. As I write these words, I realise something important, in fact something I hadn't seen clearly until now. Although I was familiar with abuse from a very young age, it's my *teenage self* who feels the most worn down and broken. She's the version of me who I choose to nurture now.

- It's her voice I'll listen for.
- It's her pain I'll soothe.
- It's her battles I'll fight with awareness, truth, and self-assurance.
- It's her confidence and self-worth I'll help her build by encouraging her creativity and giving her the permission she never had to achieve and accomplish her dreams.

She's the version of me who stayed the course, even when everything inside her was screaming to give up.

As you move forward with your own healing, I invite you to think about this:

- Which version of you most needs your compassion?
- Which version of you needs their hand held the tightest?
- Which version of you most needs to hear, "You're OK. I've got you now. You're safe to be you."

The relationship you build with that version of yourself will change everything. It's not about dwelling in the past; it's about meeting the needs and healing the parts of you that were left behind.

Daily Healing Practice: Three Minutes to Reconnect

Every day - morning, night or both - take just three minutes to:

See your younger self

Close your eyes and imagine your teenage self.

- Where are they today?
- What do they need?

Speak to them

Say something kind to them. It can be simple:

- "You are safe now."
- "You're gifted and intelligent."
- "You don't have to hide anymore."

Show them

Promise them one small action you'll take today to protect them and honour them. For example:

- Stand up for yourself when needed.
- Say no without guilt.
- Let yourself enjoy something fun.
- Rest without apology.
- Pursue a dream they had, or something related to the dream.

Consistency builds trust. The more often you reconnect, the stronger and more secure they will feel - and so will

you. You're building a bridge from your past to your present, and to your future.

Affirmation Mantras for Healing and Reconnection

- I protect you. I honour you. I set you free.
- Your light is safe with me now.
- I am the love you waited for.
- You survived. I will help you thrive.
- I walk with you, not without you.
- Together, we are unstoppable.
- You shine through me. I shine for you.
- I am the home you always needed.

If you want something even simpler, almost like a whispered pocket mantra to carry everywhere, here are a few:

- I've got you. I always will.
- You are safe. You are free.
- We rise together. We always will.

RECAP

THREE LITTLE WORDS

BREATHE

Breathe in for 5

Hold for 5

Release for 5

TRUTH

I know why I feel this way.

I'm not in danger.

This is my truth.

REASSURE

You're OK.

I've got you.

You're not in danger anymore.

CHALLENGE IT TO CHANGE IT JOURNAL PROMPTS

YOUR NEW KNOWLEDGE...AND SETBACKS

As you become more familiar with the practices of A.C.A.L.M.E.R.M.E and Three Little Words, you'll notice the signs of healing: greater self-awareness, emotional self-control, and the unmistakable feeling of calm that tells you that you are winning your emotional war. The goal of this process is simple: to move away from fear-driven reactions and consciously choose a calmer, more empowered response.

If you **experience a setback** - and setbacks are simply invitations to deepen your awareness - take a moment to gently reflect:

- Who or what triggered your fear-based memories?
- What specific memories were triggered?
- Did you experience any feelings of shame, criticism, or rejection?
- How quickly did you remember and implement A.C.A.L.M.E.R.M.E and Three Little Words?
- What could you do next time to support yourself even sooner?
- How has your ability to reset, breathe, and self-reassure grown since you first started this journey?

Every reflection strengthens your healing. Every small victory rewires your emotional responses towards peace.

Our fear recalls those early, scary moments when anger and rejection made us feel invalidated and worthless. The hopelessness we feel in these moments stirs a painful question: **"What's the point in trying to feel better?"** That is precisely the moment we must pull ourselves back from the brink of unravelling and return to our road of emotional freedom.

We are shaped by shocks, insults, and tantrums, and when we're emotionally exhausted the road to recovery can be rocky. We must stay aware of how easily our fears can be triggered by even the smallest ripple of tension or stress. Feeling retraumatized, anxious, or panicked is exhausting and upsetting but we are in control of our emotional responses - and you know by now that they include walking away, breathing deeply, resetting ourselves, and choosing the path to peace no matter what or who tries to provoke us. You don't need to save face or have the last word. You really don't.

Now that you know why you've been choosing, feeling, and thinking the way you have, you are free to choose, feel, and think differently.

And **that** is emotional freedom!

ALSO...

We're tired of defending ourselves. We're tired of obeying what 'Judge Mental' tells us to do. Next time someone's rude, confrontational, or aggressive don't waste time wondering what *you've* done wrong or thinking of a clever comeback. Instead, ask yourself:

- I wonder what happened *to them*.
- Is their story like mine?
- What or who do they remind me of?

Refuse to allow other people's overwhelming, toxic behaviour to make you feel emotionally unsafe. Break the chain. Reject the temptation to be dragged into an emotional battle of wills.

When we carry unresolved trauma, we can be tempted to offload our pain in ways that we later regret. Trust me on that one. If we approach life with an 'eye-for-an-eye' attitude it's not a sign of our strength - it's a sign of the pain we're still in. We've been conditioned to defend and protect ourselves but now we're changing that conditioning. We're moving from *defensive reaction* to *conscious response*. We're breaking the habits that kept us stuck. We're creating new habits that will take us somewhere far healthier, far stronger, and far more comfortable than we've ever been before.

I CHOOSE CONSCIOUS POWER OVER UNCONSCIOUS PAIN

Other people's anger and criticism bring back memories of frightening experiences, memories that reverberate throughout our nervous system. These people may or may not know about our emotional history, their behaviour may or may not be deliberately designed to trigger us, but it still does. Our response, however, is our responsibility and we're choosing **not** to allow other people's toxic projections to trigger us anymore.

Very few people become difficult, critical, judgmental, angry, defiant, defensive, or argumentative unless they carry traumatic experiences of their own. What's really going on behind their mask? With practice and experience, you'll be empowered to ask: *what or who caused them so much pain?* And that's a great example of making someone's behaviour mean something worrying *about them, not about you.*

Being at peace with others becomes much easier when we're at peace with ourselves. When we end the *internal* emotional war, the *external* emotional war is won. We might still have the occasional blip but now, we're empowered to respond differently. We're asking big questions and receiving big answers, all of which help us heal our emotional history.

We're lifting ourselves out of confusion by telling the truth about our emotional history, healing our emotional present, and protecting our emotional future. We're directing ourselves into a space of conscious curiosity and emotional freedom whilst remembering that we can only control ourselves.

I'm not suggesting you spend hours analysing every encounter, but over the next few weeks you might want to reflect on:

- Why did I feel triggered?
- Who triggered me?
- What old memory or wound did it touch?

We tend to feel deeply invalidated as adults when we were deeply invalidated as children. With hearts and minds full of **invalidating** experiences, we must build a new store of **validating** experiences instead. We must rise above the old provocations. We must own our worth.

Affirmation: I matter. I count. I am valid.

When we accept that our lives have been shaped by the wounds we've borne from past trauma, when we understand who and where that trauma came from and how it still influences us, we can energetically give it back to its rightful owner. This creates the space we need to

reclaim our emotional power, embrace emotional freedom, and win our emotional war.

As you move further down the road towards emotional freedom it won't matter how stropky, irritable, or dysregulated other people are - they can be as chaotic as they like. You'll remain calm and untriggered, because you've learned to switch your focus from them to you and to ask yourself:

"I wonder what happened to them...?"

AND THERE YOU HAVE IT! You've equipped yourself with a straightforward but profoundly powerful process that teaches you how to manage anyone and anything, despite your emotional history.

How subtle and quiet - or loud and emotional - has the impact of this process been for you?

Every empowering step of A.C.A.L.M.E.R.M.E offers its own gifts. Feel free to revisit them as stand-alone practices, focusing on whichever step you need most at any moment.

Once we embrace the healing powers of A.C.A.L.M.E.R.M.E, something incredible happens:

- We can afford to be emotionally generous.
- We can smile, say hello, and be the person who calmly says, "don't worry, we can sort this out."

For the first time in our lives, we're not the person desperately trying to be validated. We're not the one scrambling to avoid anxiety, begging to have our needs met, dodging criticism, or trying to redirect a catastrophe with frantic, stress-inducing fixes. Once upon a time, in someone else's broken story, we thought we had to save the day to be worthy.

No more.

It's time to tell the truth of who we really are. It's time to put our needs first.

With awareness and conscious conversation, we can soothe sensory experiences and restore calm. We know the only source of our self-doubt and shame has been other people. We weren't born carrying these disempowered feelings - they were programmed into us.

They no longer serve us.

They once led us down paths of drama, confrontation, and chaos, convincing us that life had to be loud and catastrophic to be meaningful.

We're done with that.

Learn the values and purpose of A.C.A.L.M.E.R.M.E, and it will run quietly in the background like a healing operating system, guiding you every time you feel overwhelmed, anxious, intimidated, or scared.

- Allow awareness to wash over you.
- Have a conscious conversation with yourself.
- Let a logical perspective be your guide.

Allow your nervous system to return to its natural state of calm, conscious composure.

EMOTIONAL CLOSING

- You are no longer who they made you believe you were.
- You are not broken.
- You are not less-than.
- You are not the shame they projected onto you.
- You are who you choose to become – aware, conscious, calm, and free.
- You are the calm in your own storm.
- You are the voice of your own compassion.
- You are the safe place you have been searching for all along.
- You have rewritten the story they tried to write for you, and that changes everything, beginning now, and for every day to come.

