

The 90-Second Reset

For When It All Feels Like Too Much

You're likely making this decision under stress, maybe real fear. And what your body won't tell you out loud is this: you can't make a clear-headed choice from inside a stress response. When your nervous system thinks you're in danger, it narrows everything down to survival. It's brilliant at getting you out of the path of a lion. It's poor at weighing risks, reading nuance, or sitting with uncertainty, which are exactly the things this decision needs.

So, before you weigh anything, give your body the one thing it's asking for: the signal that, in this moment, you're safe enough to think.

You can't think your way calm. But you can signal your way there.

Here's a 90-second way to do it. I teach a fuller version in my Ancient Body, Modern World programme, but this short form is plenty for right now.



The 90-Second Reset: Your Guide

1

Three Breaths

"First, three slow breaths, and make each out-breath longer than the in-breath." In for a count of about four, out for six or more. That longer exhale is the actual switch: it's the thing that tells your heart to slow and your body to stand down. Let your belly move if it wants to, and your shoulders drop if they're willing. (Fastest of all is a physiological sigh: two breaths in through the nose, one stacked on top of the other, then a long, slow breath out through the mouth.) If focusing on your breath winds you up rather than settling you, and for some people, especially with panic or a condition like POTS, it does, don't force it. Skip the counting and go straight to dropping anchor.

2

Acknowledge

Name what's here, silently, without trying to fix it. "There's fear. There's tightness in my chest. There's that thought again." Naming it makes a little space between you and it.

3

Connect with Your Body

Press your feet into the floor and feel it hold you. Notice where you're resting on the chair. Lengthen your spine. Scan slowly downward — jaw, shoulders, hands, belly — and wherever you find yourself gripping, see if you can soften it, even a little. Then take one slow, conscious breath. You're anchoring yourself in something solid and real.

4

Engage

Look up. Notice a few ordinary things around you: the light, a sound, the weight of this page in your hand. You're back in the room, in the present, where the decision actually lives.

That's it. Nothing mystical. You've just given your nervous system the "all clear" it's been waiting for, and shifted from the accelerator towards the brake.

Do this as often as you need. Once helps. Three times helps more if your mind keeps galloping off. There's no upper limit, and no such thing as doing it too often. Come back to it any time the noise rises: before the appointment, in the waiting room, or in the small hours when sleep won't come. Each time, you're teaching your body that it's safe to settle.



Now, from steadier ground, open the workbook. Whatever you decide, let it be your decision, made with a clear head, not one that fear made for you.