

The 5-Minute Reset

Not every day is for going deep. Five minutes to steady yourself and carry on.

No digging. No childhood. No homework. Five small steps, and then you go back to your day. Writing is optional at every step — saying things out loud, or just thinking them, counts.

MINUTE ONE

Land where you are

Look around. Name five things you can see, four you can hear, three you can physically feel. Out loud if you're alone — or here:

MINUTES TWO AND THREE

Slow the breath

Breathe in through your nose for a count of four, then out through your mouth for a count of eight — all the way empty. Repeat for two minutes. The long exhale is the part doing the work; exhale-focused breathing like this improved mood in a month-long randomized study at Stanford.

Set a timer and let it be boring. Boring is the point.

MINUTE FOUR

Name what's here

One or two words for the feeling. Not why, not whether it's fair. Just its name.

And underneath it — what do you need in the next hour? Not this year. This hour.

MINUTE FIVE

Choose one next action

One thing, small enough to actually do in the next hour. Drink water. Send the one text. Step outside. Close the tab.

That's it. That was the work today. If you want more when you're steadier, the other rooms will be here. If five minutes wasn't enough and something bigger is moving, that's information, not failure.

IF IT STIRRED SOMETHING UP

Coming back down

Breathe in through your nose for four, out through your mouth for eight — longer out than in — for a few minutes. Then name five things you can see, four you can hear, three you can touch. Stirred-up feelings after writing like this are common and tend to pass; if they don't, that's information that this deserves more support than a page can give.

If you're in crisis or thinking about harming yourself, please don't work through it alone here. In the US, call or text 988 (the 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline), or chat at 988lifeline.org — available 24/7. Outside the US, findahelpline.com lists helplines around the world.

A BLESSING ON THIS WORK

This work is a gift. Share it freely with anyone who needs it — print it, copy it, pass it on whole. It is not for sale, by us or by anyone, and it shouldn't be changed. Above all, keep the crisis lines and the words about seeking professional help exactly as they are — for someone, those may be the lines that matter most. It exists to help people heal, and to raise the vibration of the world. That will never cost anything here.

— *Aether & Root* · aetherandroot.com/inner-work