

The 3-Minute Reset

An interactive checklist for when 'self-care' is a joke

Landing

We're not going to ask you to meditate. We're not going to ask you to journal. We're going to ask you for three minutes – and if that's too much, we'll take one. This checklist is for the days when "self-care" sounds like a second job. It's on the floor on purpose – because the floor is where you are right now, and that's a good place to start.

- The promise: Three minutes. No guilt. No prep. No "you should."

Minute 1 – Hydrate [?]

- Drink a full glass of water. Any liquid counts.
- Dehydration mimics anxiety and exhaustion. This is the highest-leverage minute.

Minute 2 – Breathe (Actually) [?]

- Inhale 4 counts.
- Hold 7 counts.
- Exhale 8 counts.
- Do it 3 times. That's the whole minute.

This activates your parasympathetic nervous system. It works even if you don't believe it will.

Minute 3 – Anchor

- **Name one thing you can see.**
- **Name one thing you can hear.**
- **Name one thing you can feel.**
- **Name one thing that's not terrible right now. (The sun is out. My cat is soft. I'm wearing comfortable pants.)**

The Micro-Dose Version

When even one full minute is too much, any one of these counts as a successful reset:

- **Take one deep breath. Just one.**
- **Put your phone face-down for 60 seconds.**
- **Drink one sip of water.**
- **Look out a window for 30 seconds.**
- **When even one minute is too much – the 15-second version:**
- **One breath.**
- **One sip of water.**

That's it. That's the whole reset.

If you feel...

Try this...

Like you can't catch your breath

Minute 2 only – 4-7-8 breathing, 3 rounds

Like you're revved up / overstimulated

Minute 1 + 3 (water, then name 5 things you can see)

Numb / checked-out

Minute 3 only – "name one thing that's not terrible"

Too tired to even read this

Micro-dose: one sip of water + phone face-down, 60 seconds

Like a total failure for needing this

Read this line: "Needing a reset is not a moral event." Then do minute 1.

Share this

Send this to one caregiver you know. Say: "Minute 1 only, I dare you."

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- **[The 3-Minute Reset](/blog/three-minute-reset)** – the essay behind this checklist
- **[Executive Dysfunction at 2 p.m.](/blog/executive-dysfunction-at-two-pm)**
- **[Why Self-Care Fails ND Caregivers (And What Doesn't)](/blog/why-self-care-fails-nd-caregivers)**

About The Unadulging Society

We're a shame-free space for caregivers, neurodivergent adults, and anyone who never quite grew up as expected. We create free resources, visual tools, and permission slips to be human. No streaks. No shame. No "you should." – The Unadulging Society · sfwagere.com