

HOW TO GAIN CONTROL *over how you feel*

SO THE SILLY SEASON DOESN'T FEEL
LIKE ONE MORE THING TO SURVIVE





IS THIS YOU?

If you're a woman in midlife heading into Christmas already running on empty - I want you to hear this: you're not failing.

Your nervous system is simply stuck in a survival state, and your hormones are no longer cushioning the impact.

You might be:

- Flip-flopping between wired and tired - anxious and overthinking one moment, numb and disconnected the next.
- Snapping or shutting down in relationships, even when you don't mean to.
- Reaching for coping habits - the extra glass of wine, another workout, a scroll, or the chocolate stash - just to feel something or stop feeling everything.
- Chasing answers for weird physical symptoms - fatigue, insomnia, brain fog, digestive chaos, heart palpitations, anxiety - only to be told your bloods are "normal."

Here's what's actually happening.

As you move through perimenopause, your progesterone levels drop first, taking with them that natural calming buffer your body once relied on. Oestrogen - your mood, motivation, and energy hormone - starts to fluctuate wildly, amplifying stress responses and disrupting sleep. So even small stresses now feel bigger. Your window of regulation (see next page) is harder to find. And the body that used to bounce back... just doesn't.

You might be quietly asking yourself:

"What's wrong with me?"

Nothing is wrong with you, but you can no longer keep pushing through in the way you once did. Your body is doing exactly what it's designed to do under prolonged stress and hormonal change - it's adapting for survival, but this is different from enjoying life.

This handout will help you understand which nervous system state you're in, why it feels so intense right now, and how to gently guide yourself back toward regulation - even in the middle of the silly season.

A good place to start is by understanding your *Window of Regulation* - your body's natural zone of balance.

Think of it as your internal “sweet spot,” where you feel grounded enough to think clearly, respond calmly, and deal with life without tipping into overwhelm or shutdown. In this zone, your mind and body are working in sync - your prefrontal cortex (the part of your brain responsible for reflection and reasoning) is fully online. You can make decisions, connect with others, and bounce back from stress.

But during times of pressure - especially emotional or hormonal stress - you can slip out of your window. When that happens, your body moves into one of two survival states:

- Hyperarousal – the “fight or flight” zone. You might feel anxious, restless, irritable, wired but exhausted, unable to switch off.
- Hypoarousal – the “freeze or shutdown” zone. You might feel flat, disconnected, foggy, unmotivated, or numb.

In either of these states, your body is prioritising survival over connection or reflection. The thinking brain goes offline; the survival brain takes over. Here's why this matters even more in perimenopause. As progesterone drops, your body loses that natural calming buffer that used to help you self-soothe. Oestrogen starts to fluctuate, which affects serotonin and cortisol - your mood and stress hormones. Sleep becomes lighter, recovery slower, and emotional reactivity higher. So even small stresses that you used to brush off can now push you straight out of your window.

Your “window” hasn't disappeared - it's just narrowed. And the good news? You can widen it again, by learning to recognise what state you're in - hyper, hypo, or regulated - and gently meeting yourself there with nervous-system tools (page 5) and supportive daily rhythms, you can train your body to return to safety more easily.

If you're finding it difficult to spend any significant time in your window - if regulation feels fleeting or impossible to hold it means your system needs guided support to build new patterns of safety and capacity. That's exactly what we do inside The HEAL Method, this is where you'll start to gain real traction - not just moments of calm, but the ability to stay there.

Window of Regulation

HYPER-AROUSAL

Anxious
Angry
Hypervigilant
Racing thoughts

(Sympathetic)
Fight or Flight

Reduce arousal:
Walking/running in nature
Healthy ways to release anger
Diaphragmatic breathing

WINDOW OF REGULATION Optimal Zone

Present
Might feel calm & settled
Able to focus & make decisions
Able to connect with others
Can process stress & challenges without getting overwhelmed

HYPO-AROUSAL

Zoned out
Disconnected
Numb
Shutdown

Immobilised

Increase arousal:
Loud music
Gentle movement
5 Senses

Regulating Resource List

- Connecting with others
- Art - colouring, painting, clay
- Craft - knitting, crochet, sewing
- Dancing
- Breathing fresh air
- Holding an object - shell, twig, stone
- Balance like a Tree (Yoga Pose)
- Lying on the ground & feeling the ground under
- your body
- Rolling on the ground, feeling all sides of your
- body on the ground
- Doing squats
- Doing push ups
- Jumping up and down
- Doing heel lifts (one at a time, then both)
- Mindfulness in motion - walking or running
- Yoga
- Qigong
- Tapping (you will learn how in the HM program)
- Stretching
- Feeling sand on your feet or hands
- Snuggling with your kids or partner
- Floating in a pool
- Holding hands
- Enjoying a hot or cold drink
- Getting hair washed at the hairdresser
- Use a heat bag or hot water bottle
- Use a cold pack
- Play with playdough
- Listening to music
- Watch the sun rise / set
- Watch the leaves on trees move in the wind
- Spend time in nature
- Listen to new types of music
- Read a book
- Swim in the ocean or a pool
- Scuba Dive
- Go canoeing
- Sit in a chair and notice the body parts that
- make contact with it
- Have a massage
- Paint your nails
- Mindful eating
- Rock in a rocking chair
- Watch a candle or fire burning
- Having sex
- Stretching
- Lifting weights
- Bike riding
- Going to the gym
- Journaling

REGULATING RESOURCES

Some of these skills will calm your system down and some will increase energy in your body.

The idea is to have a look through the list and work out which skills do what for you and then create your own guide over the page that supports your own nervous system to come back towards your *Window of Regulation*.



CREATE YOUR OWN

Window of Tolerance

HYPER-AROUSAL

Anxious
Angry
Hypervigilant
Racing thoughts

(Sympathetic)
Fight or Flight

What can I do when I am here:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.

WINDOW OF REGULATION

Optimal Zone

Present
Might feel calm
Able to focus & make decisions
Able to connect with others
Can process stress & challenges without
getting overwhelmed

What can I do to stay here:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.

HYPO-AROUSAL

Zoned out
Disconnected
Numb
Shutdown

Immobilised

What can I do when I am here:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.

Hey! I'm Alex



I am so glad you are here and I hope this exercise helps you understand yourself a little bit more. Remember that with healing and growth, it takes time and it is super important that you have a roadmap to support you along the way.

The last thing I want to share with you today are my ABC's

Awareness – start to notice when your past is intruding into the present. And become aware of the moments of safety in your day.

Attribution – Don't minimise or invalidate your experience, as being not that bad. If it was traumatic to you, name it as that.

Be patient – Regulating your nervous system and emotions can take longer if the system is still traumatised.

Be kind – learn how to treat yourself as if you were your own best friend.

Consistency – because we need to widen our window of tolerance and we have to show not tell our nervous system this.

Connection – often trauma happened to us in relationships, and while not all relationships are good for you, it is important to find safe and supportive people.

Sometimes this starts with a trauma-trained therapist.

I am a trauma-trained psychotherapist, who is also a naturopath & accredited EMDR practitioner with over 30 years experience in the field of healing (ha ha and my surname is Field!)

If you are interested in going deeper with me then please contact me (contact information on the next page).

Connect with me!



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