

ADHD IN WOMEN



PROVEN RELIEF



How Do I Get Through Today?

*For the woman
falling apart in
menopause — every
coping tool years
of therapy and
psychiatry taught me.*

CALM • RELIEF • GET THROUGH IT



ADHD IN WOMEN

Proven strategies and coping mechanisms for relief

A PROVEN RELIEF KIT

How Do I Get Through Today?

Written by Laura Parker

www.adhdinwomen.uk

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*These are gentle coping tools, shared for education and support only.
They are not medical advice, therapy, or a replacement for professional care.
If you ever feel you can't keep yourself safe, please reach out — in the UK the
Samaritans are there day or night, free, on 116 123.*

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*Right now, you don't
need to understand it.
You just need it to stop.*

READ THIS FIRST

Start here

This isn't about why. This is about right now.

If you're a woman who used to cope — who held it all together for years — and then somewhere in perimenopause it all became too much, this is for you. If you've opened it with your chest tight and everything feeling like too much, you're in exactly the right place. Put the rest of your life down for a minute; we're only dealing with the next hour.

So don't read this cover to cover. It's not that kind of book. It's a toolbox for bad days. When it's all too much, open it, find the bit that matches how you feel *right now*, do that one thing, and close it again. Each tool takes a few minutes. None of them need willpower you haven't got.

You don't have to fix your whole life today.

You just have to get through the next hour.

That's enough. That is the whole job.

A NOTE FROM ME

Hi, I'm Laura

I know the days this is for. The ones where you forget why you walked into the room, lose the word mid-sentence, take the dish out of the oven with the glove on — then pick it straight back up with your bare hand. For me it got worst in menopause: the coping I'd always somehow managed just fell apart, almost overnight. And I was so angry at myself — why has my brain just *stopped working* ?

I didn't work these out on my own. I learned most of them the long, slow, expensive way — through years of psychiatrists and therapists, one appointment at a time — and I've added a few of my own along the way, the small things that actually brought the volume down on the days nothing else would.

That's what this is. Not a lecture on ADHD. It's the coping tools it took me years — and a fair bit of money — to gather, put in one place, so you don't have to wait as long as I did to find them. The exact things I reach for on a day that's just too much.

Keep this somewhere you can find it fast. You won't be at your calmest when you need it. — Laura

PART ONE

Right Now

When it's all too much, this minute.

DO THIS FIRST

The three-minute reset

When everything is too loud at once, don't try to think your way out — your thinking brain has gone offline. Do this with your body first. It takes three minutes and it works whether or not you believe it will.

1. Breathe out longer than you breathe in

Breathe in gently through your nose for a count of four. Hold for four. Now breathe out, slowly, for a count of *six or seven*. Again. Four more times. The long breath out is the bit that matters — it's the one signal your body can't ignore, the switch that tells your nervous system the danger has passed. You're not imagining the calm. You're causing it.

2. Name it, out loud

Say it plainly: *"I'm overwhelmed. This is my ADHD brain flooding. It's horrible, and it will pass."* Naming a feeling out loud genuinely shrinks it — it moves the panic out of the part of your brain that can only feel, and into the part that can think. You're not making it worse by saying it. You're taking its power back.

The overwhelm is real, but it is not permanent.

It is a wave. Waves rise, and waves fall.

You only have to stay standing while it passes.

WHEN YOUR HEAD IS SPINNING

5-4-3-2-1: come back to the room

If your thoughts are racing and you can't catch them, you need to get *out* of your head and back into the room. This is the fastest way I know. Go slowly, and actually look for each thing.

5. things you can **see** . Really look at them — the mug, the window, your own hands.
4. things you can **hear** . The far-off traffic. The hum of the fridge.
3. things you can **touch** . Your feet in your socks. The chair holding you up.
2. things you can **smell** . Or two slow breaths, if you can't find a smell.
1. long, slow breath out — and notice you're still here.

It feels almost too simple to work. It works *because* it's simple. Racing thoughts live in the future; your senses only live in now. This drags you back to now, where the danger isn't.

GET IT OUT OF YOUR HEAD

The brain-dump

A spinning head can't rest, because it's trying to hold twenty things at once and terrified of dropping one. So put them down. Grab any scrap of paper and empty everything out of your head onto it — every worry, task, and half-thought. Don't sort it. Don't solve it. Just pour it out.

It'll feel busy for a moment, then lighter — because a worry in your head feels infinite, and a worry on paper is just a line you can look at. Your brain can finally stop gripping. That's the relief. You can deal with the list later, or never. Emptying it was the point.

If this one helps, there's a daily version of it — my Daily Containment System — inside the full Unmasked System at adhdinwomen.uk/unmasked.

PART TWO

When You Can't Start

For the days the smallest task is a wall.

THE TASK IS TOO BIG

Shrink it until it's almost silly

When you physically cannot start something, it's not laziness — the task has grown too big for your brain to pick up, so it slams on the brakes. The fix isn't more effort. It's making the task smaller. Then smaller again. Then smaller than feels reasonable.

Not “tidy the kitchen.” That's a wall. **“Put one cup in the sink.”** That's a step. Not “do my emails.” — “open my laptop.” That's it. That's the whole task. Shrink it until the first step feels almost too small to bother with, because *that* is the size your brain can actually pick up.

The one tiny next thing I can do is: _____

You don't need motivation to start.

You need a step small enough to take —

*because with an ADHD brain, doing comes first, and
the wanting-to follows.*

TWO TOOLS THAT BEAT THE FREEZE

Ten minutes, and not alone**Set a timer for ten minutes**

Tell yourself you only have to do the thing for ten minutes, then you're allowed to stop — and mean it. The freeze comes from the *size* of the task; a ten-minute box shrinks it small enough to begin. You can genuinely stop at ten. You often won't. But being *allowed* to is what unsticks you.

Borrow a body double

Do it alongside someone — on a video call, on the phone, or just in the same room. It sounds odd, but “body doubling” is one of the most reliable ADHD tools there is. Not being alone with the task lets your brain actually engage with it. They don't have to help. A friend scrolling their phone beside you is enough.

*You were never going to win this by gritting your teeth alone.
You win it in ten-minute boxes —
and by not doing it on your own.*

PERFECT IS THE FREEZE

Lower the bar on purpose

Here's a quiet trap: sometimes you can't start because, deep down, you're afraid to do it *badly* . So you do nothing — which is, of course, doing it as badly as possible. Perfectionism and paralysis are the same coin.

So lower the bar, out loud and on purpose. Give yourself full permission to do the rushed, messy, B-minus version. A wonky email that's sent beats a perfect one that's still in your drafts. A tea-for-dinner night beats a proper meal that never happens. **Done is kinder to you than perfect. Almost always.**

You are allowed to do it imperfectly.

A thing done badly is finished.

A thing done perfectly in your head is still undone.

PART THREE

When The Feelings Are Too Big

For the rage, the tears, and the sting that floors you.

THE VOLUME IS TURNED UP

Ride the wave

With an ADHD brain, feelings don't arrive politely — they flood. A small comment lands like a slap. A flash of rage rises from your stomach before you can catch it. You cry over something tiny. The feeling is *real* ; it's just been turned up far louder than the moment deserves. Knowing that doesn't stop it — but it does give you ten minutes of grace.

Wait ten minutes before you act

A big feeling peaks fast and then falls — usually within about ten minutes, if you don't feed it. So before you fire off the text, quit the job, or say the thing: wait ten minutes. Set a timer. Don't act at the top of the wave. Decide at the bottom of it, where the real you is.

Do the opposite of the urge

The urge wants to make it worse. Want to hide and cancel everyone? Send one small, warm message instead. Want to lash out? Step out of the room and get a glass of water. Acting *against* the pull, gently, is often the fastest way to let the wave fall.

You are not too much.

*Your dial is just set louder than most —
and a loud feeling is still only a feeling.*

THE VOICE IN YOUR HEAD

Talk to yourself like someone you love

On a hard day, the cruellest voice in the room is usually your own. *You're useless. You're failing. What is wrong with you.* You would never, ever speak to a friend that way. So don't rehearse it at yourself — it pours petrol on the fire every single time.

When you catch it, answer it. Out loud if you can. Here are the words — borrow them until they feel like yours:

“This is genuinely hard, and I'm doing it with a brain that makes it harder. I'm allowed to struggle with this. I'm allowed to find it a lot. It will pass, and I don't have to be cruel to myself while it does.”

It feels awkward the first few times. Do it anyway. Kindness isn't a reward you earn by coping well — it's the thing that helps you cope at all.

PART FOUR

Protect Your Capacity

The quiet basics that make the bad days rarer.

PLAN BY ENERGY, NOT HOURS

Capacity, not time

Most planning assumes every hour holds the same amount of you. With an ADHD brain — and especially around perimenopause, when the hormones that used to prop you up start to wobble — that's just not true. Some days you have a full tank. Some days you're running on fumes, and no amount of “trying harder” refills it.

So plan by *capacity*, not the clock. On a fumes day, cut the list to three things. Then cut it to one. Protecting your energy on a low day isn't giving up — it's the thing that stops the low day becoming a lost week. **Rest planned in advance is cheaper than the burnout it prevents.**

And take decisions off your own plate wherever you can — same breakfast, laid-out clothes, a repeating shopping list. Every decision you don't have to make is energy saved for the ones you can't avoid. Decisions are where an ADHD brain leaks fuel fastest.

Resting before you're empty is not lazy.

It's the most sensible thing a tired brain can do.

You don't have to earn the right to stop.

THE UNGLAMOROUS BASICS

The boring things that hold you up

These aren't self-care in the candles-and-bubble-bath sense. They're the scaffolding your brain and body actually run on — and they're the first things to go on a hard day, exactly when you need them most. Not because you're careless. Because ADHD forgets the body. So make them a checklist, not a memory:

- ☐ **Drink a glass of water.** A tired, foggy brain is very often a thirsty one.
- ☐ **Eat something — anything.** Low fuel makes every feeling louder and every task harder.
- ☐ **Move for ten minutes.** A short walk shifts more overwhelm than an hour of trying to think your way calm.
- ☐ **Go to bed at a set time — even with things unfinished.** Sleep is where your brain files the day and resets the alarm. It is not the reward for finishing; it's the thing that lets tomorrow be better.

On the worst days, this whole page *is* the to-do list. Water, food, a little movement, bed. If that's all you manage, you managed the things that matter most. That counts. That fully counts.

KEEP THIS ON YOUR PHONE

Your emergency card

When it truly hits, you won't be able to remember any of this — that's what overwhelm does. So here's the whole kit shrunk to three moves. Screenshot this page. Keep it where you'll find it fast, on the day you can't think straight.

1. **Breathe out, long and slow.** Four in, six or seven out. Five times.
2. **Name it out loud.** “This is overwhelm. It will pass.”
3. **Do one tiny thing.** One cup in the sink. One sip of water. One step.

Right now, I only have to do three things: breathe, name it, and take one tiny step. That's all. That's enough. I can do three things.

Even better: print this page and cut the three steps into little emergency reset cards — one for your purse, one for the car, one on the fridge. Somewhere they'll find you before you go looking.

*You have got through every single hard day so far.
Your record of surviving them is one hundred per cent.
You will get through this one too.*

ONE LAST THING

You don't have to do this alone

There is a private space for women who are discovering ADHD later in life — after years of being told it was anxiety, stress, or 'just your hormones'. No judgement, no performing, no masking. Just women who finally get it.

THE FREE COMMUNITY

*You're not lazy. You're not broken.
You're not alone.*

JOIN OUR PRIVATE GROUP

facebook.com/groups/adhdinwomen.uk

BEFORE YOU GO

You got through it

If you opened this in the middle of a hard hour and your breathing slowed even a little — then it did the only job it was ever meant to do.

You don't have to hold all of this. Keep one tool. The one that helped today. That's plenty. On the next hard day, it'll be here, and so will the others.

*You didn't need to be fixed.
You needed to get through today —
and look: you did.*

Your gentle next steps

Take the free ADHD test. Two minutes, private — at adhdinwomen.uk/quiz.

Join the ADHD in Women community. For women who know exactly what the too-much days feel like — [@adhdinwomen.uk](https://twitter.com/adhdinwomen).

When you're ready to understand the why behind the hard days, the full Unmasked System is at adhdinwomen.uk/unmasked

SCAN TO CONTINUE



QUIZ



WEBSITE



FACEBOOK



INSTAGRAM



UNMASKED



*The bad days will still come — that's not failure, that's a brain and a body doing something hard. But now you have a way through them.
Not a cure. A hand to hold on the days it's all too much.*

Laura**ADHD IN WOMEN · hello@adhdinwomen.uk**

*You don't have to earn rest.
You're allowed to stop, right where you are.*