



10-Minute Rhythm Resets

Short, practical resets to restore regulation, orientation, and momentum

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Important note

This resource is intended to support understanding and good practice in neuro-inclusive workplace design. It provides general guidance and does not constitute legal, medical, or clinical advice. Organisations should apply the principles in line with their own policies, regulatory obligations, and professional judgement.

Neurodivergent nervous systems don't regulate best through long pauses or forced calm.

They regulate through **rhythm**:

- predictable sequences
- gentle movement between states
- clear beginnings and endings
- embodied transitions

A rhythm reset is not a break from work...
it is a **re-entry point into capacity**.

Each reset below takes **10 minutes or less** and can be used:

- at work
- at home
- during shutdown build-up
- after emotional activation
- between tasks
- when you feel "stuck but not tired"

How to use rhythm resets

- You do **not** need to feel calm before starting
- You do **not** need silence, insight, or motivation
- You can stop early if your system settles

The goal is not relaxation.
The goal is **state shift**.

Reset 1... Orient → Move → Focus

(Best for fog, freeze, task paralysis)

Minute 0–2: Orient

- Name 3 things you can see
- Name 2 sounds you can hear
- Name 1 physical sensation (neutral is fine)

No meaning. No reflection. Just noticing.

Minute 2–6: Gentle movement

- Walk
- Stretch
- Rock
- Pace
- Stand and sit a few times

Let movement be repetitive, not intentional.

Minute 6–10: Narrow focus

- Choose *one* small, concrete action
- Set a 3–4 minute timer
- Begin without committing to finishing

This reset restores **direction**, not productivity.

Reset 2... Sensory Drain → Sensory Feed

(Best for overwhelm, irritability, emotional flooding)

Minute 0–4: Drain

Reduce input:

- lower lights
- silence notifications
- step away from screens
- close eyes if safe

You are not “doing nothing”... you are reducing load.

Minute 4–8: Feed

Add *one* regulating input:

- weighted pressure
- warm drink
- textured object
- steady sound
- slow rocking

Minute 8–10: Re-orient

Ask:

“What’s the *next smallest* thing?”

Not the right thing. The smallest.

Reset 3... External Structure Reset

(Best for chaos, scattered attention, too many thoughts)

Minute 0–3: Externalise

- Write everything pulling at your attention
- No organising
- No prioritising

Get it *out*.

Minute 3–6: Select

- Circle **one** item only
- Cross out nothing else

Minute 6–10: Contain

- Define a 5-minute container for that one task
- Stop when the time ends

This reset reduces **cognitive noise**, not workload.

Reset 4... Body-First Regulation

(Best for emotional escalation or shutdown onset)

Minute 0–5: Body cue

Choose one:

- slow wall push
- deep pressure (self-hug, weighted item)
- feet firmly into floor
- paced breathing (counting optional)

No emotional processing.

Minute 5–8: Stillness

- Sit or lie down
- Let the body settle *without* directing it

Minute 8–10: Signal safety

Say (internally or out loud):

“Nothing else is required right now.”

This reset prevents **escalation**, not emotion.

Reset 5... Rhythm Restart

(Best after interruption, meetings, or transitions)

Minute 0–2: Mark the end

- Close tabs
- Physically stand up
- Say “That’s done” (even if it isn’t)

Minute 2–6: Transitional movement

- Walk
- Stretch
- Shake arms/legs
- Change rooms

Minute 6–10: Clear re-entry

- State one sentence:

“Now I’m doing ___ for ___ minutes.”

This reset restores **continuity**, not energy.

Reset 6... Shutdown-Safe Reset

(When speech, thinking, or interaction feels inaccessible)

Minute 0–5

- Lie down or sit supported
- Reduce all input
- No talking
- No decisions

Minute 5–8

- One repetitive sensory input (sound, pressure, motion)

Minute 8–10

- Optional check-in:

“Am I ready to re-enter... or do I need more space?”

Both answers are valid.

Reset 7... Urgency Detox

(Best after pressure, deadlines, or adrenaline)

Minute 0–3

- Name what *does not* need action right now

Minute 3–6

- Slow physical movement
- Longer exhales if comfortable

Minute 6–10

- Re-define urgency:

“What happens if this waits 10 minutes?”

Often: nothing.

Important reminders

- Rhythm resets work **before burnout**, not after collapse
- Doing them early shortens recovery later
- You don't need permission to regulate
- You are allowed to interrupt productivity to preserve capacity

These are not indulgences.

They are **maintenance**.

A final note

Neurodivergent regulation is not about pushing through or switching off.

It's about **keeping rhythm intact**:

- work → rest → re-entry
- effort → pause → continuation

Ten minutes is often enough to prevent hours of dysregulation.

You don't need to be fixed.
You need to be **re-synced**.

