

# Overcoming ADHD overwhelm

In 4 simple steps

01

## IDENTIFY & NAME

"I am feeling overwhelmed"

My chest feels tight, I'm breathing fast, my neck feels stiff...



02

## TIME OUT

Step away & call time out.

Move out of fight or flight by using a breathing technique.

*(Breathe in for 3 & out for 5)*

03

## DUMP IT

Dump all the thoughts buzzing around in your brain out onto paper.

*I've got too much to do...  
I don't have enough time...  
I don't know where to start...*



04

## DO (THE 3 D'S)

Delegate

Disregard (for now)

Decide what to DO next

# 1

## Identify & Name

Think back to the last few times you got overwhelmed - what did it feel like? What were the sensations in your body?

Did you breathe faster, was your chest tight, did your heart race or your shoulders feel heavy & stiff?

!! Those are your red flags ⚠️

**The more you are aware of them, the sooner you can notice when overwhelm is beginning.**

**The sooner you deal with it, the less consuming it will be.**

In order to tame it, first we must name it.

Science shows that **when a feeling is named a shift happens in the brain.** We begin to move from fight or flight into the logical/thinking region of our brain.

This helps to decrease the intensity of the feeling & decreases impulsivity #WIN WIN!

### TIP:

- Rather than saying “*I am overwhelmed*” - we create separation between ourselves & the feeling by stating “I am feeling ...”  
This also reminds our brains that feelings are temporary.

# 2

## Take a “time out”

In the same way a sports teams call a time out to regroup & make sure they are working effectively.

We want to step away & give ourselves a few minutes to do the same.

**This gives us an opportunity to move out of fight or flight & regain control of our thinking brain** (rather than letting our emotions run the show).

We can do this by using a breathing technique.

**Option one:** Breathe in for 3 & out for 5.

A 2018 study from the Department of Stress & health found that our brain has paired the luxury of a long exhale with safety.

**Option two:** The physiological sigh: A double inhale, followed by a long exhale. Research shows this is hugely effective in helping to reduce stress & anxiety quickly ([check out this 5 min video about it](#)).

### TIP:

- Don't underestimate the power of taking a “time out” or let your brain convince you that you don't have time. This step alone will help you to feel better & increase productivity.

# 3 Dump it

Like a dump truck carrying a huge load of dirt, moving really slowly because it's so heavy - we are going to dump everything in our brains out so we can move more easily & freely.

**Grab a piece of paper & dump all of the thoughts buzzing around in your head out.**

All the thoughts about what you need to do, how much time you have, the pressure you feel, how your partner never helps, how you don't know where to start - ALL OF IT.

**Here are prompts to help you start writing, based on the 5 types of overwhelm we commonly experience:**

## #1 To-do list overwhelm

What are all the things I need to do?

What are my thoughts about getting it all done?

## #2 Sensory overwhelm

What are all the things causing me to feel overwhelmed?

What are my thoughts about these things?

## #3 Too many steps overwhelm

What are my thoughts about this process or task that I need to do?

What are all the steps that might be involved in doing it?

## #4 Clutter overwhelm

What are my thoughts about this clutter or these areas?

What are all the things I need to do/change/fix in order to feel better?

# 3

## Dump it (continued)

### #5 Thoughts overwhelm

What's on my mind? What am I struggling with?

Why am I feeling overwhelmed?

**When you think you are done writing - Ask yourself:**

What else is on my mind right now?

**Writing it down does two powerful things:**

1. Slows us down. This alone can bring about a sense of relief.
2. Helps us to see all the pieces in one place. Which can help to shift our perspective.

### **TIPS:**

- Try not to judge your thoughts or writing... Remember you don't need to share this with anyone & can throw it away once you're done.
- Watch your self-talk - beating yourself up only makes it worse. Please be kind to yourself & remember that you deserve to be treated with love & respect (*from yourself!*)

# 4

## Do (the 3 D's)

**Delegate**

**Disregard (at least for now)**

**Do next**

What here can I delegate or ask for help with?

What on this list can I disregard for now?

And what will I do next?

**Here are some other helpful questions for this step:**

- What's the most simple way I can get this done?
- What can I eliminate? Or say 'no' to?
- What can I move out of sight, to then be out of my mind?
- What here is actually urgent Vs what is just important?

Be sure to **listen to Podcast episode #52** as I walk you through an example of this step & how my client overcame her overwhelm with this process.

### **TIP:**

- Asking for help can have a HUGE impact in this step.

*This could look like... asking for a deadline at work or an extension on a project.*

*Asking for clarification on what "done" looks like.*

*Or asking a friend to help you declutter over a glass of wine.*

# Final thoughts...

**Working WITH my ADHD brain has been a transformative journey – one that I wish I had embarked on much earlier.**

Looking back, I realise that the constant overwhelm I experienced took a toll on my confidence, how I showed up in the world & in my relationships.

This all changed with Coaching.

**Nothing has made such dramatic impact to my life & my ADHD as coaching has.**

Not the meds, the exercise or the healthy diet .

Yes all of that helped...

**BUT** the most dramatic & *\*permanent\** changes in my life have all come from coaching.

- ✓ Overcoming my constant state of overwhelm
- ✓ Increasing my self esteem & creating genuine self-confidence
- ✓ Learning to manage & regulate my emotions which has hugely improved my relationships
- ✓ Turning my procrastination into action
- ✓ Actually achieving goals I set (not just setting them over & over)

I invite you to experience the impact of coaching for yourself.

[Book an ADHD Support Session with me.](#)

Huge love,  
Xena xx

