

# WHEN UNI FEELS LIKE TOO MUCH

Use this when you're overwhelmed, before class, after a stressful uni email, or before an assessment. You don't need to do all five. Pick one and try it for 60 to 120 seconds.

## IMPORTANT:

These are general wellbeing tools, not therapy. If you feel unsafe, at risk of harm, or unable to cope right now, get urgent support.

Australia (24/7): Lifeline 13 11 14.

Suicide Call Back Service 1300 659 467.

Emergency 000.

You can also contact your university support services.

## HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

First, name it. Say: "I'm overwhelmed. My body is stressed. I can reset." Next, choose one exercise. If you need to calm down, try box breathing or the quiet darkness reset. If you need to feel present, try barefoot grounding. If you need to shift strong emotions like anger, try sigh exhales or a short walk. After the exercise, do one tiny next step only, such as opening your laptop, writing one sentence, packing your bag, or setting a 10-minute timer.

## QUICK REMINDER

One minute helps. Overwhelmed is a body state, not a personal failure. The goal isn't to feel amazing. It's to feel steady enough to take one next step.

You can get through this.





### **BAREFOOT ON GRASS (GROUNDING)**

Stand on grass, soil, or sand if it's safe. Feel both feet on the ground. Look around and name five things you can see, four things you can feel, and three things you can hear. Take one slow breath and say, "I'm here. I'm safe enough right now." If you can't access grass, stand on cool tiles or a bathmat, or press your feet firmly into the ground inside your shoes.

### **BOX BREATHING (CALMING)**

Breathe in a simple square pattern. Inhale for four, hold for four, exhale for four, then hold for four. Repeat four rounds. If four feels too hard, do three or two.

### **THREE SIGH EXHALES (SHIFTING)**

Take a gentle inhale through your nose. Exhale longer through your mouth with an audible sigh, like "haaa...". Repeat three times. Let your shoulders drop and unclench your jaw.

### **QUIET DARKNESS RESET (CALMING)**

Go somewhere safe and dim, like a bedroom, a quiet corner, a parked car, or a library pod. Turn the lights off or cover your eyes with a hoodie. No screens and no audio. Sit or lie down and let your eyes rest. If thoughts come, let them pass. Do ten minutes if you can, or three minutes if that's all you've got.

### **A SHORT WALK (SHIFTING)**

Walk at an easy pace, inside or outside. Keep it simple: a hallway, around the block, or across campus. While you walk, count ten steps and start again, or notice three colours, or feel your feet moving heel to toe. If you can't walk, you can do push ups, star jumps or any other exercise or movement that gets your heart rate up.