



A FREE SELF-WORK GUIDE FROM THE SECURE BOND

Calm Is a Skill

A CBT guide to managing stress and anxiety. Because when you can manage those, you can manage everything.

Esti Kedem · CBT-certified relationship & life coach · thesecurebond.com

BEFORE YOU BEGIN

The master skill underneath everything

Here is what I tell every client, and I mean every word of it: when you learn to manage stress and anxiety, you can manage everything.

Your marriage. Your parenting. Your work. Your health. Your self-talk. All of them run through the same place: your nervous system. When it is flooded, the kindest person becomes sharp, the smartest person cannot think, and the most loving partner cannot listen. When it is regulated, the same life, the same kids, the same inbox, suddenly become manageable.

So this is not one more thing on your list. It is the skill underneath the whole list.

And please hear this: anxiety is not weakness and it is not who you are. It is an alarm system doing its job too loudly, protecting you from dangers that mostly live in your thoughts. Alarms can be retuned. That is exactly what CBT does.

"When you manage stress and anxiety, you can manage everything."

Esti Kedem

How anxiety actually works: the loop

Anxiety runs in a loop with four stations, and it can be interrupted at any of them:

- **A thought fires:** "What if something goes wrong?" "I cannot handle this."
- **The body reacts:** tight chest, fast heart, shallow breath, clenched jaw.
- **The feeling swells:** dread, overwhelm, irritation.
- **Behavior follows:** snapping, avoiding, scrolling, controlling, shutting down.

Then the behavior feeds the thought, and the loop spins faster. The tools below give you a doorway into each station.

Tool 1 · Calm the body first

You cannot think your way out of a flooded nervous system. The body has to come down first, and the fastest lever is the exhale.

The long exhale

Breathe in through your nose for a count of 4. Breathe out slowly, through soft lips, for a count of 6. The long exhale tells your nervous system: the danger is over. Six rounds, about one minute, and your body chemistry actually changes.

If your mind is racing: ground through your senses. Name 5 things you see, 4 you can touch, 3 you hear, 2 you smell, 1 you taste. You cannot spiral and notice at the same time.

Tool 2 · Catch the anxious thought

Anxiety speaks in predictable patterns. Learning to recognize yours is half the cure:

Catastrophizing: "What if it all falls apart?"

The answer: "What is actually most likely? And if the hard thing happens, what would I do? I have handled hard things before."

Mind reading: "They think I am failing."

The answer: "I cannot read minds. What do I actually know? What would I need to ask?"

All-or-nothing: "If it is not perfect, I have failed."

The answer: "Done and imperfect beats perfect and impossible. What is good enough for today?"

Tool 3 · The worry sorter

Stress grows when everything feels equally urgent and equally yours to carry. Sort it, on paper, right now:

IN MY HANDS

What I can actually influence this week:

NOT IN MY HANDS

What I have been carrying that was never mine to control:

Energy spent on the right column is rent paid on a house you do not live in. Every time a right-column worry knocks, name it: "Not in my hands", and return to the left.

Tool 4 · Audit your load

Three things in my week that reliably drain me:

Three things that genuinely restore me (not numb me, restore me):

One boundary I will set this week to protect my calm:

Your daily calm practice

Five minutes that change the whole day

1. **Morning:** one intentional thought before the phone. "Today I choose what gets my energy."
2. **Midday:** six long exhales, shoulders down, jaw soft.
3. **Evening:** catch one anxious thought from the day and write its truer answer.

Small, repeated, unimpressive, and it compounds. The thoughts you repeat become the beliefs you live by, and calm is built exactly the same way anxiety was: one repetition at a time.

And notice what happens around you as you practice. When you are calmer, your conversations soften. Your patience stretches. Your partner and your children get the regulated version of you. Manage the storm inside, and every room you walk into changes.

Yours, Esti



Want to retune the alarm together?

Anxiety and stress are the most rewarding things I help people transform, because everything else improves with them.

Come talk to me.

Book your free 15-minute call at thesesecurebond.com

Or go deeper: book your Introduction Session

calendly.com/estiluv2coach-7nim/30min · 75 minutes · on Zoom

WhatsApp: wa.me/17285006027 · Instagram: [@the_secure_bond_](https://www.instagram.com/the_secure_bond_)