

# How to stop the *RSD spiral*

Save this and use it the next time you feel your rejection sensitivity activate

When you feel the impulse to act on the story you're telling yourself, use these four tools to slow your roll.

**1**

## RIGHT NOW

### Name it in the moment.

Out loud or internally, whatever works. The single most powerful thing you can do when RSD is firing is to name it. Naming it creates a small gap between you and the wave.

*"This is just RSD. The story I'm telling myself is \_\_\_\_\_. I don't have to do anything right now."*

**2**

## NEXT 20 MINUTES

### Build a pause window.

Your nervous system will want you to send the text, fight back, shut down, or run. Don't. Just give the wave time to crest. 20 to 30 minutes is the sweet spot. Move during the pause: walk, splash cold water on your face, dance, lift, do yoga. RSD lives in the body. Move your way through it.

**3**

## WHEN YOU'RE REGULATED

### Reality check with your partner.

Set this agreement outside a spiral, so the script is ready when you need it. You're not accusing. You're asking for data your hijacked brain can't access. A short check-in can dissolve hours of spiralling in seconds.

*"The story I'm telling myself is \_\_\_\_\_. Is that true? I'm not trying to accuse you. My brain is just doing this thing, and I need a reality check."*

**4**

## LONG-TERM

### Reduce ambiguity by default.

Ambiguity activates RSD. Remove the ambiguity to reduce the impact of RSD. Pre-explain tone ("heads up, rough day, not about you"). Use a "more coming" shorthand in texts ("btw not ignoring you, in meetings till 3"). Name what conflict is and isn't about ("I'm frustrated about the dishes. I'm not pulling away from you"). Erase the gaps that your brain wants to fill in with evidence of the worst-case scenario.

*Just because it feels real, doesn't mean it is real.*