

A real-time response for hard moments

Acknowledge · Validate · *Respond.*

An ADHD-informed way to meet yourself in the moment
— neurobiological, not motivational; not moral.



The C³ Loop™

Centre → Clarify → Choose → Repeat · Human first. Then performance.

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A variable regulation *of attention*.

ADHD is not a deficit of attention — it is a variable regulation of attention, emotion and executive function that creates a distinctive pattern under load.

Intense activation can be followed by rapid depletion, with reduced access to working memory under pressure. Recognising the indicators — and naming them precisely as they happen — is the first move from chaos toward clarity.

TUNNEL INDICATOR	WHAT IT CAN LOOK LIKE
Emotional dysregulation	Faster activation, slower recovery.
Working-memory dropout	Information lost under cognitive load.
Task-initiation difficulty	The activation system is under strain — this is not a lack of motivation.
Time blindness	Difficulty tracking and sequencing under pressure.

The Tunnel™

The same person who cannot start a routine task can focus deeply for hours on a high-interest one. This is not inconsistency of effort — it reflects an interest-, novelty- and urgency-driven regulatory system, rather than one driven by importance.

The three-phase *response*.

An ADHD-informed framework for meeting yourself in the moment — neurobiological, not motivational; not moral.

A

ACKNOWLEDGE — NAME THE EXPERIENCE, NOT THE DIAGNOSIS

Begin with the specific experience: the wall, the noise, the paralysis. Not “I am failing,” but “I am in a moment where my regulation system is under strain.” This is neurobiological, not a character verdict.

V

VALIDATE — YOUR BRAIN IS WORKING HARD, IN A DIFFERENT WAY

ADHD brains are not broken — they are differently wired. Executive-function challenges are real and documented, and not a reflection of intelligence, effort or character. Validation is the shift from self-criticism to neurobiological understanding.

R

RESPOND — STRUCTURE FROM THE OUTSIDE, UNTIL IT COMES FROM THE INSIDE

The C³ Loop uses external scaffolding — tools, cues and environmental design that compensate for internal regulation gaps. The loop stays the same; the way you run it is adapted to the neurobiological reality.

Language prompts

“I have hit a wall — my activation system is not engaged right now.”

“My brain processes this differently — that is not a failure.”

“I am not lazy. I am navigating a genuinely more demanding regulatory landscape.”

03 · THE C³ LOOP, STEP BY STEP

The C³ Loop — *step by step.*

For ADHD, the loop runs on external scaffolding: tools, cues and environmental design that compensate for internal regulation gaps.

01

CENTRE

Body-based reset — movement, cold water, grounding. Physiological regulation before cognitive engagement.

02

CLARIFY

External structure only — a written list, a visible timer, one item at a time.
No internal working memory required.

03

CHOOSE

The smallest possible starting action. Not the project — the first five minutes. Activation through momentum.

04

REPEAT

Built-in loop reminders — timer alerts, check-ins, body doubling. Regulation is a repeated practice, not a one-time event.

S.H.I.F.T.™ Protocol — Stop · Hold · Focus · Take action

The real-time micro-intervention that initiates the C³ Loop under acute pressure.
Deployable in seconds, learnable in minutes. *Transformative over time.*

Confirm: the S.H.I.F.T.™ letters/step words from your brand kit (shown as “Stop · Hold · Focus · Take action”).

04 · USING THIS TOOLKIT

Keep it *close*.

This toolkit is designed to be used in the moment — not memorised. Keep it somewhere you can reach when a hard moment arrives: Acknowledge what’s happening, Validate that it’s real, then Respond with one small, external step.

Want support putting this into practice?

We can help you build it into daily life.

Email hello@executiveframe.co.nz · visit executiveframe.co.nz/neurodiversity

