

The Anxious Attachment Field Guide

For the eight to twenty minutes an urge takes to crest and fall. Print it, fold it, keep it where your phone lives.

1. It is a nervous system, not a flaw

Anxious attachment is a body that learned silence means danger. You are not needy; you are under-resourced in this exact moment.

2. The urge has a shape

It rises, peaks, and falls. Almost always inside twenty minutes. Your only job is to not act at the peak.

3. Protest behaviour is a request in disguise

Double texting, checking, testing, withdrawing — all of it is asking 'am I still safe with you?' Say that instead, later, plainly.

4. Evidence beats reassurance

Reassurance wears off in hours. Written evidence you kept a pause lasts.

CUT HERE AND KEEP IT CLOSE

The Ten-Minute Pause Ladder

RUNG 1 Phone down, screen away

Put it out of arm's reach. Not off — away. Two minutes.

RUNG 2 Four rounds of box breath

In four, hold four, out four, hold four. Your exhale is the brake.

RUNG 3 Name it out loud

'I'm having the fear that I'm being left.' Naming it moves it out of the driver's seat.

RUNG 4 Write it here, not there

Draft the whole text on paper. Say everything. Send nothing.

RUNG 5 Move for three minutes

Walk, cold water, stretch. Discharge the charge before you decide.

RUNG 6 Read it back at ten minutes

Keep one line if it's true and kind. Bin the rest.

Say-it-calmly script

When _____ happened, I noticed I got scared that _____.

I'm not asking you to fix it. I'd love it if _____.

Here's what I'll do next time instead: _____.

Weekly Pause Tracker

Patterns beat willpower. Log the hour, the trigger, whether you held the pause, and what you needed.

DAY	TIME	TRIGGER	HELD?	WHAT I NEEDED
Mon				
Tue				
Wed				
Thu				
Fri				
Sat				
Sun				

End of week

The hour that keeps repeating:

What worked at least once:

One thing to try next week:

Want the guided version? The Pause Protocol app times the ladder for you, tracks your hold rate and keeps your journal in one place. pauseprotocol.online