



5 Self-Havening *Practices*

For Anxious Moments

Gentle tools to calm your nervous system · Use anywhere, anytime

Self-Havening is a gentle, science-backed technique you can use anywhere, anytime — when anxiety rises, when a memory ambushes you, when your nervous system needs to come home.

The Havening Touch works by generating delta waves in the brain — the same waves produced during deep sleep. This gentle, repetitive stroking of the arms, face and hands helps your brain release the emotional charge stored in the body.

"We can't always change what happened — but we can change how it lives in our body."

The Three Touch Points

1. The Arms

Using both palms, stroke slowly and gently from your shoulders down to your elbows. A long, smooth, continuous stroke — like you are soothing a child.

2. The Face

Using your fingertips, stroke gently from the centre of your forehead out to your temples. Then from under your eyes across your cheekbones.

3. The Hands

Turn your palms upward. Using the fingers of one hand, stroke gently across the back of the other — from knuckles to wrist. Then swap.

All touches are slow, gentle and rhythmic. There is no right or wrong speed — simply what feels soothing to you.

The Anxiety Anchor

For when anxiety arrives without warning

This is your first response when you feel anxiety rising — that tightness in your chest, the racing thoughts, the feeling that something is wrong even when nothing is.

How to do it:

- Place both hands on your upper arms and take one slow breath in through your nose, out through your mouth
- Begin stroking slowly down your arms — shoulders to elbows — while you breathe
- As you stroke, say quietly to yourself or out loud:

"I am safe right now. In this moment, I am safe."

- Continue for 2-3 minutes — or until you feel your nervous system begin to soften
- Close with three slow breaths and notice how you feel

When to use it: The moment you feel anxiety beginning to rise. In the car. In the bathroom. Anywhere.

The Emotional Release

For when you're carrying something heavy

Sometimes we carry emotions we can't even name — a weight in the chest, a tightness in the throat, a heaviness that follows us through the day. This practice creates space to acknowledge what you're holding and gently begin to release it.

How to do it:

- Sit quietly and place one hand on your heart. Just notice what's there — without trying to fix or analyse it
- Gently name what you're feeling, even vaguely: "I am carrying something heavy today."
- Begin the arm strokes — slowly, gently — while you breathe

"I am allowed to feel this. I am safe to let this move through me."

- Continue for 3-5 minutes. You may feel emotions rise — that's okay. Let them.
- End by placing both hands on your heart and saying:

"I release what is ready to go. I keep what is mine to carry."

When to use it: When you're feeling heavy, tearful, overwhelmed or emotionally flooded.

The Calm Reset

For when you need to come back to yourself quickly

This is a shorter, sharper practice for moments when you need to reset fast — before a difficult conversation, after receiving hard news, in a moment of overwhelm.

How to do it:

- Cross your arms over your chest — like a self-hug — and tap gently on your shoulders, alternating left and right (the butterfly tap)
- While tapping, breathe slowly and count your breaths up to 10
- Then switch to the face strokes — forehead to temples, under eyes to cheeks — slowly and gently

"I am calm. I am grounded. I am here."

- Finish with one long exhale — let it be audible if you can

When to use it: Before hard conversations, during conflict, in waiting rooms, in moments of sudden overwhelm.

The Sleep Softener

For the racing mind at 2am

The night can be the hardest time. When the world is quiet and your mind is anything but — this practice helps guide your nervous system out of activation and into rest.

How to do it:

- Lying in bed, begin slowly stroking your arms — shoulders to elbows — with your eyes closed
- Breathe slowly — in for 4 counts, out for 6 counts
- As you stroke, visualise something gentle — a forest path, a still lake, a warm room with candles

"I am safe. I can rest. Everything is okay right now."

- Continue until sleep finds you — there is no time limit

When to use it: When you can't sleep, when your mind won't quieten, when anxiety spikes at night.

The Grief Holder

For the days when loss is loud

Grief doesn't follow a schedule. It arrives on ordinary Tuesdays, in supermarket aisles, in the middle of a song you didn't know would break you.

This practice doesn't try to fix grief — it simply holds it with you.

How to do it:

- Place one hand on your heart and one on your belly. Just breathe for a moment.
- Say the name of what you're grieving — out loud if you can: "I am grieving ____." Or simply: "I am grieving."
- Begin the arm strokes — slowly, as if you are comforting yourself the way you would comfort someone you love

"This loss mattered. This grief is love with nowhere to go."

- Continue for as long as you need. There is no rush. There is no right way to grieve.
- When you feel ready, place both hands on your heart and breathe. That is enough.

When to use it: On anniversaries, on hard days, when grief arrives unexpectedly, when you need to feel less alone in your loss.

These practices are yours now. Self-Havening is not a replacement for professional support — if you are carrying significant trauma, grief or anxiety, I would love to work with you one-on-one where we can go deeper together.

You are not alone. — Danielle