

Doom Spiral Reset

A shadow work workbook for processing headlines, fear, and collective heaviness without absorbing it.

Use this when you feel flooded, stuck, or trapped in catastrophic loops. This workbook helps you recognize the state, interrupt it in your body, meet the protector part underneath it, and return to your next true step.

Tonight's anchor: Observe, do not absorb.

A doom spiral is a **threat state**, not a truth state. You do not have to carry the whole world to care about it.

Not medical advice. If you are in danger, experiencing thoughts of self-harm, or feel unable to stay safe, contact local emergency services or a trusted professional.

Quick Start: 5-Minute Reset

If you are actively spiraling, do this first. Do not analyze yet.

- [] Feet on the floor. Press down for 10 seconds.
- [] Unclench jaw. Drop shoulders one inch.
- [] Exhale longer than inhale, 5 times.
- [] Name the state: "My system is activated."
- [] Set a boundary: "Headlines once, then I stop."
- [] Choose one small action, then return to life.

Write your one boundary for the next 24 hours:

Write your one next true step: (one action, not a life overhaul)

1) Recognize the Doom Spiral

A doom spiral is when your nervous system gets activated and your mind starts running catastrophic loops as if it is problem-solving. In a spiral, your brain can feel certain. That certainty is often a symptom of threat.

Common signs

- Compulsive scrolling, researching, or "just one more" video
- Catastrophic future-tripping and worst-case certainty
- Black-and-white conclusions: "everything is hopeless"
- Anger, disgust, fear, or numbness that grows with more content
- Trouble doing normal tasks after consuming headlines
- Feeling responsible to carry, fix, or decode the whole world

My current spiral signals

Trigger (headline, conversation, body sensation):
Body cues (tight chest, stomach drop, jaw, shoulders):
Behaviors (scrolling, arguing, isolating, doom-research):

Notes

2) Interrupt the State (Body First)

You do not reason your way out of a threat response. You signal safety first, then you think.

Choose one reset

- Press feet into floor for 10 seconds, release, repeat 3 times
- Long exhale breathing: inhale 4, exhale 6, repeat 6 rounds
- Name 5 things you see, 4 you feel, 3 you hear, 2 you smell, 1 you taste
- Cold water on wrists for 30 seconds, then slow breath
- Walk for 5 minutes without phone, feel your steps

My chosen reset today

Now name the state

Write one sentence you can say out loud:

3) Process Without Absorbing

Witnessing is not absorbing. The goal is to feel what is true without turning your body into a dumping ground for the world.

One-word emotion check

Circle one or write your own:

grief • rage • fear • disgust • helplessness • shame • numb • overwhelm • other: _____

Where do I feel it in my body?

What does my mind keep saying? (the loop)

Two truths (to exit black-and-white thinking)

Truth 1: This is heavy and it hurts to witness.

Truth 2: I can be present and still live my life today.

4) Shadow Map: Meet the Protector Behind the Spiral

A doom spiral is often a protector part trying to keep you safe through prediction, scanning, and control.

Which protector is driving today?

- The Watcher: If I see it coming, I am safe
- The Researcher: If I understand it, I can control it
- The Moral Sentinel: If I stay angry, I stay good
- The Doomsday Prophet: If I expect the worst, I will not be disappointed
- The Fixer: If I solve it, I will not feel helpless
- Other: _____

Shadow questions

What is the trigger I cannot emotionally metabolize right now?

What emotion is the spiral protecting me from feeling directly?

What is this part trying to prevent? (surprise, betrayal, humiliation, abandonment)

What is the payoff of spiraling? (control, certainty, distraction, not feeling)

Compassionate reframe

Write a sentence to the protector part:

5) Information Boundaries (Care Without Consuming)

The modern media environment rewards fear, outrage, and certainty. Boundaries are not avoidance. Boundaries are how you stay functional and able to act.

Choose your rules for the next 24 hours

- Headlines once. No deep dives.
- No doom content before noon.
- No comment sections when activated.
- I will not chase certainty while dysregulated.
- I will verify later, not while spiraling.
- One trusted source only. No endless feeds.

My 24-hour boundary plan

My replacement plan (what I do instead of scrolling)

6) One Action, Then Return to Life

Spirals feed on powerlessness. One bounded action restores agency. Endless consumption steals it.

Pick one action in your lane

- Local action: donate, volunteer, call, support a cause
- Relational action: check on someone, ask for support, have a real conversation
- Protective action: set a boundary, adjust media intake for your home
- Embodied action: walk, shower, clean one corner, cook, stretch
- Creative action: write, make, build, speak truth through your work

My one action (specific and small)

After I act, I return to life by doing this alive thing

Hand on chest. Long exhale.

I am here. I am safe enough in this moment.

I can witness without absorbing. I am not required to carry what I cannot control.

I will take one true step, and then I will live.