



**C.R.A.S.H &  
C.O.A.C.H**

A framework to stay calm  
and collected



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March 2020

**The world has been shaken to its core these past few months.**



The pandemic threatens people all over the globe and our daily lives are severely restricted. Although as humans we have a shared sense of what this means, **as individuals each of us has an experience that is unique.**

At times like this it is easy to think that we don't have a choice.



**“Everything can be taken from a man but one thing: the last of the human freedoms – to choose one’s attitude in any given set of circumstances, to choose one’s own way”.**

Viktor E. Frankl

Although this isn't World War II, we are living through complex and distressing times. **What follows are simple steps you can use to take back some agency and help you look after yourself and others.** These are tools that I use in my practice as a coach and trainer. My aim, as in my sessions, is that you find something useful you can take away and use immediately.



**C.R.A.S.H and  
C.O.A.C.H**

At times of crisis we go into survival mode.

Fight or flight, with a racing heart, narrow vision, sweaty palms, feeling fear, anxiety or panic. 🦊

The opposite of this is rest and digest, fundamental for bodily functions like sleep, digestion and repair, the most resourceful state for us all right now. 🙄

**C**ontact

**R**eact

**A**nalyse

**S**eparate

**H**urt

**C**entre

**O**pen

**A**ware

**C**onnected

**H**olding

# Awareness and acknowledgment

Noticing when we are in states that may  
be holding us back (C.R.A.S.H)

## **Become aware of moments when you are in the C.R.A.S.H state.**

Your body may be tense, restricted breathing, you may be reacting to the news or in a place of analysis paralysis, with overwhelming thoughts, feeling separate from others and the world.

## Try this now:

Take a moment to consider when you have been in a C.R.A.S.H state recently. Perhaps now, earlier today, yesterday or last week. Notice what you were reacting to in the moment. Was it the news, social media, WhatsApp, your own self-talk, someone else's behaviour?

## 1. **Say 'welcome'.**

It makes sense that you are or have been feeling that way, and I am sure it is important. By noticing and acknowledging difficult thoughts and feelings you can give yourself the opportunity to make a choice to respond differently.

2. **Next you can ask, ‘is this useful right now?’**

If it isn't, ask yourself, ‘what do I want instead?’

# How to feel calm and connected

Tools to access more resourceful  
states (C.O.A.C.H)

**Try this now.**



# 1. Center

Sitting on a chair or standing, make sure your feet are firmly on the floor and your body is in a symmetrical position. Drop your weight down so you bring your attention to your centre and let the ground or the chair support you. Imagine you are an old oak tree, your legs are like the trunk of the tree and your feet are the roots, connecting through the earth's crust deep down into the core of the earth. Notice what it feels like to be centred and grounded.

Place your hands on your tummy, the centre of your body, and breathe.

**C**entre  
**O**pen  
**A**ware  
**C**onnected  
**H**olding

## 2. **Open**

Bring your attention to your breath and on your next exhalation, squeeze all of the air out, like you are squeezing the water out of a sponge, until there is nothing left, and then let it go. Notice how deeply you are able to breathe again. Start breathing out for longer than you are breathing in, breathing out for a count of 6, holding for 3, and in for 3. Notice how you can let any areas of tension in your body go as you breathe out. Allow your jaw, shoulders and stomach to soften, draw your shoulders back as you open your chest. Bring your arms down by your side, palms facing open.

**C**entre  
**O**pen  
**A**ware  
**C**onnected  
**H**olding

### 3. **Aware**

Become aware and attend to what is going on inside and outside of you. Notice that you can widen your periphery vision as you take in everything from this centred and open state. Notice three things you can see in the outside world, three things you can hear in the outside world, and three things you can feel in the outside world. Do this again noticing two and then one for each. Next attend to your inside world and repeat the process, noticing what you can see, hear and feel within you.

**C**entre  
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**A**ware  
**C**onnected  
**H**olding

## 4. **Connect**

While maintaining connection with yourself in your centre, bring your attention to the system you are part of, your household, your family, friends, community, country, and the world. By connecting with yourself you are able to realise your connection to the whole.

**C**entre  
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**C**onnected  
**H**olding

## 5. **Holding**

Hold whatever you are experiencing right now from a place of resourcefulness, in this expanded space where you are able to feel centred, open, aware and connected. Notice what feels different and how much more possible it seems to make positive choices for yourself and others.

**C**entre  
**O**pen  
**A**ware  
**C**onnected  
**H**olding

You can use the **C.O.A.C.H state** as a **checklist** to bring your attention to how to feel centred and balanced in yourself any time you need.

You can also use your own past experiences and wisdom to access more resourceful states.

## Try this now.

**Think of a time in your life when you felt calm and grounded.**

See what you saw, hear what you heard and feel what you felt. Notice what you were doing more of, and what you were doing less of. Repeat this exercise with two other experiences.

**Once you have done this, consider, what was the same in all three?**

What needs to be true for you to feel centred? Write down what you have noticed, paying particular attention to what you become aware of inside of you – what were you seeing, hearing or feeling in your minds eye and body? What were you attending to?

# Creating an action plan

How you can bring this into your future

## **What can you commit to doing differently from now?**

Practice is fundamental and personally my daily rituals are vital in keeping me in a resourceful place.

**Take a moment to consider what you will start doing from now every day to ensure you are centred in yourself, open, aware, and connected.**

Consider your entire day, what do you need in the morning, lunchtime, afternoon and evening to create balance and harmony. Moving your body, eating healthily, breaking up your day, drinking water, getting sunlight, keeping your environment tidy, writing to do lists, connecting with friends and family, supporting others, and most importantly, consider **what you have just discovered about what you specifically need in order to feel centred from the above exercises.**

## **A sense of purpose is important to keep us all motivated and moving every day.**

So write down what you are committed to doing from now, and share it with someone if you want extra accountability.

## Remember that we are all doing our best.

So be kind, open hearted and aware of other people's experiences. If people you know are behaving differently, that's because this isn't a 'normal' situation and it disrupts people's usual patterns. We have to be flexible to find the skills to adapt to our rapidly transforming environment, and we all have the resources we need to do this.

It's our ability to make a choice that makes us human, and its resourceful and connected humans we can all be right now.



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Vida Carmel is a behavioural change coach with over 6 years experience helping people think differently and transform their lives.

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