THE ISLAND AUTISM COACH · FREE RESOURCE

# 5 Calm-Down Strategies to Try Today

Gentle ways to bring calm back when a moment feels big — for your child and for you.

1. **Regulate yourself first**
Your calm is contagious. Take one slow breath, drop your shoulders and soften your voice before you respond. Children borrow our calm before they can find their own.

2. **Use fewer words**
In a big moment, language is hard to process. Swap long explanations for short, kind phrases: "I'm here." "You're safe." "Let's breathe." Talk it through later.

3. **Lower the sensory load**
Dim lights, turn down sound, move away from crowds or offer headphones. Many hard moments are the body saying "too much" — reduce the input.

4. **Offer a calm space and comfort tool**
A quiet corner, a soft blanket, a favourite fidget or a weighted lap pad. Keep the same tools in the same place so your child knows where calm lives.

5. **Move or breathe together**
Try slow "smell the flower, blow the candle" breaths, wall push-ups, a squeeze hug (if welcomed) or a gentle walk. Movement helps the body reset.

After the storm: once everyone is calm, reconnect warmly. Notice what happened just before — tiredness, hunger, noise, a change of plan — so you can plan ahead next time. Every child is different, so keep what works and let go of what doesn't.

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