



## Quieting Exercises to Calm Myself by Sarah Manson, M.A.

### Shalom for My Body<sup>i</sup>



**Startle Reflex (Moro Reflex):** Arch your back and throw your arms and head back while you do a sharp intake of breath. Then bring your arms back down to a relaxed position while saying, “Whenever I am afraid I will trust in you, O Lord” (Psalm 56:3). **Do this four times.**

**Yawn:** Turn your head to one side and then yawn. Let your head return to the center while saying, “Whenever I am afraid I will trust in you, O Lord.” **Do this four times, alternating the direction of your yawn.**

**Tap Vagus Nerve:** Tap on the area under your collarbone (the vagus nerve) with your fingertips, a couple inches to the right and left from the center of your sternum, in a rhythm like a slow resting heartbeat. Breathe in while speeding up the rhythm. Then deeply exhale while massaging the same place you were just tapping and saying, “Whenever I am afraid I will trust in you, O Lord.” **Do this process four times.**

<sup>i</sup> Developed by Jim Wilder and Ed Khouri for the Belonging module of Connexus. *Belonging Workbook*. Pasadena: Shepherd’s House, 2010.

### Read the Bible

The Psalms are often a good place to go when we are feeling overwhelmed.



Sarah Manson has been married for over 25 years to her high school sweetheart, Doug. Both Florida natives, they live in Tampa where they raised their two boys. She has worked in the real estate and marketing fields. After a season of being a stay at home mom, she was a pastoral counselor for New Beginnings Church and Counseling Center. Sarah has a master’s degree in Christian counseling, and enjoys helping people heal from brokenness so they can have greater intimacy with the Lord through prayer ministry and teaching.

## Why Is This So Important?

“Quieting after both joyful and upsetting emotions is the strongest predictor of life-long mental health. Lowering my own energy levels so I can rest as I need to and on my own, makes me feel stable.”

*Joy Starts Here: The Transformation Zone*, Wilder, Khouri, Coursey, and Sutton, 2013, Shepherd’s House, Inc., East Peoria, Illinois, p. 247.

### 9-1-1

9 – Deep breaths

1 – Focus on something for which you are truly thankful or grateful (one minute).

1 – “Five-Bar” Moment<sup>ii</sup>: recall a moment of close connection with God that was joyful and/or peaceful. If you start to lose focus, think about what you appreciate about that “Five-Bar” connection. If you cannot think of a “Five-Bar” Moment, just continue your appreciation of anything you are thankful for.

**Focus** on the good feelings you felt. Name those good emotions.

**Do a body scan.** Focus on how your body felt. Locate the area of your body you are feeling good sensations and describe the sensation.

<sup>ii</sup> The term “Five-Bar” Moment was coined by Dr. James Wilder and is analogous to mobile phone reception.

## Attune With Me

Find someone who can attune to your distress and help you return to joy—someone who will tune in to you so that you feel seen, heard, understood, that they care about you and that they are glad to be with you.

Check out Karl Lehman’s book *Outsmarting Yourself* to learn more about attunement.