

Creative Fix

Creative Calm Summer Survival Kit

ALLEGRA CHAPMAN

HELLO



My name's Allegra Chapman. I'm an author, columnist, creative therapy practitioner and creativity coach.

I'm also an AuDHD mum of two, with fairly unpredictable health. I'm passionate about the benefits of creativity for wellbeing.

You can find more from me on creative therapy, neurodivergent creativity, and life as a writer at:



Instagram:
[allegra_chapman](https://www.instagram.com/allegra_chapman)



Threads:
[@allegra_chapman](https://www.threads.net/@allegra_chapman)



Substack:
[@allegrachapman](https://allegrachapman.substack.com)
YourCreativeFix.substack.com



WHAT IS THIS KIT?

This is not a schedule.

It's not a list of things to complete, or another thing to keep on top of.

This kit is here for you to dip in and out of, as and when you want to.

Think of it as your **emergency rescue kit** for when the summer gets a little too hot to handle.

In these pages, you'll find creative activities suitable for the **whole family** that will help regulate everyone's nervous systems, process experiences and feelings, and create some joyful together time (or some necessary "me time").

It's ok to not love every moment of the summer.

It's an intense time, where we're all under a lot of pressure to be *making the most of it*, and that can feel stressful.

If you've got kids and everyone's together a lot more than usual, the children want entertaining and the parents are trying juggle that with their normal routine, life can get intense.

Even if you don't have children, there are a lot of conflicting demands, and a lot of external messaging telling us we should deliver an unattainably perfect summer.

So allow yourself to find it tough sometimes. Allow yourself to drop the ball. Allow yourself a perfectly half-arsed summer. And reach for help when you need it.

WHAT'S IN THIS KIT?

1: Quick Start



How to identify which creative remedies you need.
Page 6.

2: Overwhelm Reducer



Creative remedies for when it's all a bit too much.
Pages 7 - 8.

3: Boredom Buster



Creative remedies for when the whinging starts.
Pages 9 - 10.

4: Big Feelings Processor



Creative remedies for processing emotions.
Pages 11 - 12.

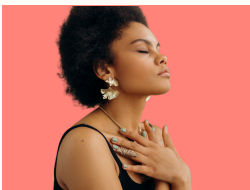
5: Family Friction Repair Kit



Creative remedies to cut the tension.
Pages 13 - 14.

WHAT'S IN THIS KIT?

6: Five-minute Resets



Creative moments to make a little space of calm.

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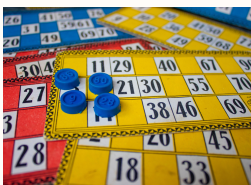
7: Emergency Rescue



An emergency plan for when it all goes awry.

Pages 16.

8: Summer Bingo



An optional game to play throughout the summer.

Page 17.

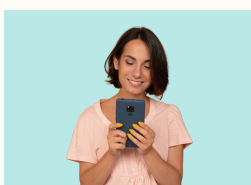
9: Quick Reminder



Just so you don't forget to take it easy.

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10: Further Resources



Printable sheets for structured activities.

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1 QUICK START

Symptoms

(in adults or children)

Remedies

- Everything feels too much
- Irritability
- Crying “for no reason”
- Wanting to hide in a cupboard with a box of cookies

Overwhelm Reducer

- Whinging
- Restlessness
- Bickering
- Demands for entertainment
- Compulsive snacking

Boredom Buster

- Meltdowns
- Anger
- Anxiety
- Emotional flooding
- Worrying about making experiences “perfect”

Big Feelings Processor

- Arguments
- Snapping
- Trouble sharing
- Competing desires
- Differing expectations

Family Friction Repair Kit

- Parents have reached the end of their tethers
- Juggling work + parenting
- Parents need a break
- Everyone needs some alone time

Five-minute Resets

2 OVERWHELM REDUCER

Choose a remedy to soothe your system(s).



Scribble the Storm

Take a sheet of paper and something to draw with. Without trying to make anything beautiful, scribble as hard, fast, large, small, messy or chaotic as you want. Keep going for two minutes (use a timer). Then look at the page and add colours, shapes or words.

(Optional extra) Ask yourself:
What does this feeling want me to know?

Colour Breathing

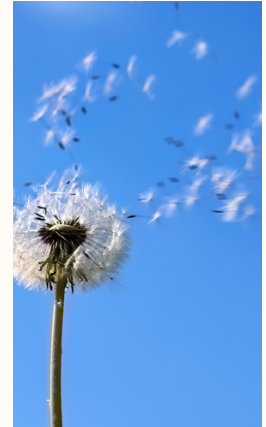
Take a sheet of paper and something that makes colour (crayons, pastels, paint, pens...).

Choose three colours.

Make marks, shapes, scribbles... As you colour, breathe in for four counts and out for six.

Don't aim for a picture.

Just let the colours fill the page.



Body Scan Sketch

You'll need paper, a pencil, and any other art materials you want to use.

Draw a simple outline of a body (stick figure is fine).

Around the body, mark areas of tension, heaviness, tiredness, anxiety, or any strong feelings you notice. Represent these sensations in whatever way you like, using colour, shape, lines, texture...

Don't try to explain it or change it, just notice it.

2 OVERWHELM REDUCER

Choose a remedy to soothe your system(s).



Window Sketch

Everyone sits by a window, or in front of a view.

Set a timer for five minutes.

Quietly, each person will choose one thing that they can see, a sketch a picture or rough impression of that thing.

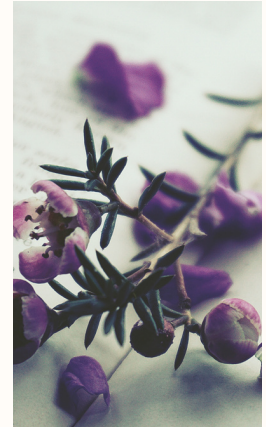
Once the timer goes off, take turns to discuss what you chose to draw and why. Notice the differences in what each person picked out.

Nature Mandala

Go on a walk and collect natural materials – leaves, flower petals, herbs, pebbles... anything that catches your eye and can be legally and responsibly taken.

Arrange them in a pattern on the ground, or take them home to make a collage.

Child option: wrap a band of sellotape around each child's wrist with the sticky side facing outwards. The children collect items to stick on, to create a bracelet.



Texture Hunt

Find a selection of materials – tissue paper, cardboard, yarn, ribbon... raid art supplies or your recycling.

Arrange scraps of similar textures together.

You don't have to make any particular image, unless you want to.

Notice how these textures feel together.

3 BOREDOM BUSTER

Choose a remedy to encourage curiosity.



Museum of Me

Each person collects 5 objects from around the home, or in nature, that are special or interesting to them (for any reason, no justifications needed).

Then each person creates cards information cards about each object. Little ones can draw pictures instead of writing.

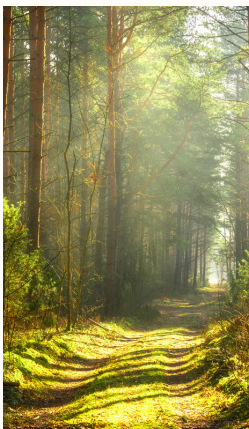
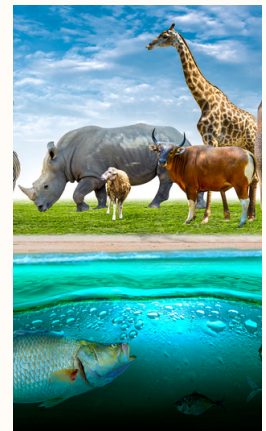
Take turns to visit each other's collection with a guided tour from the curator.

Creature Creator

Combine three animals into one new creature.

Do one, or some, or all, of the following:

- Give your creature a name
- Draw a picture of it
- Write a description of it
- Pretend to be it
- Describe its habitat and habits



Wonder Walk

Walk around your home, garden, street, or local park.

Look for one, or a combination, of the following:

- Surprisingly beautiful things
- Things that make you smile
- Things you've never noticed before
- Tiny things
- Strange things

Optional: photograph, draw or paint some of them.

3 BOREDOM BUSTER

Choose a remedy to encourage curiosity.



What If?

Fill a page with silly questions:

- What if dogs could drive?
- What if trees could talk?
- What if your house had a secret floor?
- What if summer lasted all year?

Choose one together, then all draw, write, or imagine the answer. Discuss what you came up with. There are no wrong answers.

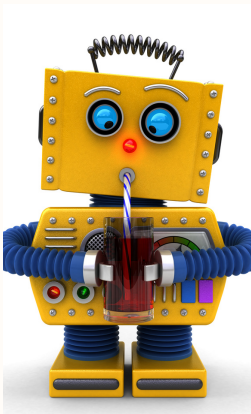
Object Stories

Choose an everyday object.
A spoon, a sock, a pebble, a leaf...

Imagine it has a secret life when nobody is looking.

- Where does it go?
- Who are its friends?
- What adventures does it have?

Draw or tell its story.



Fun Machine

Invent a fun machine.

- What does it look like?
- How does it work?
- What does it do?

You could paint a picture of it, draw plans for building it, write a description of it, or make a model of it out of junk materials.

4 BIG FEELINGS PROCESSOR

Choose a remedy to process your emotions.



Emotion Monster

Notice the biggest emotion in your body right now. It might help to sit quietly for a moment, close your eyes and take a few deep breaths to listen to your body.

Draw that emotion as a creature. What does it look like? What colour is it?

Give it a name. Describe its voice, its actions, what it likes, what it wants...

What would you like to say to this creature?

Worry Shredder

Take a piece of paper and a pen or pencil.

Set a timer for 3 minutes and write down all the worries you have on the paper. Don't judge them, don't try to solve them, just get it all out of your head.

When the timer goes off, tear the paper up into small pieces.

You can then either dispose of the pieces, or use them to make a collage.



Pocket of Calm

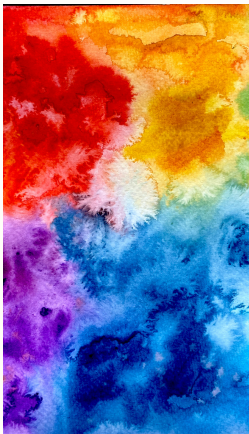
Draw a small pocket. (Or if you feel up to it, sew an actual pocket!) Fill it with tiny drawn or written reminders of things that make you feel calm:

- places
- people
- objects
- songs
- activities

Revisit it whenever you need a dose of calm thoughts.

4 BIG FEELINGS PROCESSOR

Choose a remedy to process your emotions.



Feelings Mix

You'll need paper and paint or coloured pens or anything you can use to make colour.

Choose colours to represent all the different emotions you're feeling right now. There's no right or wrong, whatever colour represents that emotion to you.

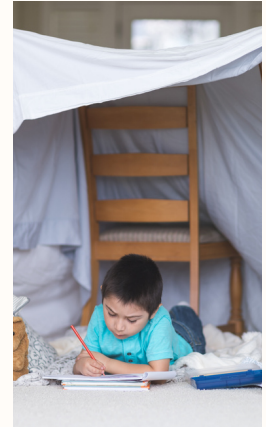
Fill the paper with your colours. Notice which colour takes up the most space, how they blend together, what colours are less visible...

Comfort Fort

Gather objects that feel comforting:

- cushions
- blankets
- favourite books
- soft toys
- calming objects

Arrange them into a small nest, den, or calm corner.



Tiny Things List

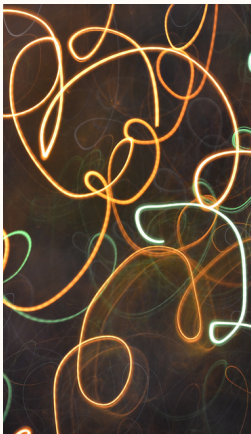
When feelings are overwhelming, look for tiny anchors.

Draw or write:

- one thing that is okay right now
 - one thing that made you smile today
 - one thing you can see
 - one thing you can hear
 - one thing you're looking forward to
-

5 FAMILY FRICTION REPAIR KIT

Choose a remedy to relieve the tension.



Squiggles

This works best in pairs.

One person draws a single line, in whatever shape they like, with no intention.

Their partner then has to add to it in a way that turns that line into something. E.g., an upside down triangle becomes an ice cream cone.

There is no right or wrong, it's just about seeing potential in a squiggle!

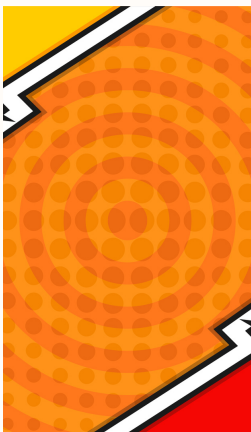
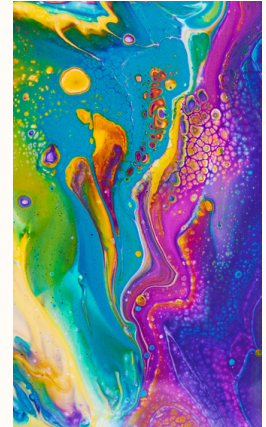
Collaborative Art

Take a large piece of paper, or tape several pieces of A4 paper together to make a large canvas.

Everyone grabs crayons, paints, pens... whatever art materials you want to use.

Each person adds different elements.

You could give each person their own section, or let everyone cover the whole piece of paper and overlap with each other.



Family Comic Strip

Create a comic strip about something that happened in the last week.

It can be something funny, memorable or just a normal part of your routine.

You could assign jobs (e.g. one person draws the pictures, one person writes the captions, one person colours...), or you could take one frame each. You probably want to make a plan together before you start though.

5 FAMILY FRICTION REPAIR KIT

Choose a remedy to relieve the tension.



Gratitude List

Each person writes or draws three things they are grateful for in this moment.

You could turn these lists into artwork by colouring / painting the images or decorating the words. You can then display this artwork somewhere it can act as a reminder of the things you all appreciate in life.

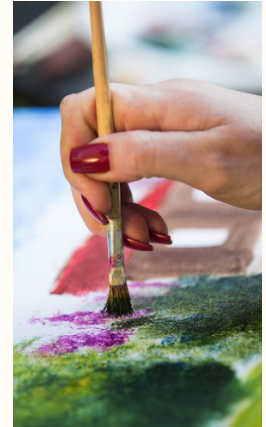
Favourite Things

You need another large piece of paper (or another load of A4 pieces taped together).

Each person writes or draws a selection of their favourite things from the summer so far.

Cover the page in all of your favourite things - make sure there is space for everyone's.

Decorate the page in any way you like.



Compliment Collage

Everyone takes a paper, and writes their own name in the centre (or has it written for them if needed).

They then pass the paper around. Each person takes turns to add two or three positive things on each paper about the person whose name is on it: a positive memory, a characteristic they like, something they appreciate... You can use words or doodles.

Keep passing around until everyone has their own paper back to read the nice things about themselves!

6 FIVE-MINUTE RESETS

Say what you see

Take a moment to look around and write down, or just notice, five things you can see.

If you like, you could sketch one of them.

Instant mandala

Find a selection of small objects that are to hand – pebbles, scraps of paper, buttons, rubbers, pencils, spoons... literally anything.

Arrange them in a pattern on the nearest available surface.

Temporary art

Make an artwork using something that won't last.

Draw in the soil or the sand. Make a picture using leaves on the ground. Make a model out of ice (or ice cream if you fancy a treat – you can eat it afterwards).

Draw breath

Take a piece of paper and a pencil.

Draw a line up as you inhale, and a line down as you exhale. Notice how your breath moves, and if it changes. Don't try to change it or control it, just notice it.

7 EMERGENCY RESCUE

Help! Everyone is melting down...





SUMMER BINGO

You can play this game throughout the summer.
Tick items off if they happen, but don't force it.

Made
something
from junk

Worked on
something
together

Used
nature
items

Made art
outside

Used
varied
textures

Made
temporary
art

Noticed
something
new

Tried
a new
activity

Let my art
be silly

Captured
a memory

Practiced
gratitude

Made a
gift

None of this is necessary

You do not have to create a perfect summer.

You do not have to do loads of things.

You do not have to do all (or any) of the
activities in this kit.

These activities are here if you need and want
them. They're not extra tasks for the To Do list.

You are allowed to do less.

You are allowed to pause.

You are doing enough.

IF YOU WANT MORE...

You'll find creative therapy activities and tips on weaving creativity into your life in my monthly **Creative Fix magazine**.

Find out more at

YourCreativeFix.substack.com

There are a variety of creative resources and books available to download and buy on my website:

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