RITUALS

A Minimal Suite for Attention, Clarity, and Action

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Python · Terminal UX · Minimal Systems Design

Overview

RITUALS is a suite of terminal-based practices built on a single idea:

|attention improves when choices are removed, not added.

Instead of dashboards, metrics, and optimization loops, RITUALS provides containers—clear beginnings, limited scope, and deliberate endings—for three essential human functions:

- Presence (STILLNESS)

- Clarity (UNTANGLE)

- Action (ONE)

Each tool is intentionally minimal, opinionated, and resistant to feature creep.

Problem Statement

Most productivity and wellness tools introduce complexity in the name of usefulness. This often results in cognitive overload, performance anxiety, and stalled execution. RITUALS explores the opposite approach: strict constraints, minimal interfaces, and clear endings.

Design Principles

Presence over performance. Legibility without gamification. Ritual over routine. Effect-based language. Silence scales best
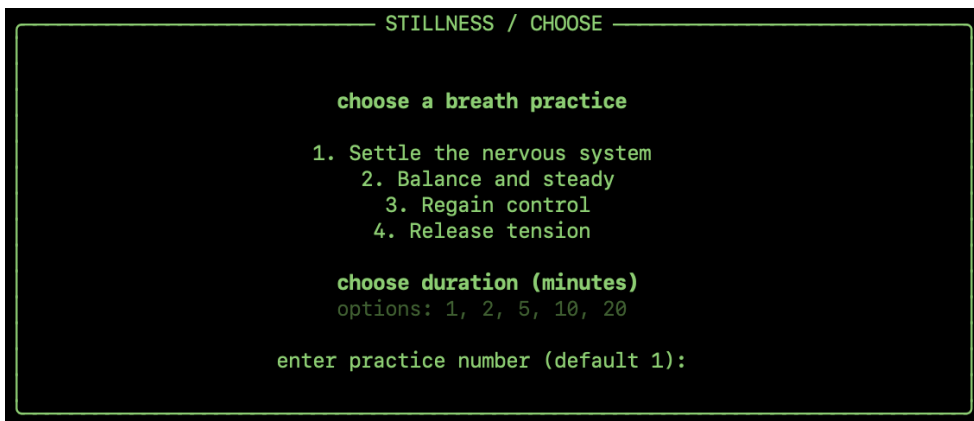
The Suite

STILLNESS — Sit

Purpose: Support calm presence without striving.

Key Design Choices:

- Breath options labeled by effect:
  - Settle the nervous system
  - Balance and steady
  - Regain control
  - Release tension
- Breath visualized semantically:
  - ■ inhale
  - ▒ hold
  - ▓ exhale
- Centered UI, no metrics, no countdown pressure
- Optional "Deep Sitting" removes all labels

Outcome: Meditation without performance anxiety.

```
───── STILLNESS / CHOOSE ─────


        choose a breath practice

       1. Settle the nervous system
          2. Balance and steady
            3. Regain control
           4. Release tension

         choose duration (minutes)
         options: 1, 2, 5, 10, 20

      enter practice number (default 1):
```

```
STILLNESS

soften and remain

time  11:23
session  Regain control
duration  5 min

breath
■■■■■ ▒▒▒▒ ▓▓▓▓ ▒▒▒▒

mind  settling

press ENTER to begin
q then ENTER to quit


   press ENTER to begin · q then ENTER to quit
```

U N T A N G L E — N a m e

P u r p o s e: Interrupt overthinking and force clarity.

C o n s t r a i n t :

You may write **one sentence only.**

P r o m p t :
"**n a m e t h e n e x t h o n e s t s t e p**"

D e s i g n C h o i c e s :

- No editing

- No visible history

- Optional quiet recall of the previous sentence (off by default)

- Auto-exit after saving

O u t c o m e : Clarity through constraint, not analysis.

```
┌───────────────── UNTANGLE ─────────────────┐
│                                             │
│ ┌─────────────────────────────────────────┐ │
│ │                UNTANGLE                 │ │
│ │                                         │ │
│ │         name the next honest step       │ │
│ │              one sentence only          │ │
│ │                                         │ │
│ │          press ENTER to submit.         │ │
│ │              type /q to exit.           │ │
│ │                                         │ │
│ └─────────────────────────────────────────┘ │
│                                             │
> Stop overthinking the promotion█
```

```
┌───────────────── UNTANGLE ─────────────────┐
│                                             │
│                   saved                     │
│                                             │
│                 release it                  │
│                                             │
└─────────────────────────────────────────────┘
```

The Suite

ONE — Do

Purpose: Contain focused effort without overwhelm.

Rules:

- Exactly one task

- Fixed **25-minute** deep work session

- Visible **MM:SS countdown**

- Auto-exit when time ends

- Mandatory **5-minute break** afterward

Design Choices:

- Large, centered task text

- No task lists, no extensions

- Completion acknowledged, not celebrated

Outcome: Honest commitment without grinding.

```
┌───────────────────────── ONE ─────────────────────────┐
│                                                        │
│              what is the one thing?                    │
│                                                        │
│         (25 minutes. one line. no editing once started)│
│                                                        │
│                                                        │
└────────────────────────────────────────────────────────┘

> Debug code for new program█
```

```
                        ONE

              Debug code for new program


                        24:56

                        remain

                    q to release
```
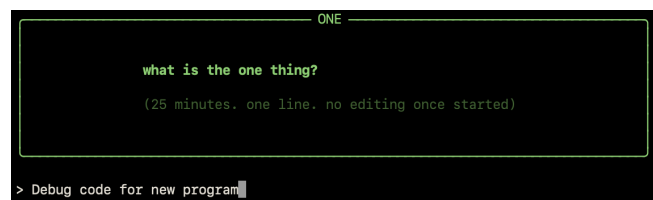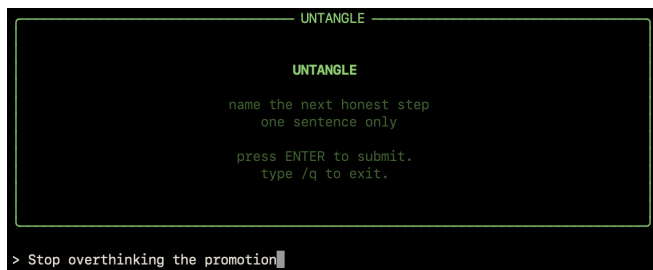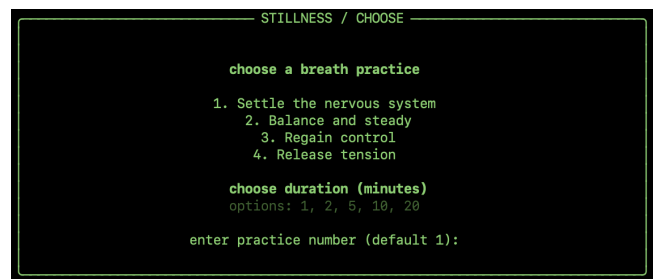
```
                        break

                        04:56

              walk • water • breathe

                    (q to end)
```

System Architecture

- **Language**: Python
- **UI**: Rich (terminal rendering)
- **Structure**:
- stillness.py
- untangle.py
- one.py
- rituals.py (dashboard launcher)
- **Logging**: Local JSONL files, never surfaced
- **Execution**: Single command or macOS app (Automator)

Each ritual runs independently but can be launched from a unified dashboard.

Screens / Visuals

What Was Intentionally Excluded

- Progress tracking
- Streaks
- Scores or ratings
- User accounts
- Recommendations
- Optimization loops

These omissions are deliberate design decisions.

Learnings

- Constraint increases trust.
- Removing options increases follow-through.
- Language matters more than features.
- Finishing a small system is harder—and more valuable—than expanding a large one.

Future Direction

- Packaging as a standalone CLI (pipx)
- macOS app bundle for the full suite
- Exploration of hardware-bound ritual devices

No feature expansion planned.

Closing

Sit.

Name.

Do one thing.

Then stop.