From Chaos to Calm

Your 5-stop road trip for a stressed-out kid

1 THE ROADS

Why: Stress built a fast highway. Thinking roads are still being paved.
Try: Stay calm, warm and firm. Teach the skill instead of just punishing.
Say: *"I am right here. You are safe. We'll do this next step together."*

2 THE STICKY NOTE

Why: Your child's mental sticky note is tiny, even when calm.
Try: One step at a time. Add picture checklists at eye level.
Say: *"What's the ONE thing on your note?"*

3 THE GPS

Why: Fog inside means no map for what comes next.
Try: Picture routine boards (morning, after school, bedtime). Give a 5-minute timer warning.
Say: *"We have a detour today. Let's draw it on our map together."*

4 ENGINE & BRAKES

Why: Fast engine, thin brakes, sticky gears.
Try: Practice a "pause" in calm, happy moments (Freeze Dance, Red Light/Green Light). Add a 30-second fun bridge between activities.
Say: *"Your engine is fast. Let's pump our brakes: one slow breath."*

5 THE COOLING SYSTEM

Why: A hot engine can't think. Your calm is the coolant.
Try: Sit low. Speak low and slow, 3 words at a time. Cool first, then teach. Give the consequence right after calm returns.
Say: *"Your body is hot. We'll sit until your engine cools."*

You don't have to fix everything tonight. Pick ONE stop. Try ONE tool.

Brains change slowly. Keep rules firm, stay warm, and give it time.