

STOP Practice

You can weave this short practice into your day to reduce reactivity.

S = Stop what you're doing right now, get in a comfortable position, either seated or lying down.

T = Take a few deep breaths.

- Breathe through the nose initially, and then out through the mouth.
- Allow your body to soften with each exhalation and then settle into its natural rhythm of breathing.
- Breathe in and sense the breath coming in. Breath out and sense the breath going out.
- Allow your body to take the breath it needs in its natural rhythm of being alive.

O = Observe, be aware of your experience in the moment: physically, emotionally, and mentally.

- Begin to observe your body, noticing if there's any tension or tightness anywhere, including the face. Allow your body to soften, or just mindfully adjust your body as it feels like it needs to.
- Be aware of how you're feeling emotionally right now: calm, ease, some restlessness or irritation, sadness or feeling neutral.
- Just be aware of any emotion and notice how it feels physically in the body and just let things be.
- Be aware of and observe your mind right now, noticing if it seems distracted or cluttered or settling into being here.
- Be aware of the fullness of your experience physically, emotionally, and mentally, and just let be.

P= Proceed. Quietly ask the questions: "*What's most important for me to pay attention to right now?*" or "*What am I needing right now?*" Allow the answers to arise and proceed with those answers in the next moment.

Finally, acknowledge yourself for taking this time for this act of self-care.

Source: Adapted from Elisha Goldstein in *A Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction Workbook*, co-authored by Bob Stahl Ph.D. and Elisha Goldstein, Ph.D. (New Harbinger, 2010). This exercise could be found on YouTube: The STOP Practice - YouTube

[The STOP Practice - YouTube](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EiuTpeu5xQc)

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