

Pause Before I React

Notice what is happening before deciding what to do next.

Sometimes our first reaction is our nervous system trying to protect us. This isn't about stopping your emotions or forcing yourself to think positively. It's about creating enough space to notice what's happening so you can choose your next step with greater awareness.

1. What just happened?

2. My first urge was...

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|--|---|--|
| ☐ Defend myself | ☐ Shut down | ☐ Fix it immediately |
| ☐ Explain | ☐ Please someone | ☐ Reach out for reassurance |
| ☐ Withdraw | ☐ Get angry | ☐ Other: _____ |

3. What is my body telling me?

Location: _____

Sensations: _____

Intensity: ○ 1 ○ 2 ○ 3 ○ 4 ○ 5

4. What story is my mind telling me?

5. How do I want to respond?

6. One small pause I can take right now:

- | | |
|---|--|
| ☐ Take one slow breath | ☐ Wait five minutes before responding |
| ☐ Feel my feet on the floor | ☐ Ask a clarifying question |
| ☐ Relax my jaw or shoulders | ☐ Step away briefly |
| ☐ Text or call a safe person | ☐ Other: _____ |