

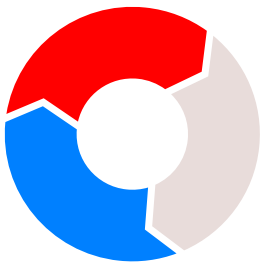


# RECOGNIZING YOUR OWN EMOTIONAL RESERVOIRS AND REACTIONS

## STRATEGIES FOR EMOTIONAL RESETS

### 1. SELF SOOTHE

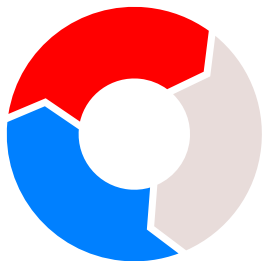
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|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Meditate                     | <input type="checkbox"/> Get a massage            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Read a book                  | <input type="checkbox"/> Go to therapy            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pay attention to your breath | <input type="checkbox"/> Get enough sleep         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Jog                          | <input type="checkbox"/> Play with your pet       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Dance                        | <input type="checkbox"/> Play with your kid       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pray                         | <input type="checkbox"/> Watch an inspiring video |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sing                         | <input type="checkbox"/> Go to the movies         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Go boxing                    | <input type="checkbox"/> Binge a TV show          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Take a walk                  | <input type="checkbox"/> Volunteer                |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Get into nature              | <input type="checkbox"/> Pick up a craft or hobby |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Do yoga                      | <input type="checkbox"/> Do dishes                |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Go bowling                   | <input type="checkbox"/> .....                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Call a friend                | <input type="checkbox"/> .....                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bake                         | <input type="checkbox"/> .....                    |



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## 2. "NAME TO TAME"--IDENTIFY YOUR FEELINGS

- Try to name what you're feeling. Denying and avoiding feelings doesn't make them disappear—naming emotional responses can help us understand ourselves better, communicate ourselves better, and diffuse the visceral escalation of our feelings.
- Acknowledge and accept that you feel what you feel. This is an element of mindfulness practice—notice, feel, don't judge.
- Identify the actions that your emotions are compelling you toward. Are you angry and itching to tear into your counterpart? Do you feel sad and eager to climb back into bed?
- Pause. Breathe. Decide: I feel what I feel, but how to I want and choose to at right now? All our emotions come with behavioral impulses—but these impulses aren't always the most constructive choices. Once you know how you feel and how your gut wants to react, you can decide....how to I choose to respond?
- Learn: What do my emotions tell me about my boundaries? Sometimes difficult political discussions push our boundaries in ways that we aren't willing or ready to engage with. Ask yourself—is my discomfort pushing me toward a growing zone? Or is it putting me in the panic zone? If it's panic, it might not be the time to engage.
- Learn: What do my emotions tell me about what I care about? Our emotional experiences sometimes provide the purest, most unfiltered messages about what we care about. Ask yourself—what's giving rise to these feelings? Why does it matter to me? And how might I communicate that in a way that is true to myself and understandable to my counterpart?



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## **3. WORK TOGETHER—COMMUNICATE YOUR EMOTIONAL RESPONSES, DON'T PROJECT THEM.**

Depending on the situation and the relationship, it can be helpful to be honest about our emotional responses to conflict. If it feels safe (it may not feel comfortable, but it shouldn't feel dangerous), try discussing:

- What feels most agitating or upsetting to me (you) when we talk? Why?
- Is there something in your history (individual or shared) that makes an issue particularly charged?
- Is there anything I (or you) should know about how this issue affects you (or me) personally?
- Is there a way we can name when something approaches a boundary line for us, before the conversation gets so far off the rails we can't engage anymore?