

The STOPP Method Guide

Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) Rapid Grounding & Relief Tool

SELF-HELP KIT

S STOP!

Pause immediately. Do not react or act on impulse.

- Picture a bright red STOP sign in your mind.
- Freeze your body in place for 2 seconds.
- Remind yourself: This reaction is not an emergency.

T Take a Breath

Calm your nervous system. Slow the adrenaline surge.

- Inhale slowly through your nose into your belly (4s).
- Exhale gently through your mouth (6s).
- Extended exhales stimulate the vagus nerve.

O Observe

Notice without judging. Become a neutral observer.

- **Feelings:** "I am noticing intense anxiety."
- **Body:** "My fight-or-flight response is active."
- **Thoughts:** "My mind is telling me I can't handle this."

P Pull Back (Perspective)

Take the Helicopter View. Question your thoughts.

- Is this thought a **fact** or an **opinion**?
- What would I tell a friend in this scenario?
- This feeling is uncomfortable, but it **will pass**.

P Proceed / Practise What Works

Choose an intentional next step that serves your long-term wellbeing.

Positive Self-Talk Mantras:

- "I am safe in this present moment."
- "This is just adrenaline; it will fade."
- "I can handle this uncomfortable feeling."

Constructive Actions:

- Practice sensory grounding (5-4-3-2-1).
- Step outside for fresh air or a brief walk.
- Return focus mindfully to your immediate task.

5-4-3-2-1 SENSORY GROUNDING TECHNIQUE

RE-ANCHOR YOUR AWARENESS IN THE PRESENT

5

Things You SEE

4

Things You TOUCH

3

Things You HEAR

2

Things You SMELL

1

Thing You TASTE

**Vagus Nerve
Breathwork:**

Inhale calm **4 Seconds** into your lower diaphragm, hold gently, then exhale **6 Seconds** to trigger parasympathetic relaxation.

My STOPP Method Practice Log

Use this worksheet to work through distress, anxiety, or emotional triggers.

REFLECTIVE LOG

DATE & TIME

TRIGGERING SITUATION / EVENT

DISTRESS SCALE (1-10)

1 S & T – Stop & Take a Breath Check-In

Pause what you are doing. Take 3 deep, slow abdominal breaths before writing.

- ☐ Paused physical motion ☐ Took 3 slow 4-in / 6-out breaths ☐ Unclenched jaw & shoulders

2 O – Observe: What is happening right now?

What body sensations do you feel? (tight chest, shaking, racing heart)

What thoughts is your mind generating? ("My mind is telling me...")

3 P – Pull Back: Helicopter View & Perspective

Is this thought a proven FACT or an emotional OPINION?

What compassionate advice would you give a close friend here?

What is the bigger picture? Will this matter in 6 months?

4 P – Proceed: What is the best step right now?

Select 1 or 2 constructive actions to ground yourself:

- ☐ 5-4-3-2-1 Sensory Grounding ☐ 10-minute walk or movement
☐ Listen to calming music ☐ Speak to a trusted colleague / friend

My Grounding Statement & Next Action:

