



## STOPP

This is a technique that allows us to gain some distance between distressing thoughts and feelings, reduce the physical reaction of emotion/adrenaline at times of high stress, and helps us to find some calm to help us think more logically and rationally.

**S****TOP!** – Just pause for a moment. Say it to yourself, in your head, as soon as you notice your mind and/or your body is reacting to a trigger/stress.

**T****AKE A BREATH** – Notice your breathing as you breathe in and out. Slowly breathe in through the nose, out through the mouth.

**O****BERVE** – We can notice the thoughts going through our mind, we can notice what we feel in our body, and we can notice the urge to react in impulsively.

- What thoughts are going through your mind right now?
- What are you reacting to?
- What sensations do you notice in your body?

**P****ULL BACK – PUT IN SOME PERSPECTIVE –**

**DON'T BELIEVE EVERYTHING YOU THINK!**  
**Thoughts are thoughts, NOT statements of fact.**

- What's the bigger picture?
- What is another way of looking at this situation?
- What advice would I give a friend?
- **THIS WILL PASS**

**P****RACTISE WHAT WORKS – PROCEED**

- What is the best thing to do right now?
- What is the most helpful thing for me, for others, for the situation?
- What can I do that fits with my values?
- Where can I focus my attention right now?
- Do what will be effective and appropriate.



## **How to use STOPP**

- Read through the steps often to familiarise yourself with them.
- Start to practice STOPP fully by running through the procedure several times a day, even if you don't need it.
- Start to use it for the little things that upset you. Do you find it easy to follow? If you find you are struggling a bit maybe carry around a reminder of STOPP you can use to guide you.
- Gradually, you will find that you can use it for more distressing situations. It will become automatic over time. It takes practice and patience.
- The earlier you use STOPP, the easier and more effective it will be.