

Creating space in the day to briefly pause, step back from stressors, and tend to our needs is an effective way to reduce the negative effects of our stress response and prevent us from going "over threshold."

When we STOP we create space between the stressor and our reaction. Then we have the power to choose our response.



Use this short practice throughout the day to "pump the brakes" on stress:



**Stop what you're doing; put things down and pause for a moment.**

**Give yourself some space from the stressor, if possible.**



**Take 3-5 deep breaths.**

**If it helps, say to yourself "in" as you're breathing in and "out" as you're breathing out.**



**Orient yourself to your environment. What do you see? Feel your feet on the floor.**

**Observe your experience with curiosity. What body sensations, thoughts, and emotions do you notice? Remember: thoughts are not facts; sensations and emotions are not permanent.**



**Proceed to address the situation.**

**Is the stressor something you have control over? If not, how can you cope with it?**

**If you still feel activated, pull back and pause again. What support do you need?**