

The Pause Journal

A guided reflection to prepare for difficult conversations.

The Pause

The Pause is a simple but powerful step that comes before engaging any other conflict resolution skill. It's a moment of engaging in emotion regulation, connecting with your body, mind, and spirit. A practical step anyone can try in any stressful situation. It involves three key elements:



- **Noticing:** What is happening in your body in that moment of conflict?
- **Relaxing:** Intentionally relax those areas.
- **Reflecting:** Reflect on the thoughts running through your mind.

*Between stimulus and response there is a space.
In that space is our power to choose our response.
In our response lies our growth and our freedom.
- Victor Frankl*

Using this Journal

This journal will walk you through the three steps of The Pause. If you're able, we encourage you to print these pages out, find a quiet space, and hand write your reflections to the prompts. First, you'll recall the conflict or situation you are hoping to address. Next, you'll take a Pause to notice what's happening in your body and release any tension you're holding. Finally, you'll reflect on your reaction to the conflict through a RAIN meditation.

Visit our website to learn more about [The Pause](#), [view resources](#) about these skills and ideas, or even sign up for an [upcoming workshop](#).



Recall your conflict

Using the prompts below, take a few minutes to remember the conflict that you brought with you today.



Who is involved?

What happened?

How did you respond when the conflict occurred?

How did the other person respond?

How did you leave things? What's the current status of this conflict?

Pause to Reflect



Before we enter a conflict, we should first pause to check in with ourselves. The prompts below will guide you through the three parts of the Pause to prepare yourself to act. Feel and think BEFORE you speak!

Step 1: Notice

Invite yourself to be present to just this moment. What feelings and sensations are you experiencing?

How does your stress reveal itself to you? To others?

Hit PAUSE.

Maybe you missed the chance to pause last time, but practice for next time. Draft a message and ask for a Pause.

EX: "I need a minute to gather myself and my thoughts. I'd like to take a 15-minute break. Would that be OK with you?"

Step 2: Relax

Do some deep breathing to release tension in your body.

**Inhale for 4
Hold for 7
Exhale for 8**

Step 3: Reflect on RAIN

Recognize	Allow	Investigate	Nurture
<i>What emotions are you feeling?</i>	<i>Let it be!</i>	<i>Why might you be feeling this way? What are you believing about this? What are your unmet needs?</i>	<i>What can be done about this unmet need? Who can help?</i>
	This is allowed!		
	Let it be!		
	It is what it is!		
	This is natural!		
	This too!		

**When you've finished, star the emotion/need most important to communicate to someone else.*

Speak with Purpose



Using your RAIN reflection from the Pause, create an I-Message that conveys how you feel about the conflict, why, and what you'd like moving forward.

What feeling do you want to communicate?

What need do you want to negotiate?

I feel / I'm feeling / I am / I get... (use one feeling word)

When... (describe what happened in OBJECTIVE language)

Because... (explain why it matters to YOU)

What I'd like / What I need / What I ask is... (share what you want in the future)

Conclude with Conviction



You can't control how a conversation will go, but you can control how you end leave it. Draft three I-messages you can use depending on how the conversation ends.

If the conversation goes well and the problem is solved:

If the conversation is received well but problem isn't solved:

If the conversation ends in a stalemate or they are opposing you: