

Staying Calm in Stressful Situations

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Center for Trauma Informed Innovation

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Grounding Yourself with a Mindful Body Check-In

- Shift to a comfortable position
- Take a deep breath in, feeling each part of it
- Pause and notice that you are basically okay
- Exhale slowly, letting go of tension and anxiety
- Repeat as often as you like



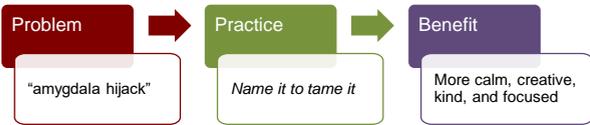
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Before you enter



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Tune into your emotions



Shapiro, 2020

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Extended Exhale



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Extended Exhale



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Check your mind, check your face

- Accept that discomfort is normal
- Recall your intention
- Remember that humans synchronize
- Be aware of how you show up



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During the encounter

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Give no one cause to fear you

- Remember we are primed to fear confrontation
- Stay calm in your body
- Slow down; consider your words and tone
- Consider what their nervous system needs



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Continue to keep yourself emotionally, mentally, and physically grounded

Seven horizontal lines for writing notes.



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TAP in

- Take a breath
Assess your body
Pinpoint any activators ("triggers")

Seven horizontal lines for writing notes.



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Intrapersonal Boundaries

- Operate alongside interpersonal boundaries
Determine how much of another's "stuff" I will let lodge in my own being
Determine how much of my own energy I will expend

Seven horizontal lines for writing notes.



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Practice the Shield



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Seven horizontal lines for writing.



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Seven horizontal lines for writing.



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Seven horizontal lines for writing.



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Experience	Description	Directed toward	Emotional load
Sympathy	Feeling sad for another	Other	Low
Cognitive Empathy	Understanding emotions and drivers	Neutral	None
Emotional Empathy	Feeling emotion with another	Self and Other	High
Compassionate Empathy	Being mindfully present alongside another	Other	Balanced and galvanized

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Practice compassionate empathy

- actively listen to the person
- remain nonjudgmental
- explore the other person's perspective
- identify the person's feeling(s)
- validate the person's feeling(s)
- let the person know they are not alone



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Do

- ✓ Provide support through presence and listening
- Offer assistance
- Listen without judgement, blame, shame, or guilt
- Focus on their thoughts and feelings
- Maintain confidentiality

Don't

- ✗ Allow yourself to be distracted
- Offer advice or opinions
- Shame or blame the person, even non-verbally
- Focus on your thoughts and feelings
- Gossip or spread rumors



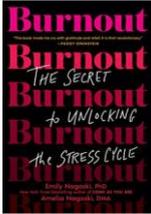
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Complete the Stress Response Cycle

While you are managing the day's stressors, your body is managing the day's stress.

The stress itself will kill you faster than the stressor will – unless you do something to complete the stress response cycle.

It's absolutely essential to your wellbeing that you give your body the resources it needs to complete the stress cycles that have been activated.



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Self-Compassion

1. Start with emotional tuning: Name what you feel.
2. Acknowledge that you are human, with a range of human emotions, common to all humans.
3. Stay curious, identify what you need most, and treat yourself with kindness.



Dr. Kristin Neff, 2003

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Virtual Room of Refuge
bit.ly/communityroomofrefuge

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Thank you!

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