

The Practice

Pause Before You Proceed

I'd like you to experiment with one new habit. Whenever you notice yourself becoming emotionally activated, don't make your first move. Make your first Power Pause.

The pause doesn't have to be long - one breath is enough, a few seconds is enough. What matters is that you interrupt the old sequence. Instead of:

Trigger.

Reaction.

Relief.

You practice:

Trigger.

Pause:

What am I feeling?

What is happening?

What does this moment need from me?

Then continue:

Choose.

Respond.

Emotional Regulation.

The purpose of the pause is not to find the perfect response. It's to stop your nervous system from automatically choosing the familiar one.

There may be times especially at first when you remember your new sequence after you've already reacted. Don't criticise

yourself. Use that moment to replay the situation in your mind and ask yourself: if I'd paused, what might I have chosen instead?

That isn't failure. That's practice.

Each time you do this, your nervous system learns that:

- ♥ not every uncomfortable feeling requires immediate action.
- ♥ that you can survive uncertainty.
- ♥ that you can tolerate discomfort without abandoning yourself.

Most importantly, it learns that there's someone new in charge who knows exactly how to keep things steady and regulated. Not fear, shame or guilt based, but someone who makes decisions from a consciously aware perspective. That person is you.

By the end of the week, don't ask yourself whether you were calmer, ask yourself something far more important: did I remember to pause?

- ♥ Every pause is a small act of self-leadership.
- ♥ Every pause is evidence that you're no longer living on emotional autopilot.
- ♥ Every pause is another step away from survival and another step towards choice, and emotional empowerment.

You don't need to protect yourself from every trigger. You only need to protect the space between the trigger and your response. That space is your new home. Furnish it with comfort, tranquillity, and joy.

And come home often.

At the end of the week think about any difficult situations that arose, and ask yourself: if I'd paused, what might I have chosen instead?