

Mindful Work

The S.T.O.P. technique

When a stress point arrives, we can easily react without thinking. In fact, when the core part of the brain recognises a threat, it partially shuts down the rational part of the brain. That's why otherwise docile people can be guilty of road rage!

The benefit of the body scan is that we become more familiar with the feelings that get triggered, in a split second, in the body. We all tighten up in different ways. So if you can pick up the signs really quickly, noticing body tension first, it may help you pause and look at things more rationally.

The S.T.O.P. technique is useful when stress hits you hard. Here's what it means:

S = Stop

Stop everything and just pause.

T = Take

Take some deep breaths, bring yourself fully into the present moment, and employ the longer outbreath or 10 second reboot technique.

O = Observe

Observe what's going on, like a scientist exploring something new. You just take a step back mentally, and observe, for example:

What body sensations are you experiencing and where?

What are you feeling right now?

What assumptions are you making?

What is the story you're telling yourself?

P = Proceed

Proceed with care and kindness.

Put your values into action. Act with compassion for all involved.