

The Six-Move Pause

A practical guide to your next response

Choose one everyday situation where you feel the urge to react. Use these six moves when immediate action is not required for safety.

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Your answers stay in this file. This PDF has no submit function. Leave out names or private details you do not need.

Safety first: If someone is in danger or urgent action is needed, act for safety and seek appropriate help. Do not delay that action for this exercise.

What is happening? Describe the situation in factual terms.

What do you feel pulled to do automatically?

1 Stop adding fuel

Choose one action you will hold off on for a defined interval. For example: sending, posting, purchasing or continuing an argument.

For this interval, I will not...

2 Protect the interval

Create time and practical distance from that automatic action. Decide how long you will pause and what you will move away from.

I will pause for... and protect that time by...

Make room for a choice

Use the pause with care

3 Orient to the present

Notice the room and your body's contact with a chair or the floor. Let your breathing be natural and comfortable. Name what is happening without adding a story.

My simple action to orient to the present is...

4 Check stakes and safety

Check what is urgent, reversible or potentially dangerous. Notice what information or support is missing before you decide.

What needs action now? What can safely wait or be reversed?

What information or support do I need?

5 Communicate the pause

If someone else is involved, explain the pause calmly. Name a boundary and a clear return point without using the pause to punish.

Example: "I need a little time. I will come back to this at 4 p.m."

My calm pause message, if another person is involved

My specific return or review time

Return with intention

Choose a next step you can follow

6 Choose or defer responsibly

Return to the situation. Choose a response with greater clarity, or set a specific time to review it and get support.

My deliberate response or next action is...

If I defer: my review time, next step and support are...

Notice what actually happened

What did you do during the pause? What changed, if anything? Use one observable detail. It is okay if you still feel unsettled.

My brief observation

Keep one small if-then plan

If [situation] happens, I will wait [interval] before [action]. During that interval, I will [supportive action]. I will return or decide at [time].

My next if-then pause

Continue with Return to Yourself

An optional next step: explore the full book by Nelson Pereira.

Explore the book

<https://payhip.com/b/AmsqP>

Practical adaptation of Chapter 6 of Return to Yourself by Nelson Pereira.
For reflection and learning. Not medical or mental health care.