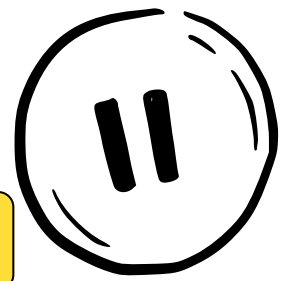


PRESS PAUSE TOOLKIT



Simple tools to help calm your body, slow your thoughts, and choose safer responses in moments of anger or stress.

WHEN TO USE THIS TOOLKIT

Use these tools when you notice early signs of anger such as muscle tension, racing thoughts, raised voice, or feeling overwhelmed. You do not need to use every tool—choose one that works best for you in the moment.

TOOL 1: THE 10-SECOND RESET

Pause. Inhale through your nose for 3 seconds, hold for 2 seconds, and exhale slowly for 5 seconds. Repeat this cycle three times before responding.

TOOL 2: STEP BACK TO STEP FORWARD

If it is safe, physically step away from the situation. Take a short walk, go outside, or move to another room. Distance helps your nervous system settle.

TOOL 3: GROUNDING (5-4-3-2-1)

Name 5 things you see, 4 things you can touch, 3 things you hear, 2 things you smell, and 1 thing you taste. This brings your focus back to the present moment.

TOOL 4: TEMPERATURE RESET

Splash cool water on your face, hold a cold object, or step into fresh air. Temperature changes can quickly reduce stress response.

TOOL 5: CONTROLLED MOVEMENT

Stretch, walk, or move your body gently. Physical movement helps release built-up tension and adrenaline.

TOOL 6: PAUSE PHRASE

Use a calm phrase to slow the moment, such as: "I need a moment. I'll come back to this." "Let's pause and talk later."

TOOL 7: SAFE DISTRACTION

Listen to music, focus on breathing, or engage in a neutral task until your body feels calmer.

AFTER THE PAUSE

Once calm, decide how to respond. Use clear communication, problem-solving, or seek support if needed.

WHEN TO SEEK EXTRA HELP...

If anger feels out of control, leads to fear, or becomes unsafe, reach out for help immediately by calling or texting the 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline – Call 911 for immediate danger



**Livingston County
Health Center**
YOUR LOCAL LINK TO PUBLIC HEALTH