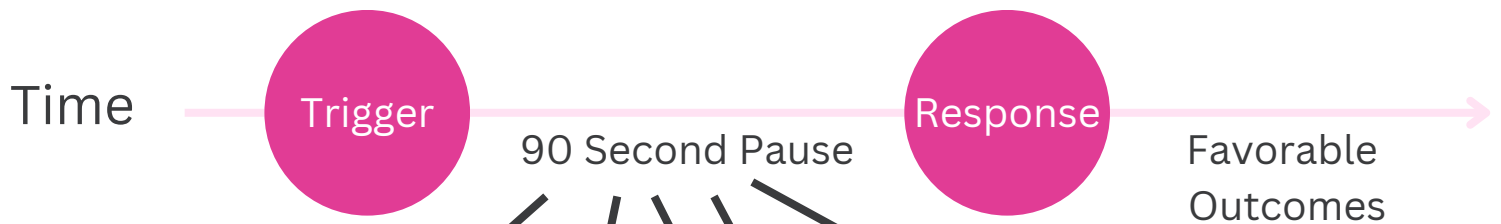
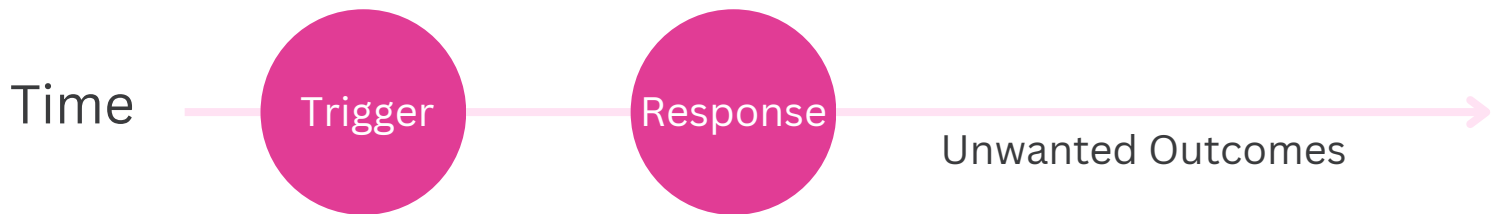




# ***The 90 Second Pause***



Deep breaths

Think through consequences

Resist the urge to act impulsively

Name how you feel

Connect with the present moment

## 90 Second Pause

Ninety seconds is all it takes to identify an emotion and allow it to dissipate while you simply notice it. Taking a 90 second pause tamps down activity in the amygdala (your fight/flight/freeze center).

### How can this be true?

The 90 second pause works because there is a 90-second chemical process that happens in the body; after that, any remaining emotional response is just the person choosing to stay in that emotional loop.”

“

### So, how do I do this 90 Second Pause?

#### Identify an Emotional Reaction

Emotions usually begin with physical responses or thoughts. So, start by paying attention to yourself when you are starting to experience an emotion.

*Need to get more in touch with your feelings, thoughts or body?*

Start by paying attention to yourself on a more regular basis. To do this, you can set an hourly reminder to take an internal weather report by asking, What's going on in my body? What am I thinking right now?

#### Label the Emotion

This step involves simply naming the emotion, such as I'm feeling angry. Do this as a neutral observer might, without judgment.

*Struggle to identify emotions?*

Have a cheat sheet. Pick five emotions: mad, sad, glad, afraid, or ashamed. This list is easy to memorize. Then, when you notice a physical sensation you struggle to label, try to simply pick between mad, sad, glad, afraid, and ashamed.

## Allow the Feeling to Come and Go without Judging or Trying to Change It

Feelings are like ocean waves — they rise, crest and recede, all day long. The entire “wave” process takes 90 seconds if you identify, label, and accept your emotion. This last step involves allowing the feeling to exist without trying to shove it down or deny it, or conversely, magnify it or make it a big deal. Simply observe it.

### Emotions feel to painful and scary?

It is natural to want to avoid uncomfortable feelings. Luckily, you can build up your tolerance for emotions much like you can strengthen muscles by going to the gym. When you practice observing and accepting your emotions, you are going to the “emotional gym.” This psychological workout builds better self-awareness which results in fewer amygdala hijacks.

### *Have emotions that overwhelm you, like waves that never recede?*

This dilemma can be traced to your thoughts. When you feel stuck in a feeling, look at the thoughts that you’re thinking that are re-stimulating the circuitry that is resulting in you having this physiological reaction over and over again. Journaling can help you to get your thoughts down on paper and reduce the emotional charge behind them.

### Forget to identify, label and accept your emotions?

Set a timer to remind yourself throughout your day to breathe and check-in with how you’re feeling. Start your day practicing mindfulness with a quick meditation.

### Feel like it is not working “fast enough?”

Be patient with yourself by focusing on progress, not perfection. Just like building muscle at the gym, it takes time and consistent effort. Eventually you will notice improvements.

