

# STOP Skill

## FACILITATOR HANDOUT

The STOP skill can be one of the most useful for helping us to avoid acting impulsively. Have you ever had a time where you have done or said something, then a few moments later wish you hadn't? The STOP skill can help with that!

STOP stands for:

<b>STOP!</b>	Don't move a muscle, freeze! Your emotions may try to make you react - stay in control!
<b>TAKE A STEP BACK</b>	Step away from the situation. This will help you to avoid acting impulsively.
<b>OBSERVE</b>	What's really going on? How are you feeling? What's happening inside and outside your body? What are other people doing?
<b>PROCEED</b>	Practise what works. Now you can think about what is going to be the best response. What will give the best outcome for everyone?

### But how does this actually work in real life?

#### Let me tell you a story...

I once received an email from my boss questioning me about something I didn't do (I felt like he was telling me off). I was so angry and immediately replied with a very strongly worded email. A few moments later, there was a knock on the office door. My boss walked in and gave me a dressing down for not being professional in my email and to consider things before I send them! This led to me feeling embarrassed, regretful, frustrated and a whole host of other unpleasant emotions. Now, if I had used the STOP skill...

**I could have stopped myself before I pressed send**

**I could have stepped away from the keyboard**

**I could have gone to make a cup of tea!**

**I could have taken a second to realise that anger was building within me, I could have noticed that my breathing was getting faster and I was getting hot**

**I could have re-read his email and realised that he was only looking for an answer, not blaming me**

**I could have walked to my boss' office and asked why he thought I was responsible**

**If I had done all of these things then the issues may have been resolved**



Discussion - do you think this could be useful in your life? Can you think of a time when this may have helped?



Activity - complete the STOP skill worksheet for a real life experience, where they think they could have acted less impulsively.