



Practice the PAUSE

Helping teens understand emotions and build resilience in the face of trauma or loss.

Ages 13-18

What is the pause?

The pause is the moment between feeling something and reacting to it.

Kira Mauseth, Ph.D., a clinical psychologist who specializes in disaster behavioral health, developed a series of skills models (trainings) to teach how to better manage emotions.

- The **COPE** model focuses on changing thoughts—**thinking skills**
- The **CALM** model focuses on changing actions—**doing skills**
- The **CARE** model focuses on changing how you want to live—**being skills**

The key to each of these models is to stop, recognize what you are feeling, think about why you're feeling that way, and choose a different thought, action, or behavior. Learn more about the COPE, CALM, and CARE skills models at practicethepause.org.



COVID-19 is more than just a virus. COVID-19 is a natural disaster.

When we think of natural disasters, we think of hurricanes, tornadoes, or earthquakes, but our minds and bodies react the same way to any disaster—even a pandemic. These are traumatic experiences.

Anger. Confusion. Difficulty concentrating or remembering. Worry. Sadness. Frustration.

These are normal responses to an abnormal situation.

These tips can help parents or caretakers teach teens ways to pause between feeling an emotion and reacting to that emotion. In that moment, we can learn how to choose a different way to think, act, or be that can make us feel better about the emotion we're experiencing.

Talk about what is happening in terms teens can understand.

It's important to discuss that unexpected experiences—like COVID-19—can make us all feel really uncomfortable.

- Our bodies and brains are having to make all kinds of changes right now, and changes are hard for everyone!
- When we feel uncomfortable, we may also feel sad, angry, or confused.
- This is normal and we ALL have these feelings.

The **COPE THINKING SKILLS**, **CALM DOING SKILLS**, and **CARE BEING SKILLS** give us tools we can use to feel better, stronger, and happier!





COPE: THINKING SKILLS

Using our minds in ways that help us feel better

Key concepts for COPE:

Helping teens learn how to change their thinking, establish healthy patterns, and create a greater sense of control.

CHECKING, OBSERVING, PLANNING, EXECUTING:

- **C**heck for your automatic reaction (thought)
- **O**bserve the emotion and behavior connected to the reaction
- **P**lan an alternative thought, reaction, or response
- **E**xecute positive change through practice and repetition

Discussion points for teens about THINKING SKILLS:

When you are worried about something...

try to find a new or different way of thinking about it. If your thoughts make you feel sad or angry, what are some things you can think about that help you have different feelings?

Example:

Instead of – “I’ll never see my friends again.”

Think – “I’m looking forward to summer when I can see my friends again.”

Thoughts, Feelings and Behaviors are all connected. To change one, you just have to change ANY of them.

- How can you change a 'bad' thought into a 'good' thought? The trick is to find a different thought.
 - » If something you are thinking is really bothering you, try to find an idea that is a little different than that. It doesn't have to be something wonderful or even happy—just different. Trying out a **DIFFERENT** thought can change how we feel and how we act!
- If it is hard to change your thoughts, even a bit, then maybe try changing a behavior or an action. Just a small thing can make a big difference in mood (feelings) and outlook (thoughts).
 - » Try a new routine. Get up and go to bed at the same time each day, do homework at a different time when you have more energy, or any number of other things. **ANYTHING** new can start a chain reaction for thoughts, feelings, and behaviors.





CALM: DOING SKILLS

Teaching to regulate and control the way that our bodies respond to emotions and stress

Key concepts for CALM:

Helping teens learn how to regulate their bodies with deep breathing and muscle relaxation.

CONTROLLING, ATTENDING, LISTENING, MASTERING:

- **C**ontrol breathing and heart rate
- **A**ttend to the present moment
- **L**isten to your thoughts & feelings
- **M**aster relaxation and body scanning

Discussion points for teens about DOING SKILLS:

Control, Attend, Listen, Master

CONTROL your breathing and heart rate. You can't panic if your body isn't in panic mode.

- Slow your breathing by counting slowly to three or four for every breath in and out. Try to breathe in through the nose, and out through the mouth.
- Use square breathing (make a square with your finger in the air- using a four count for each side of the square).

ATTEND to the present moment, not the past or the future.

- Tune into what it is happening within you and around you RIGHT NOW.
- Use all your senses to help you attend to the present. What do you see? Hear? Smell? Touch? Taste?

LISTEN to your thoughts, feelings, and sensations.

- Pay attention to your thoughts, feelings and sensations. Acknowledge each and let them pass over you like a wave rather than getting stuck.

MASTER your anxiety. Remind yourself that you are in charge, and that anxiety is not.

- Use muscle relaxation and body scanning to put yourself into a relaxed state. Scan your body and your five senses while attending to the present and listening to your thoughts and feelings. Starting at your toes, check in on each area of your body; tighten and then relax it.





CARE: BEING SKILLS

Reminding us that we are connected to lots of other people who care about us, and that it feels good to be part of something bigger than just us

Key concepts for CARE:

Helping teens learn to recognize the importance of connecting to other people and ideas, and being healthy, positive members of their community.

CONNECT, ACCEPT, REASON, ENGAGE:

- **C**onnect with other people or ideas
- **A**ccept change
- **R**eason your choices or purpose for growth
- **E**ngage in mindful living

Discussion points for teens about BEING SKILLS:

Find ways to connect to other people or even pets!

Try to spend time each day talking, sharing, and learning about other people and ideas that matter to you.

What are some social causes or issues that are important to you? How can you get involved?

- Talk to a parent, caregiver, teacher, or other adult about ideas they may have for how you can do this.
- Some ideas include raising money for a cause, collecting food for a food bank or food drive, writing notes to people who live in long-term care facilities.

Read, listen, and take part in stories and ideas that are new to you to learn more about your world and community. Recognizing you are part of something bigger than yourself helps create meaning and happiness.



Practice the PAUSE

Want to learn more about how to manage
your emotions and stress at any age?

Find additional resources and
downloadable tools at:

practicethepause.org

Practice the Pause is based on the COPE, CALM, and CARE skills models developed by Kira Mauseth, PhD, Clinical Psychologist, Snohomish Psychology Associates Senior Instructor, Psychology, Seattle University. They have been adapted for public use by Greater Columbia Accountable Community of Health.



**DOWNLOAD TOOLS AND RESOURCES FOR CHILDREN, TEENS,
AND ADULTS AT [PRACTICETHEPAUSE.ORG](https://practicethepause.org)**