



## Pick Your Toolkit: Managing Emotional Contagion

When we interact with others, their emotions can stick to us like glue - sometimes for better, sometimes for worse. This toolkit gives you quick strategies to stay grounded and intentional when emotions are swirling around you.

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### Grounding Tools

Recenter yourself when you feel overwhelmed:

- Take three deep breaths, focusing on your exhale.
  - Place your feet firmly on the ground and imagine roots connecting you to the earth.
  - Use a mantra like "This isn't mine to carry."
  - Visualize a protective bubble around you, letting in only what serves you.
  - Focus on a physical sensation, like the feeling of your hands clasped together or the texture of an object nearby.
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### Validation Phrases

Show empathy without absorbing negativity:

- "That sounds tough."
  - "I can see why you'd feel that way."
  - "Thanks for sharing that with me."
  - "That must be frustrating."
  - "I hear you."
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### Energy Shifts

Redirect or protect your energy in a situation:

- Change the subject to something lighter or more neutral.
  - Excuse yourself briefly to reset (e.g., "I just need to grab something real quick!").
  - Focus on something neutral in the room—a picture, a sound, or even your own hands.
  - Use humor (if appropriate) to diffuse tension.
  - If you're able, physically change your environment—step outside or move to a quieter space.
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### Reflection Prompts

Process and release emotions at the end of the day:

- "What emotions did I pick up from others today?"
  - "How did I manage my energy well?"
  - "What can I let go of before tomorrow?"
  - "What strategies worked well for me today?"
  - "Is there anything I want to adjust for next time?"
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### Personalize Your Toolkit

Write your own strategies or observations:

- "When [specific person] is upset, I can use [strategy] to stay grounded."
  - "One thing that always helps me is..."
  - "A mantra that works for me is..."
  - "I know I need to reset when I feel [specific emotion or physical cue]."
  - "One way I can protect my energy is by [specific boundary or action]."
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