

## **S.T.O.P.P.**

**S.T.O.P.P.** is a technique that allows us to gain some distance between distressing thoughts and feelings. It can help us to reduce the physical reaction of emotion and adrenaline at times of high stress, and enables us to find some calm in order to help us think more logically, clearly and rationally.

### **How to use S.T.O.P.P**

- Read through the steps often to familiarise yourself with them.
- Start to practice **STOPP** fully by running through the procedure several times a day, even if you don't need it.
- Start to use it for the little things that upset you. Do you find it easy to follow?
- If you find you are struggling a bit, maybe carry around a reminder of **STOPP** you can use to guide you.
- Gradually, you will find that you can use it for more distressing situations. It will become automatic over time. It takes practice and patience.
- The earlier you use **STOPP**, the easier and more effective it will be.

**DON'T BELIEVE EVERYTHING YOU THINK!**  
**Thoughts are thoughts, NOT statements of fact.**

## S.T.O.P.P.

Notice the intrusive or distressing thought, image, memory, trigger...	Write your reactions and alternative, healthier responses in this column. What works for you? What will help? What can you tell yourself? What do you need to remember at those times?
<b>STOPP!</b> Just pause for a moment. Say it to yourself, in your head, as soon as you notice your mind and/or your body is reacting to a trigger/stress.	
<b>T</b> ake a Breath. Notice your breathing as you breathe in and out. Slowly breathe in through the nose, out through the mouth.	
<b>O</b> bserve – Notice the thoughts going through your mind, the images, the triggers and body sensations you are experiencing. What feelings are you noticing in your body? Be aware of the urge to react impulsively. What thoughts are going through your mind right now? What are you reacting to? What sensations do you notice in your body?	
<b>Pull back</b> - Put in some perspective. What's the bigger picture? What is another way of looking at this situation? How would someone else see this? Is this fact or opinion?	
<b>P</b> practice what works. What is the best thing to do right now? What is the most helpful thing for me, for others, for the situation? What can I do that fits with my values? Where can I focus my attention right now? Do what will be effective and appropriate.	