



5 Ways to Stop Emotional Flooding Fast

We've all had the experience of having our buttons pushed at inopportune times, and feeling that dreaded impending rush of strong emotions. There are some ways to put a proverbial foot out and trip those up, and quickly. Strong emotions when triggered, some in like a wave. It rushes towards you, splashes all over you, and then goes back out to sea. This all takes place within 90 seconds. Really, just 90 seconds.

Let's say you get triggered. What can you do without leaving, reacting, or causing a scene? Here are some ideas to practice:

1. Change your body position. If you're sitting, stand. Standing, start walking. Swing your arms. Stuck in a chair with your right leg crossed? Cross the left instead. If you have privacy and have room, do a couple of jumping jacks. When you change your body position, it changes the direction your energy is flowing and disrupts what is going on.
2. Emotions are a right brain activity. Get out of your right mind and move over to the left. Start counting. Count backwards from some obscure number like 57, and count backwards in twos. Sing the ABC song to yourself. Don't like counting? How about adding in your head? $1+1=2$, $2+2=4$, $3+3=6$. Doing something left brained will take the focus off the emotions for long enough to regain your balance.
3. Take a bilateral approach. Bilateral means that you will go from one side of the body to the other. A really great bilateral activity is walking. Not only are you moving from left foot to right foot, but you are also swinging your arms. Have you ever noticed how much better you feel after a long walk and talk about a situation? It's because of the bilateral movement while you are processing what you're upset about.

If you are stuck in a room, make bilateral movements with your eyes. Look to the left, slide over to the right, and then back and forth until the emotions recede. You can also lightly tap some part of your body, from left to right and then back again until you feel calmer.

4. Don't forget to breathe. When we are tense, we tend to hold our breath. Breathe deep until your abdomen expands; in for the count of four, hold it for a count of seven, and then exhale for the count of eight. Do these three or four times to relax the body.
5. You can put the distressing situation in a container in your mind and let the mind know that you will address the issue later when it's more appropriate. Sometimes you can visualize a big Stop sign to make the flooding stop, and then put it into whatever container you desire.

BONUS: Notice that the upset energy is swirling around you in a certain direction. With your attention on that, start swirling the energy in the opposite direction until you feel calmer. You might have to do it a few times, but don't give up.