

# Calming Your Intense Emotions Worksheets

Create personal calm

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## 1. Deep Breathing

Breath work helps you manage stress of all levels and varieties and bring you back to the present moment.

1. Try doing this exercise lying down on the ground and notice how that provides a sensation of being grounded to the earth.
2. Place one hand on your stomach and the other on your heart.
3. Inhale deeply through your nose as you silently count to three.
4. Exhale through your mouth as you silently count to six.
5. Repeat this six more times, and then see if you can work up to a four-count inhale, followed by an eight-count exhale, and then five-count inhale, followed by a ten-count exhale.

Once you're done, notice how you feel calmer and more present.

Apps like [Prana Breath](#), [MindShift CBT](#), [Breath Ball](#), and [Health through Breath](#) can help make breathing exercises easier.

## 2. Progressive Muscle Relaxation

This is when you relax your muscles through a two-step process. You begin by systematically tensing particular muscle groups in your body, such as your neck and shoulders. Then you release the tension and notice how your muscles feel when they are relaxed.

1. Lie down in a comfortable position on your back.
2. Begin by focusing on a target muscle group – your legs, for instance. Take a slow, deep breath and squeeze the muscles as hard as you can for about five seconds. It's important to really feel the tension.
3. Next, quickly relax the tensed muscles. After a few seconds, you should feel all the tension flow out of your muscles, and they will become loose and limp.
4. Deliberately focus on the difference between the tension and the relaxation. This is the most important aspect of this exercise.
5. Remain in this state for fifteen to thirty seconds, and then move on to the next muscle group and repeat steps 2 and 3.
6. Systematically move through every muscle group of your body.

### **3. Stimulating Your Vagus Nerve**

The vagus nerve plays a central role in autonomic nervous system ANS regulation because it connects your brain to your digestive system, heart, lungs, throat, and facial muscles.

Vagus nerve stimulation helps you calm down when anxious and feel nurtured by your capacity to rest and feel nourished, by keeping your digestive system functioning optimally and your immune system in check.

The following strategies will help you stimulate your vagus nerve from the comfort of your home:

#### **Humming**

Because the vagus nerve passes by the vocal cords and the inner ear, vibrations of humming help soothe your nervous system.

Choose your favorite tune and notice the sensations in your chest, throat, and head.

#### **Conscious breathing**

Slow, conscious breathing is one of the fastest techniques to soothe your nervous system.

Vagus nerve stimulation happens when the breath is slowed down from the typical 10 to 14 breaths per minute to 5 to 7 breaths per minute.

#### **Diving reflex**

This is one of the best vagus nerve stimulation techniques.

The diving reflex slows the heart rate, increases blood flow to the brain, which reduces anxiety, and relaxes the body.

To stimulate the diving reflex, splash cold water on your face from your lips to your scalp line.

## **4. Visualization or Guided Imagery**

Using your imagination to picture relaxing memories or places can help ease your intense emotions.

1. Get in a comfortable position.
2. Start breathing deeply and slowly and feel your body as you release any tension in your muscles.
3. Once you feel relaxed, picture yourself walking toward a long, sandy beach. The sand is soft and warm under your bare feet. The air smells salty and fresh. As you move closer to the water, you notice the brilliant water is crystal clear with shells of all shapes and sizes glistening beneath the waves. The sun feels warm on your skin. You hear the far-off high-pitched cry of a gull. You breathe in and out, letting go of all stress.

## 5. Soothing Through The Senses

Make a list of five to ten activities that you can easily do to help you calm down.

**Sound:** pick a music that often soothes you. You can also try out recordings of nature sounds. There are plenty of apps that can play that sound for you. Depending on where you live, you may enjoy going outside and listening to the birds, or the ocean.

**Sight:** Look outside, watch animals play, look at your favorite photos, look at the ocean or a lake. Look at the ocean or any other part of nature that soothes you.

**Smell:** Light a scented candle, bake some cookies, put on your favorite perfume, burn incense, or try aromatherapy.

**Taste:** Savor a hot cup of tea or coffee, a small piece of chocolate, a cold glass of ice water, , a cup of chicken noodle soup, or a bowl of ice Cream.

**Touch:** Get a massage or a hug from someone you love, pet your dog or cat, wear your favorite sweats, or sit in a hot tub.

## **6. Develop a Pause**

Developing a pause before you act, will help you make more effective decisions.

Before you act, pause for a moment and notice your thoughts and feelings.

This might seem hard at first – you’ve been acting on your emotions for years. But think about the many times you regretted actions you took when you were emotional, and how much it would have helped if you took a moment to think about it before acting.

### **1. Watch the Emotion**

Take a step back and observe your experience of the emotion – how the emotion feels in your body, what triggered the emotion, your thoughts about the emotion, and any urges you have to act on it.

The emotion may ebb and flow, getting stronger before it gradually decreases in strength.

### **2. Accept that you’re having an emotion**

Acceptance means letting the emotion be while recognizing that you don’t have to act on it or against it.

### **3. Investigate what information the emotion give you**

If you’re upset with someone, perhaps your hurt is telling you it’s time to look for you to have an honest conversation with that person.

The information your emotions provide can lead to effective actions that will help you move forward in your life.

## 7. Create a Different Emotion

When a painful emotion is taking a long time to dissipate, despite having no reason for the intensity of your feelings, consider creating a more pleasant emotion.

Engage in an activity that will create the opposite emotion to what you're feeling:

\* **If you feel depressed**, watch a show that makes you laugh, or do something to keep yourself active, such as going out for a walk, or even doing house chores.

Change your body posture - walk tall and maintain eye contact, with a steady and clear voice.

\* **If you feel angry**, take a few deep calming breaths, or try to feel empathy for the other person - consider the reasons that might push him to act the way he did.

\* **If you feel guilty or ashamed**, accept the consequences of your actions and learn from them for the future. If there is something you can do about it, like apologizing or fixing your mistake, do it. If not, remind yourself that it's okay to make mistakes.

\* **If you feel afraid**, do something to increase your sense of control. Facing your fear can help you desensitize yourself and build mastery over your fear.

\* If you're afraid of failure, make a list of all the reasons that you truly are competent and capable of success.

Remind yourself that perfection is not the goal, rather it is willingness to perform and engage.

Separate your behavior (e.g., studying for an exam) from your emotion of fear, and remind yourself that you are capable of working and tolerating the fear.

Remind yourself that emotions will pass and that they have no more power over you than you are willing to give it. Rather than fighting against it, simply acknowledge it with mindfulness, breathe into it, and let it go.