Pause before Acting - Practice worksheet

Rehearse stopping, stepping back in an accessible way, observing, and choosing the next effective action in a low-stakes example.

Adults; supported use as appropriate | 15 minutes

Fictional example: Taylor receives an irritating email and waits before replying.

Use an ordinary or fictional example, with a clinician when appropriate. A pause can create space for choosing a safer response.

Practice task

Rehearse stopping, stepping back in an accessible way, observing, and choosing the next effective action in a low-stakes example.

1. My chosen or fictional situation, and what I know about it:

2. My response to the practice task above:

3. What would help you pause without making the situation less safe?

4. An optional next step, support, adaptation, or reason to stop:

Scope and adaptation

These are selected DBT-informed educational exercises, not comprehensive DBT, phone coaching, or crisis care. Use individualized clinical assessment and existing care plans. No cold-water immersion, breath holding, intense exercise prescriptions, exposure assignments, or risk scoring are included. Behavior chains and opposite-action decisions need clinician guidance when risk or complexity is present.

Original AI-assisted educational draft; independent clinical review pending. Version 1.0. Background: Dialectical Behavior Therapy Skills Training: Fundamentals. Full source links and scope: library.morethantherapy.org/approaches/resources/DBT-A06-2