



# Manage Your Emotions, Self-Sooth & Reduce the Tension





## 1. S.T.O.P. Technique

When you are upset, angry, emotionally aroused or about to do something that will put your children and DCF case at risk, try the simple STOP technique:

<b>S</b>	<i>Stop: Don't act immediately</i>
<b>T</b>	<i>Take a Deep Breath</i>
<b>O</b>	<i>Observe. What am I thinking right now?</i>
<b>P</b>	<i>Pull back/Cool Down. See the bigger picture. Use your mantra. Use TIPP skills (see below). Go outside. Take a walk. Implement the Family Coping Plan taught to you by your MDFR specialist.</i>

## 2. TIPP Skills for Managing Extreme Emotions

(adapted from Dialectical Behavior Therapy, DBT). TIPP Skills can be very helpful when you are experiencing extreme emotional arousal. You can use all the TIPP skills or just one.

-  Temperature: Splash cold water on your face. Hold a cold pack or Ziplock bag with ice water on your eyes and cheeks for 30 seconds.
-  Intense Exercise: Jog, walk, jumping jacks, dance for 10 – 15 minutes. Don't overdo it.
-  Paced Breathing: Breathe deeply from the belly. Each breath should be long, smooth, full and deep. Breathe out more slowly than you breathe in. For example, count to 4 as you breathe in, pause, count to 6 as you breathe out. Do this 5 - 10 times to bring down your arousal.
-  Progressive Muscle Relaxation: Tense and relax each muscle group, head to toe, one muscle group at a time. Tense for 5 seconds, then let go; relax each muscle all the way. Notice the tension; notice the difference when relaxed.

### 3. *Gentle Stretching*

This can be done as much as the you want, whenever you want. It is best used BEFORE you are very upset. It can be useful to calm yourself down and release the tension before it gets the better of you.

1. Reach your arms over your head.
2. Grab hold of your left wrist with your right hand.
3. Gently pull your arm up and to the right. Hold for 5 seconds.
4. Drop your arms.
5. Reach your arms over your head.
6. This time grab your right wrist with your left hand. Gently pull yourself to the left. Hold for 5 seconds.
7. Drop your arms.

### 4. *Self-encouragement*

Don't forget to encourage and praise yourself.  
You deserve it! Repeat over and over:

- ✓ "I can stand it"
- ✓ "It won't last forever"
- ✓ "I will make it out of this"
- ✓ "I'm doing the best I can"
- ✓ "This will pass."