



Proactive Meta-Moment Action Plan

This tip sheet is designed to help staff use the steps of the Meta-Moment to prepare for an upcoming situation in which intense unpleasant emotions (like anger or anxiety) are likely to be experienced.

Consider a recurring situation in which your emotions tend to run high and you tend not to handle the situation as your best self. Perhaps, you can handle the situation better next time by preparing in advance with the Meta-Moment.

Use the following steps to prepare to tap into your *best self* the next time you are confronted with a situation that causes intense emotions.

Step 1: Sense

Identify a situation or upcoming event that is likely to cause you to experience intense emotions and that you may not typically handle as your best self. Imagine yourself in that situation.

- What are you thinking?
- What is happening in your body?
- What emotions are you experiencing?
- How are you expressing these emotions?
- How do you typically respond to these emotions?

Step 2: Pause

Visualize yourself doing a breathing exercise to prevent your typical reaction. You inhale slowly through your nose and exhale through your mouth. Perhaps, you say a mantra while you breathe, such as “in” while inhaling and “out” while exhaling.

Step 3: See your "best self"

Now, imagine your *best self* in this situation. You may consider:

- Your personal ideal: Who do you want to be? What characteristics do you value in yourself? What personal characteristics matter to you the most? Your desired reputation: How do you want others to see you? What do you want them to say about you when you are not in the room?
- Your goals: What is your goal given your role in the situation?

Step 4: Strategize and act

Brainstorm strategies that might help you respond in a way that allows you to embody your *best self*. Here are a few that may help:

- Positive reappraisal or reframing: Remind yourself of a more helpful way to look at the situation.
- Positive self-talk: Tell yourself encouraging words to help you be the person you want to be.

Now that you’ve tried reframing or positive self-talk, what will you do or say in the situation? Describe a more helpful response that you can try next time you are in this or a similar situation.

Step 5: Debrief

After thinking about how you can better handle recurring situations that bring about intense emotions for you, have you learned anything new about yourself?