

A man with a beard, wearing a black long-sleeved shirt and a yellow apron, is working at a food stall. He is looking down at a large metal bowl. In the background, there are other people and a sign that says "The Frenchie". The scene is set in what appears to be a market or festival.

# JACKSON HIGH SCHOOL The Meta-Moment

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# About This Lesson

In this lesson, you will be introduced to the first two steps of the Meta-Moment: **Sense** and **Pause**.

**Let's get started!**

The Meta-Moment is a RULER anchor tool with four steps.

This tool is designed to create space and time to react to triggering situations in more helpful ways.

**STEP 1: Sense**

**STEP 2: Pause**

Today's  
plan

**STEP 3: See Your “Best Self”**

**STEP 4: Strategize and Act**

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## Step 1: Sense

We can be **triggered** by real or imagined:

- People
- Thoughts
- Situations
- Actions

For example, common triggers are waiting in a long line, a family member who pushes your buttons, or being verbally insulted.



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## Step 1: Sense

We can also think of triggers as things that we:

- See
- Hear
- Smell
- Touch
- Taste



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## Examples for See

- Witnessing bullying
- See someone steal something
- See someone cheat on a test
- See a scene in a movie that is a reminder to you of a bad experience

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## Examples for Hear

- Hear a racial slur or derogatory term
- Teacher brings up a topic that is upsetting to you (community violence, world hunger, abortion rights, etc.)
- Someone chewing loudly

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## Examples for Touch

- Someone pushes or bumps into you
- Someone hugs you without asking
- Itchy clothing

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## Examples for Taste/Smell

- A disgusting smell
- Something you eat brings back a memory
- A food that makes you feel nostalgic

# Remember

When we are triggered, it is usually because an emotional need was not met or was taken away suddenly.

We all have different needs and different backgrounds, so we each may find different events more or less triggering than others.

Are you more likely to be triggered at certain times of the day or in certain situations?

When we are tired, hungry, stressed, or sick after a long day, our resources within our body at lower levels. This is when we are more likely to be triggered.

**Depleted resources** put us at risk for reacting to triggers without thinking about the consequences first.



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## Step 2: Pausing

When we are triggered and our resources are depleted, it is helpful to consider emotion regulation strategies for **pausing** (Step 2 of the Meta-Moment).

**\*Question to Consider:** Before reviewing the 5 strategies on the following slides, turn to your table group or classmate and discuss any strategies you may already use.

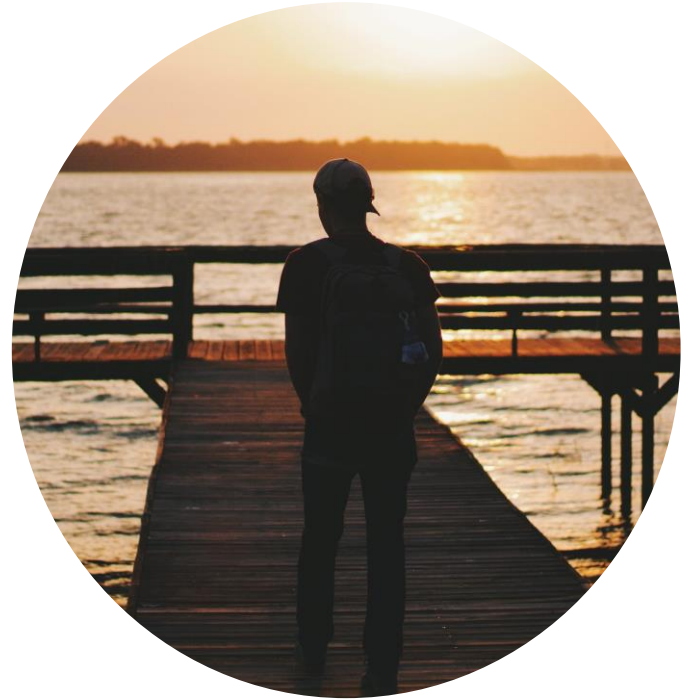
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# Taking Space

The first strategy is to **take space**.

This means putting physical distance between yourself and the trigger before you make any other decisions.

**Questions to consider:** Have you ever used a strategy like this? When do you think it is most useful?



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## Snap Out of It!

The second strategy is to “**snap out of it**” when you feel you are spiraling out of control emotionally. It is about creating a sensation you can’t ignore to bring you back to the present moment.

To do this, you might pinch yourself, snap a rubber band on your wrist, eat a lemon, hold a piece of ice, or blast music.



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## Count On It

The next strategy is **counting**. To practice, try counting back from 100 by 13s. It's hard – try it as a group!

The point of this strategy is that you have something to focus on besides your emotions for a moment, which delays you from making a poor choice.



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# Be Mindful

The fourth strategy is to take a moment to **be mindful**. Let's try it!

1. Think of **four** things you can currently see. When you've thought of four, raise your hand – then wait for all hands to be raised.
2. Now, close your eyes or lower your gaze. Think of **three** things you can feel right now and raise your hand when you have them.
3. Now, try to name **two** things you can hear, and raise your hand.
4. Lastly, name **one** thing you can taste or smell right now.

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# Keep Breathing

The final strategy is **breathing**.

Breathing is the only bodily process that is usually automatic, but we can take it over consciously when we choose to.

If we pay attention, we can make ourselves breathe faster or slower, deeper or more shallower.



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# Breathing

You've probably been told to take **deep breaths** to calm down.

## Why is that?

Taking slow, deliberate belly breaths can improve our immune systems and help with symptoms of asthma, mental health problems, or high blood pressure.

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# PAUSE Strategies

- Taking Space
- Snap Out of It
- Count On It
- Be Mindful
- Breathing

**Question to Consider:** When might each strategy be helpful for you?