

# 3 STEPS TO REVERSE EMOTIONAL HIJACKING

## REALIZE



Understand what's happening.

Know your triggers.

**Emotional hijacking** occurs when emotional processing centers of the brain take temporary control over the reasoning centers.\*

The following steps will help these brain areas **regain their normal balance**.

What makes you feel especially **upset, worried, anxious, threatened, or angry?**

Emotional triggers differ for everyone. Being **self-aware** of them can help you foresee feeling hijacked.

Forewarned is forearmed.

The brain's emotional processing centers act faster than reasoning centers.

**Waiting several seconds** allows all brain areas to come back online and help you choose a response.

**Deep breathing** will deliver oxygen & nutrients and remove waste from the brain, increasing its processing power.

**Focus on the next, best decision** you can make, taking into account what is **within your control** and what is not.

This won't be easy, so **practice patience** with yourself and others.

Wait before you respond.

Take a deep breath (or several).

Focus on solutions.

Cool down.

**Help the brain continue its recovery** by going outside, taking a walk, stretching. This will increase delivery of oxygen and removal of waste from all brain areas.

Get support.

**Talk through what happened** with a trusted friend or colleague. Empathy and an outside perspective can be helpful and healing.

Find the good.

**Reflect** on what you **did well** in the situation and **lessons learned**. Reframe this stressful situation into a learning **opportunity**.

## RESPOND



## RECOVER



\*Grillon, C., Robinson, O. J., Cornwell, B., & Ernst, M. (2019). Modeling anxiety in healthy humans: a key intermediate bridge between basic and clinical sciences. *Neuropsychopharmacology*, 44(12), 1999-2010.

