

EQ QUICK REFERENCE

EQ Under Pressure

YOUR STATE RIGHT NOW

If you're feeling...	Your nervous system is...	Quick practice
Racing thoughts, tight chest, can't focus	Overwhelmed	Orienting Practice: Look around slowly, name 5 things you can see
Foggy, numb, checked out	Depleted	Body Scan + one capacity deposit (movement, water, step outside)
Grounded, present, clear	Resourced	You're good, stay here

THE 3-BREATH RESET

1. Inhale for 4 counts
2. Hold for 4 counts
3. Exhale for 6 counts

Repeat 3 times.

Use anytime, anywhere. The extended exhale activates your parasympathetic nervous system and interrupts the stress response.

BEFORE ANY HIGH-STAKES MOMENT:

- ✓ Check your capacity (1-10)
- ✓ Ground (feet on floor, three breaths)
- ✓ Set intention: "What do I want to create here?"

AFTER ANY DIFFICULT INTERACTION:

- ✓ Name what happened (without judgment)
- ✓ Notice what you're feeling in your body
- ✓ Ask: "What would repair look like?"

THE PAUSE POINT

Between reaction and response

Pause. Turn inward. Notice what's happening.

Feel it. Name it.

Respond with care.

Return to a sense of safety. Then continue.

If regulation feels difficult, slow the process down. Take the time you need. Stay with yourself until your system settles.

EQ QUICK REFERENCE

The Emotional Vocabulary Expander

Name it more precisely

Why specificity matters: The more precisely you can name what you're feeling, the more effectively you can address it. Generic labels keep you stuck. Specific language creates pathways forward.

When you say "STRESSED" you might actually be:

Overwhelmed • Anxious • On edge • Pressured • Stretched too thin • Reactive

When you say "FINE" you might actually be:

Numb • Disconnected • Going through the motions • Resigned • Avoiding • Barely holding on

When you say "FRUSTRATED" you might actually be:

Disappointed • Unseen • Resentful • Powerless • Stuck • Dismissed

When you say "ANGRY" you might actually be:

Betrayed • Boundary violated • Disrespected • Afraid • Protective • Hurt

When you say "TIRED" you might actually be:

Depleted • Emotionally exhausted • Grieving • Carrying too much • Hopeless • Lonely

PRACTICE: THE SPECIFICITY CHECK

1. Notice a generic emotion label you're using ("I'm stressed")
2. Ask: "What flavor of this emotion am I actually experiencing?"
3. Name it more precisely ("I'm overwhelmed and afraid I'll drop something important")
4. Notice what shifts when you name it accurately

Emotional intelligence begins with awareness. You cannot regulate what you cannot name.

Dr. Samantha Kinkaid, PhD

Emotional Intelligence | Trauma-Informed Leadership | Resilience & Capacity Building

www.samanthakinkaid.com

drsamanthakinkaid@gmail.com | 406-304-5446