



A Clinician's Guide to Teaching Mindfulness

STOP Acronym Responding versus Reacting

- S – Stop**
- T – Take a breath**
- O – Observe**
- P – Proceed**

Example: You are in the middle of a phone conversation. The topic is challenging. You suddenly notice that you are upset (that is the moment of **STOP**, as you are suddenly awake to the truth of this moment). You take a deliberate breath (or two or three), which gives you a little bit of space or distance from the direct feeling of upset. Then you pay attention (observe) what is going on inside of you: you feel that your shoulders are tight and your jaw clenched. You feel a little hot and you feel like jelling or saying something mean. With this information and the created space you can now decide how to proceed.

STOP can create the small gap we need in order to make a decision instead of reacting mindlessly.