

Crisis Survival: STOP

When we are in crisis, it is like we are suddenly stuck on the middle of a frozen lake. We feel unsafe and all we can think about is getting off the ice as quickly as we can. The problem is that the urgency we feel could cause us to (a) move too quickly, slip and fall or (b) move without planning and accidentally fall through the ice. Think of this skill as “emergency mindfulness.” We want to use STOP to buy us a few moments and choose the safest path forward.

Stop

Do not react quickly! Your emotions are taking over and making it difficult to engage our Logic mind. Before we make a move, we need to stop and give our brains a chance to start working!

Take a step back

Take a step back and try to get a bird-eye view of the situation. Take a deep breath and try to address physical symptoms (e.g., racing heart, muscle tension).

Observe

Take a few moments to evaluate what is going on. What is the situation? What is your brain telling you? What is your goal?

Proceed in a planful, careful manner

Act, but with awareness. Move forward in a WISE MIND way – paying attention to your objective goal as well as your emotional needs