

TOOL #8: THE EMERGENCY BRAKE

HOW TO USE IT STEP BY STEP:

Step 1

Notice the impulse

- Even if you're already in the act of a compulsive activity or spiraling, awareness is Step 1

Step 2

STOP your body physically

- Put down the phone/controller
- Stand up and step away from the computer
- Put your hands in your pockets or cross your arms

Step 3

Ask the reality-check questions

- "Will I regret this in 10 minutes?"
- "Is this helping me or hurting me right now?"

Step 4


If the answer fails the reality check, do ONE different thing

- Drink water
- Step outside

Step 5

Regain control and take care of 'you'

- Don't allow the passing impulse to be in control



Example in Action

You've been scrolling TikTok for 90 minutes.
You're exhausted, it's 2am, you have work tomorrow, but you can't stop. Notice: "I'm in a loop." STOP: Put the phone face-down across the room. Stand up. Count to 10. Ask: "Will I regret staying up until 3am scrolling?" Answer: Yes. Do ONE different thing: Brush your teeth. You've broken the loop. You can choose to go to bed now—or if you pick up the phone again, it's a conscious choice, not compulsion.

What The Emergency Brake Tool Does

It physically interrupts an impulse loop (hyperfocus, scrolling, emotional spiral) before you do something you'll regret or waste hours on something that doesn't matter.

When to Use The Emergency Brake Tool:

Use this when you're locked in a compulsive loop (can't stop scrolling, gaming, reorganizing) or when you're about to react impulsively (snap at someone, throw something, send a regrettable text).

