

PEPPER TIME 13: THE STOP SIGN

Timing: 3–5 minutes. Practice in calm moments first; then use it in real time when anger rises.

What you’ll need: A quiet space and a vivid memory of something that made you angry.

What it’s about: Anger builds fast and hot. This practice trains your nervous system to interrupt that curve, cool the fire, and create space for choice before you react.

How to do it:

- 1. Recall the trigger. Sit comfortably, close your eyes, and bring to mind a moment when you felt strong anger.
- 2. Let the feeling build. Notice how anger shows up in your body—heat on the skin, tightness in the chest, pressure in the jaw, racing thoughts.
- 3. Call up the sign. When the feeling is vivid, picture a giant red STOP sign in your mind. See every detail.
- 4. Say it out loud (or whisper). Whisper “Stop.” At the same time, exhale slowly and let your muscles soften.
- 5. Stay with the shift. Notice the wave of anger begin to fade. Feel your body relax as the tension releases.

What to expect: With repetition, your brain starts linking the STOP image to calm. Over time, you’ll be able to summon it in real moments—during an argument, a heated meeting, or while parenting—and cut the escalation before it hijacks you.