



Pause Before I Carry More

Strong One P.I.V.O.T.™ Pause Worksheet

Use this worksheet when change, uncertainty, or a request from someone else triggers the Strong One impulse to say yes automatically, fix what is unsettled, take on what others could carry, or push through your own exhaustion. This is not about becoming less caring or less capable. It is about interrupting over-functioning before it costs you more.

As the strong one, pausing can feel unfamiliar or even irresponsible. Give yourself permission to pause for as long as you need. The purpose is:

- To create space to notice what the pressure to be strong has stirred up. Name it. Let it be here without rushing past it, proving yourself, or taking on more.
- Then discern whether your alarm is pointing to immediate danger or to the discomfort of not knowing, not controlling, disappointing someone, or not being able to do it all.

This can help your mind and body begin to settle. Once you feel steadier, you will be able to see more clearly what is actually yours to handle and what belongs to someone else.

Important: This is a self-reflection tool, not a substitute for emergency, medical, or mental health care. If you may be in immediate danger, cannot keep yourself safe, or face an urgent health, legal, financial, or relationship concern, pause this worksheet and seek appropriate help.

The Pressure I Am Pausing With

What change, uncertainty, request, or responsibility is pulling me into overdrive right now?

Date

Intensity right now / 10 (1 is least, 10 is most)



1 Notice What Is Here Before I Do More

Before I decide what needs to be done, who needs me, or how I will hold it all together, I will pause long enough to notice what is here. I do not need to justify, judge, suppress, fix, or prove anything yet.

What am I feeling right now? Check all that feel true.

- ☐ Afraid ☐ Angry ☐ Sad ☐ Overwhelmed
☐ Confused ☐ Disappointed ☐ Grieving ☐ Numb
☐ Ashamed ☐ Relieved ☐ Hopeful ☐ Something else: _____

Where do I feel this pressure in my body?

What seems to have stirred up this feeling or pressure?

What about this moment makes it feel unsafe, selfish, or disappointing to pause, say no, or let someone else carry their part?

Naming a feeling does not mean it must control what I do next. I am simply allowing it to be acknowledged.

Can I give myself permission to feel this for a moment without taking action, fixing it, or making it go away?

- ☐ Yes ☐ Not yet ☐ I may need support to do this



2 Check What This Alarm Is Asking Me To Protect

Before I push through or force myself to calm down, I will check whether this alarm is pointing to immediate danger or to the discomfort of change, uncertainty, disappointing someone, or not being in control.

- ☐ There is an immediate safety or urgent practical concern. I need appropriate help or information before I continue.
- ☐ I am physically safe right now, but my mind or body is reacting as though I must take care of everything immediately.
- ☐ I am not sure yet. I will slow down and get enough information or support to make that distinction.

What does this alarm appear to be protecting me from - disappointment, judgment, failure, letting someone down, or something else?

3 Separate What Is Happening From What My Strong One Story Is Adding

Write only what you know in the first column. Put assumptions, predictions, and the Strong One story that says you must handle it all, do it perfectly, or prove your care in the second.

What I know right now

What my mind is adding

What do I notice in my body right now? For example: tight chest, shallow breath, tense jaw, restless energy, heaviness, or numbness.



4 Give My System Permission To Settle

Now I begin to release some of the intense pressure. I do not need to force calm or earn rest; I am simply giving my system a little more space. Choose one option to practice. Feel free to do more than one if you have time or inclination.

- ☐ Feel my feet on the floor for 30 seconds. Then look around and name five things I can see.
- ☐ Focus on my breathing. Let my exhale become slightly longer than my inhale for five gentle breaths.
- ☐ Place a hand where I feel the pressure and say: "In this moment, I am safe enough to pause. I do not have to respond to a request or carry everything right now."
- ☐ When asked to take on one more task, politely ask if you can give them a response to that later.



Watch the "[I Am Safe Meditation](#)" (2 minutes)

After completing the practice I chose, answer: what shifted, even slightly? How do I feel now?



5 Make The Load Smaller Before I Decide

I am not asking myself to solve the entire future, rescue everyone, or carry every responsibility. I am reducing the pressure by identifying what belongs to this moment, what belongs to someone else, and what can wait.

What truly needs my attention right now or today - and what is the smallest part of it that is actually mine?

What can safely wait, be shared, or be returned to the person who is capable of carrying it?

What is one self-honoring choice I can make now - a boundary, a request for help, a delay, or one manageable next step?

What small act of rest or joy can I allow myself today?



Watch [Joy Heals. Just Do What Lights You Up Today](#) (1 min 30 seconds)



6 Check Again Before I Move

Intensity now / 10

Change from before points

What feels clearer now?

What do I need next to stay out of overdrive?

- ☐ More Pause. I need time, grounding, information, or support before I decide.
- ☐ Another P.I.V.O.T.™ worksheet. I can see another trip-up is active.
- ☐ One manageable next step. I can move without carrying everyone else alone.

Key Pause reminder: I do not have to prove I am capable by carrying everything. I can care deeply without taking on what is not mine. I can pause, say no, ask for help, or leave something unfinished while I get steadier.

Need more support? If you would like help working through what is keeping you stuck, reach out to me at info@dancewithchange.com.