

Back-Pocket Question or Statement Worksheet

Handling the Unexpected with Gratitude

Back-pocket statements or questions help you shift to a state of gratitude and handle the unexpected. Prepare them ahead of time for triggers you've identified. Then, when stress arises, pull out your back-pocket prompt to stay grounded.

Step 1: Prepare Your Back-Pocket Questions

These are questions you ask yourself in the moment to reset. Find one that resonates with you and is important.

Examples:

- What am I grateful for about this situation?
- Will this matter in five years?
- What's the worst that can happen?
- What do I know for sure?
- What's the big picture here?
- What do I want and how can I help?

My Back-Pocket Questions to try:

Step 2: Prepare Your Back-Pocket Statements

These are quick responses you can use in real time while staying calm and measured.

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Thank you.• Interesting.• I hear you.• Let me make sure I understand you—did you say ABC?• Please say more.• Can we go back and explore more about ...?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Help me understand why...• Humor me—why might this be a bad idea?• Is there another perspective I'm missing?• What does [other person] think?• Can I get back to you?• There's something more here I can't put my finger on.
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My Back-Pocket Statements:

Step 3: Practice in Real Time

When stress arises:

- Try asking yourself one back-pocket question.
- Use one back-pocket statement if you want to stay in the conversation.
- Choose an action: do nothing, walk away, listen, respond, decide, or act.

Tip: If it's a virtual meeting, keep your back-pocket statements and questions on a sticky note that only you can see.