

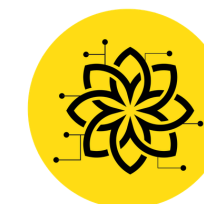
Cognitive Withdrawal

Disconnecting from Effort and Action

Sometimes children stop trying not because they are lazy, but because their brain feels tired, overwhelmed, or disconnected. Inside, quiet thoughts may whisper: *"What's the point?"* or *"What if I fail?"*

Today we explore what happens when the brain slowly disconnects from effort and how small steps can help us reconnect.

❓ Question Time: "Have you ever wanted to stop trying when something felt very hard?"



BRAIN NETI

WARM-UP Activity Time

Wake Up the Brain Game

Let's wake up our brain and body together. Our brain works best when it notices when to slow down and reset.



Sleepy Brain!

Move slowly like a sleepy turtle.



Busy Brain!

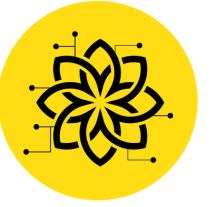
Wiggle quickly like a busy bee.



Pause Brain!

Freeze and take one deep breath.

WHAT'S HAPPENING INSIDE?



BRAIN NETI

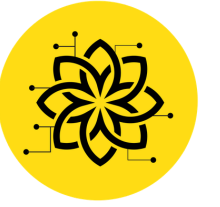
When the Brain Starts Pulling Away



Sometimes the brain slowly disconnects from effort. At first, it may look small but inside, many thoughts may be happening.

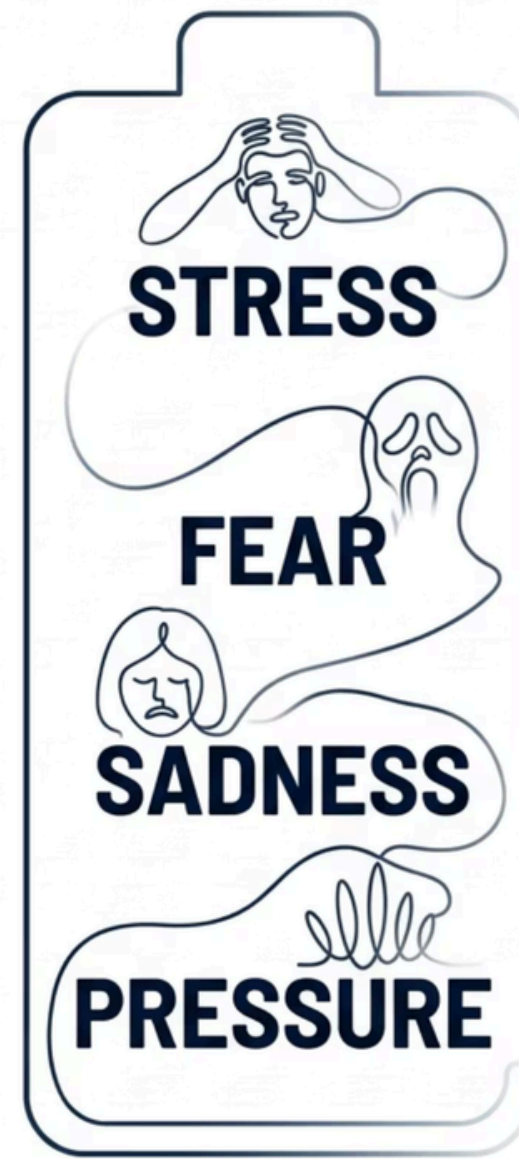
The outside becomes quiet. But the brain may feel tired from worrying, pressure, or fear.

❓ Question Time: "What are some reasons someone may stop trying?"



Meet the Brain Energy Battery

Our brain has an energy battery. When it feels charged, effort feels easier. When it drains, even small tasks feel hard.



What Charges the Battery?

- Feeling excited and curious
- Feeling supported and safe
- Feeling encouraged and seen

What Drains the Battery?

- Stress and fear
- Sadness and disappointment
- Pressure and embarrassment

📄 **Activity Time : Children show "full battery" and "low battery" body poses.**



STORY TIME

Maya Stops Trying

Maya loved drawing. She used to fill pages with colorful pictures. But one day during art class, another child laughed at her drawing.

1

Day 1

Maya smiled a little. But inside, something changed.

2

The Next Day

She drew less. She stopped raising her hand.

3

Soon After

She stopped bringing her sketchbook to school.

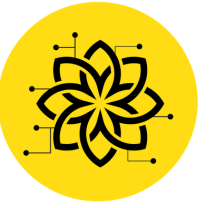
4

What Happened

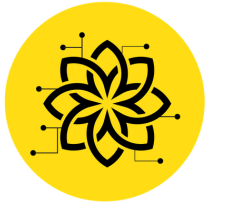
Nobody saw the change happen slowly. But Maya's brain started disconnecting from effort.



Question Time: "How do you think Maya felt inside?"



BRAIN NETI



BRAIN NETI



The Brain Remembers Hurt

When something feels embarrassing or disappointing, the brain tries to protect us. It may quietly say:

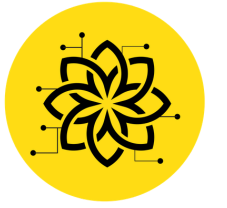
The brain thinks avoiding effort will keep us safe but sometimes it also keeps us stuck.

❓ Question Time: "Why might the brain want to avoid hard feelings?"

"Don't try again."

"Stay quiet."

"Avoid that feeling."




Big Feelings Can Hide Under Quietness

Not all struggles are loud. Some struggles become silent. A child may look calm outside while feeling something very different inside.

 **Embarrassed**

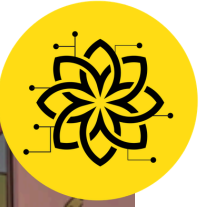
 **Worried**

 **Sad**

 **Frustrated**

 **Scared to Fail**

 Activity Time: Children point to feeling cards that may hide under quietness.



The Freeze Brain

Sometimes the brain does not fight or run. Sometimes it **freezes**. The brain is not being "bad" it may simply feel overwhelmed.

❓ Question Time: "What happens when your brain feels too full or too tired?"



Giving up quickly

Not answering

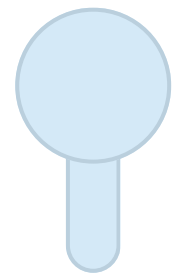
Avoiding tasks

Looking distracted

Doing nothing at all

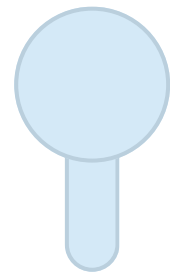
Small Steps Wake the Brain Back Up

The brain reconnects slowly. Tiny actions matter. Small steps help the brain feel safe enough to try again.



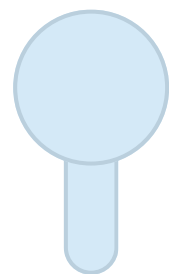
One Deep Breath

A slow breath signals safety to the brain.



One Question

Asking for help is a brave first step.



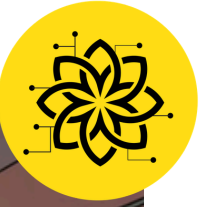
One Small Try

Tiny successes rebuild confidence and energy.



Activity Time: Children share one "tiny brave step" they could try today.





Thoughts Can Change Energy

Sometimes thoughts make effort feel heavier. Helpful thoughts can support the brain instead.

- Activity Time: Children practice turning one "stuck thought" into a "growth thought."



Stuck Thought

- "I can't do this."
- "I'm not good at it."
- "Why even try?"

Growth Thought

- "I can try one small step."
- "I am still learning."
- "Mistakes help brains grow."

Asking for Help Is a Brain Skill

Strong brains don't do everything alone. **Healthy brains ask for support.** When we reach out, our brain feels **safer and stronger** ready to try again.

💬 "Can you help me?"

💬 "I'm feeling stuck."

💬 "I want to try again."

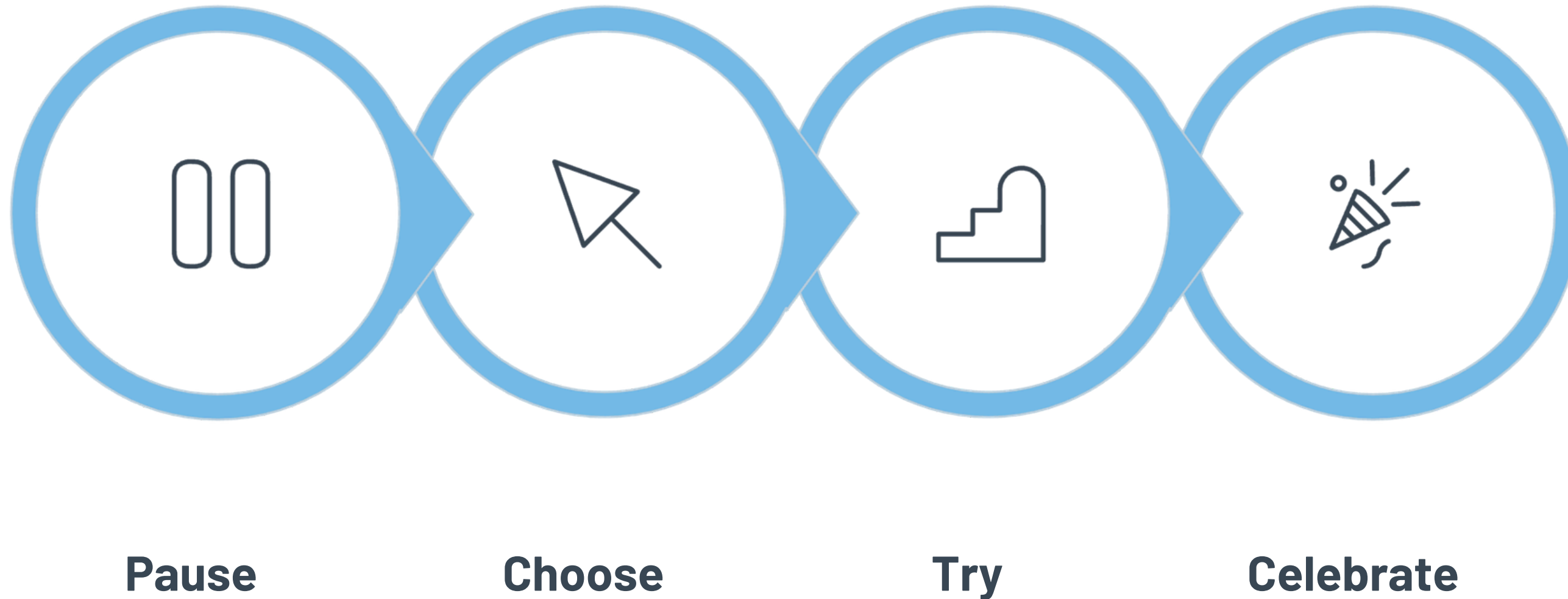
📌 Practice saying these words in a kind, confident voice!



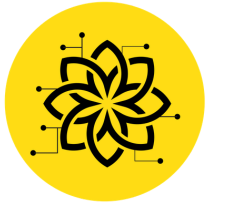
The Reconnect Tool



When your brain wants to disconnect, try these [four simple steps](#). Every small try helps the brain reconnect.



Tiny effort still counts. Every small step helps the brain reconnect to confidence.



Effort Grows the Brain



Brains grow stronger through practice. Every time we try again, learn from mistakes, ask questions, and keep going after difficulty the brain builds **stronger learning pathways**.

☞ Mistakes are not proof that we should stop. They are **part of learning**.

💬 "What is something you got better at because you kept practicing?"



My Reconnect Promise

Say together place one hand on your heart and one hand in the air:

"I notice when I feel stuck."

"I can pause and breathe."

"I can try one small step."

"Mistakes help me learn."

"I do not have to give up."

Every small effort helps the brain reconnect to confidence. 🌟

Tiny Step Roleplay



How to Play

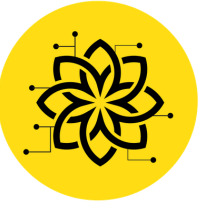
Work in pairs. One child pretends to feel stuck or ready to quit. The other helps them find **one tiny next step**. Then switch roles!

Try Saying:

- "You can start small."
- "Let's try together."
- "One step is enough."



Materials: Emotion cards and simple classroom props



Brain Battery Recharge Race

Move around the room and collect [brain recharge cards](#). After collecting one, practice the action together!

Deep Breathing

Slow breaths calm the brain

Stretching

Move your body to reset

Asking for Help

Reaching out is a skill

Taking Breaks

Rest helps the brain recharge

Positive Thinking

Kind thoughts grow confidence

  **Materials:** Recharge cards and open classroom space

Draw Your Courage Garden



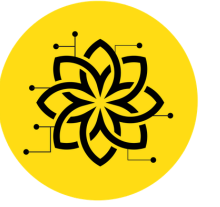
Draw a magical garden filled with things that help your brain grow. Every flower can represent a small success!

Add to Your Garden:

- 🌸 Brave thoughts
- 🤝 Helpful people
- 🌿 Calming tools
- ⭐ Tiny achievements

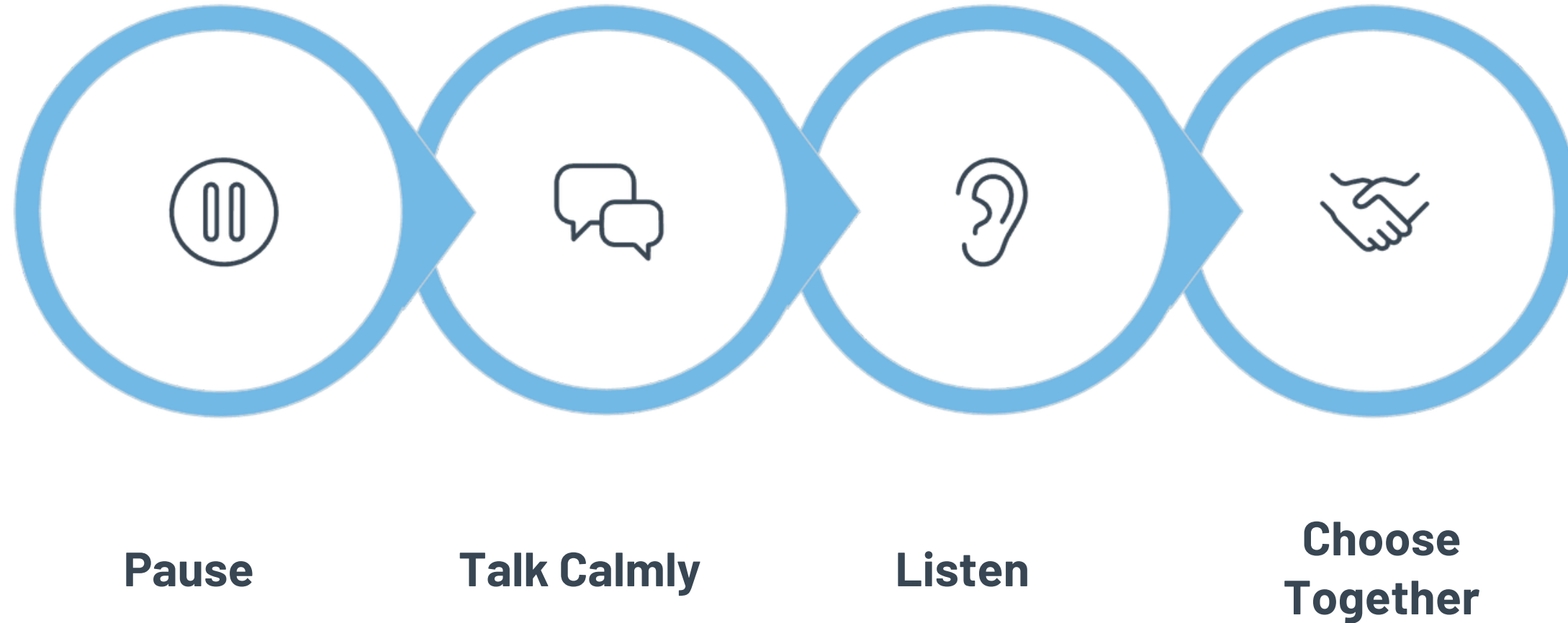


 **Materials:** Paper, crayons, markers, stickers



Team Bridge Builders

Work together to build a bridge using blocks, paper, or cups. Notice how teamwork becomes easier when everyone [slows down and supports each other](#).



These four steps help the whole team stay calm and connected while building together.

 **Cooperation**

Practice working as one team

 **Thoughtful Choices**

Slow down before deciding

 **Patience**

Give everyone time to contribute

 **Materials:** Blocks, cups, tape, or recycled materials

Activity Time

The Power Pause Lantern

Close your eyes and imagine holding a [glowing lantern](#). Take one slow breath. Imagine your lantern glowing brighter with every calm choice.

"I can pause."

"I can try again."

"I can take small steps."

"I do not have to give up."



Materials: Battery tea lights or paper lanterns (optional)

