

The Five Second Gap

If you cannot find the time to take a moment for yourself, give yourselves a **gift of the FSG** - the Five Second Gap.

Have you ever felt that you are being run by your emotions? At that moment you know that no good will come out of your actions. And yet you carry on. Your anger may be focussed on a person, a group of people or even an organisation. Your actions are vindictive, your focus to "get them back." The results often have short term satisfaction but in the long term the situation normally worsens. You feel like an outcast but in reality you have "cast yourself out."

Recently two people were sent to jail for a long time for committing road rage, which resulted in the murder of two fellow human beings. The Five Second Gap could have saved their future and two lives.

How does the FSG work? Basically the Five Second Gap creates space between what you **FEEL** and what you **DO**. If you take a short time between **RAGE** and **OUT-RAGE** you have choices. You can decide to take action or not. You can take a different course of action. You could ask a question rather than make a statement. You can learn about what makes you tick.

How do you use the FSG? Simply take note of the feelings in your body immediately before you react in a situation. This is the feeling that normally turns into actions that you regret. Recognise where the feeling is. What does it feel like? For each of us it is different. Some people feel pain or a hollowness in their chests. Some feel heat in their heads. Some people begin to shake. Where do you feel it? Simply Observe, Pause and Respond.



Once you have identified the feeling, you have the key to **RESPOND** or to **REACT**, to any situation. The next time the "feeling" arises, take 5 seconds to consider..... "Why am I feeling this way?" "Is this person/ situation trying to "make" me angry? "Are they trying to hurt me/ embarrass me/ belittle me?" "Is it just a passing comment/ action?" "What is my instinctive reaction, what can I do to change the situation or move to another safer place?"



By the time you have evaluated your feelings, the "moment" will have passed and you will be **FREE** to **RESPOND**. Choose a new option, or find another way to change the situation..... Move away from a dangerous driver. Slow down. Make space for the impatient driver. Offer tea to an antagonist. Ask **calm** questions to get a better understanding. Calmly communicate how you are feeling.

Why should I use the FSG? The FSG allows you to own your actions and your life will, become calmer and more successful. It is a learnt skill and does take time and practice. There will be times when you don't get it right. That is fine - regularly exercise the FSG and you will be rewarded.

When? Use the FSG at home with your family, your work colleagues, on the road or whenever you feel that you are about to lose your temper and your choices. Your life will be better for it. Remember that your feelings are real and **YOUR ACTIONS ARE ALWAYS YOUR CHOICE**.

TAKE THE FIVE SECOND GAP, OBSERVE, PAUSE AND CHOOSE TO RESPOND.