

## 12 Short Sentences Emotionally Intelligent People Use Under Pressure, According to a Health and Wellness Expert

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With these 12 powerful phrases, you'll have an emotional intelligence toolkit that helps you transform chaos into control.

You've likely heard of emotional intelligence, the ability to understand and manage your emotions. This is an invaluable skill, because it helps you to make better decisions in emotional moments—for example, when you're experiencing high stress or feel put under pressure.

But how can you practice emotional intelligence in those high-pressure moments?

I spoke about this recently with Carolyn Frost, founder of Healthy Mindset Living, a coaching practice focused on helping individuals find professional success without compromising their mental health.

"People today are drowning," Frost told me. "They're trying to meet never-ending deadlines, impossible demands, and endless urgency. And their reactions are amplifying the chaos, instead of calming it."

In her practice, Frost recommends using the following 12 power phrases to transform chaos into control. (If you enjoy this article, consider signing up for my free emotional intelligence course.)

### 1. I need a minute to think this through.

"It's such a fair thing to say: Let me think about it, and I'll get back to you," says Frost. "There's nothing wrong with taking a minute to process things.... You don't need to feel the pressure of an immediate 'yes.'"

If you read my column, you know I am constantly preaching "the Rule of Awkward Silence." By embracing silence and taking your time to answer others, you give yourself the time and space you need to answer more thoughtfully. Doing so also helps you avoid committing yourself too quickly or saying something you later regret.

### 2. Help me understand your perspective.

"This is a good one for when there's conflict or tension," Frost explains. "The challenge, though, is to then actually listen to what the other person is saying, rather than just teeing up what you're going to say next." \*

Using this phrase also helps you build empathy. The deeper you can dive into the perspective of others, the better you'll understand where they're coming from in the future.

### 3. That's interesting. Tell me more.

This one builds on the previous phrase, where you're taking perspective.



“Additionally,” says Frost, “it gives you a second or two to process what they’re saying along with your own thoughts.”

#### **4. I notice I’m feeling reactive right now.**

Frost says you can use this as a form of self-talk to help you get through high-pressure situations.

“I think it’s a good way to acknowledge that the conversation is really hitting you in a strong way,” she says. “And if you add a physical element to it, like putting your hand to your heart, this can provide an anchor that keeps your emotions from spiraling.”

#### **5. Let’s pause and come back to this.**

This is another alternative to help you create a pause in moments that feel heavy or stressful.

“It’s not saying, ‘Forget this, I’m moving on,’ ” Frost says. “It’s simply saying, ‘Let’s take a beat to understand this, and we’ll come back to it.’”

#### **6. Let me reflect on that and get back to you.**

Here’s one more phrase you can use to give yourself time to reflect. Additionally, though, Frost recommends blocking 15 minutes to actually give a reply. *Note*

This is important because it ensures you follow through, which builds trust and confidence in the relationship by showing that you mean what you say.

#### **7. What would a good outcome look like for you?**

“There’s this quote: ‘The biggest myth about communication is that it’s taken place,’ ” Frost shares. *Note*

“Often, two people think they understand what the other person is saying, but neither is really clear. This phrase is useful in getting clarity—and helps to show the other person that you value their opinion.”

#### **8. I appreciate you bringing this to my attention.**

“It takes courage for a team member to share their concerns with a manager or team leader,” says Frost. “When you say something like this, you acknowledge the other person’s feelings and the effort it took to bring it forward.”

I find this phrase useful because even if you don’t agree 100 percent with the other person, it still allows you to connect with their feelings and build rapport.

#### **9. I see this differently, but I’m curious about your view.**

If you don’t agree, you can use this expression to explore further. But Frost gives a warning: You have to be mindful about your body language when you say it. *Note*



"You have to be very thoughtful about it," she says. "If you can intentionally soften and open up your body language—versus saying it with crossed arms, for example—it comes across in a much more positive way."

#### 10. Can we explore other options together?

You can probably identify the key word here together.

Not only does this open the door to more creativity, it promotes a collaborative approach. Doing so can quickly turn a combative situation into a more unified one. Frost even suggests grabbing a pen and paper as you brainstorm, since the act of physical writing can slow you down and help you return to balance.

#### 11. I'm not ready to decide yet.

I've spoken often about the "dark side" of emotional intelligence, where people try to use your emotions against you. A good example of this is when they try to use time pressure to force you into making a quick decision, without concern for whether or not that decision is beneficial for you in the long run. This expression helps you relieve that pressure, using your own emotional intelligence.

On balance, though, Frost recommends setting a specific deadline for yourself to make a decision, so you don't simply procrastinate.

#### 12. What am I missing here?

I worked on a project once where the lead would regularly (and strategically) use this question to get others to speak.

"Sometimes, people are hesitant to speak up because they don't want to be viewed as critical or negative," Frost says. "But when you take initiative to ask this, you create space for them to open up and share what they're really thinking."

Developing emotional intelligence isn't an overnight process. But adding these phrases to your vocabulary gives you a toolkit with which you can practice. And the more you use them, the more comfortable you'll become at making emotions work for you, instead of against you.

