

DECREASE EMOTION

Cut through the heat so real conversation can happen.

WHAT IT IS

The intentional use of tone, pace, language, and body to reduce emotional intensity so conversation becomes possible.

WHY IT MATTERS IN SPORT

People make their worst decisions in the heat of the moment. Emotional flooding shuts down problem-solving, in you and in the other person.

6 BEST PRACTICES

1 Slow down first

Use the 3-Second Reset before you respond: take three breaths, count to three, and let the heat drop.

TRY THIS

Pause, then deliberately lower your speaking pace.

2 Stay calm on the inside

Keep your own emotions from driving the conversation. Name what you feel to yourself before you speak.

TRY THIS

Feel your feet on the floor. This moment is temporary.

3 Lead with tone and posture

Your body and voice speak before your words do. Soften your face, relax your shoulders, keep an open stance.

TRY THIS

Use a warm, even tone, not flat and not sharp.

4 Name and validate the emotion

Acknowledge what is being felt in the room before moving to facts. Validate without agreeing.

TRY THIS

"It seems like you're frustrated. That makes sense given what happened."

5 State your positive intent

Tell the other person why you're showing up. Separate the issue from the person so it never feels like an attack.

TRY THIS

"I want us to get through this together."

6 Act when emotions are low

No productive conversation happens in a flood state. Separate the parties if needed and wait 24 hours after a game.

TRY THIS

Pick a neutral, private setting, never the sideline.

"No good decisions happen in high emotion." — Dr. Thompson, NYPD Crisis Negotiator

REFLECT: How have I acknowledged and calmed emotion before trying to solve anything?