

The logo for PIXL, featuring the word 'PIXL' in a bold, dark blue, sans-serif font. The letter 'i' is lowercase and has a white dot above it. The background is a vibrant orange with various geometric patterns including circles, a grid of dots, and concentric circles.

IGNITING LEADERS
CHANGING LIVES

‘Emotionally Overdrawn’ Pearl resources

February 2024

EMOTIONALLY OVERDRAWN

If you are feeling rather like Adhern felt and have 'no more gas in the tank' then consider some of these things; not all will be relevant or right for you, but some may make a difference. Whatever is happening, if you are emotionally overdrawn you may need to stop and identify what helps the tank fill back up: a bath, meeting friends, shutting the laptop, not working at the weekend, going to the cinema/theatre/binging on a box set. Whatever it is you need, you need to find it. Sometimes we put ourselves last and then wonder why we are exhausted and emotionally drained. If your feelings of being emotionally overdrawn are to do with feeling like you have lost perspective, try some of these.

ONE: Move to a different view and narrate

Be a fly on the wall and look back into your situation and narrate what you are seeing, commenting on what you see yourself doing. The evidence seems to show that this helps get perspective. One study by Ozlem, Walter and Kross separated people into two groups: the immersers who saw things through their own eyes and the distancers who were the fly-on-the-wall group.

Group 1 immersers: were asked to replay an upsetting memory in their minds through their own eyes.

Group 2 distancers: were asked to do the same but from a fly-on-the-wall perspective, visually observing themselves like a bystander.

Then both were asked to work through some of their emotions verbally.

The results showed the following:

Immersers

- Trapped in their emotions
- Felt negative
- Verbal flood of comments
- Got tangled in emotional weeds

Distancers

- Went broad
- Could see things more clearly
- Showed empathy
- Came out with a constructive story
- Changed the tone of their inner voice

Further research into the 'distancing' technique showed it could:

- Rein in people's fight or flight mode

- Dampen down emotional activity in the brain
- Lead people to experience less hostility and aggression when they were provoked
- Shorten negative moods
- Help gain wisdom
- Put out potential 'chatter bush fires'

TWO: Watch the internal chatter

If your biggest critic is in your own head, ask it to pause. Our brains are not always helpful in their constant chatter. Ethan Kross, author of *Chatter* says, "Whatever the conversation, and how it manifests itself, when the inner voice runs amok and chatter takes the mental microphone, our mind not only torments but paralyzes us. It can lead us to do things that sabotage us".

THREE: Talk about yourself in the third person

This helps get control back and distances you from the emotion e.g. 'come on Rachel, you can do this, you have been through worse and you have overcome more than this'.

FOUR: Pause

Pause for 90 seconds while adrenaline subsides: fight, flight, freeze modes take 90 seconds to calm down before we can start to think straight. Give yourself 90 seconds before you jump in to make big decisions.

FIVE: Remember

Back your ability to handle any situation well: list all the things you have overcome so far. Reflect on what it was about YOU and what YOU did that made that possible.

As you work through these things, I hope that you feel that energy and perspective come back.



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