



Increasing Our Capacity for Intensity

Disclaimer: Energy work is never about becoming a better doormat. This isn't about accepting or tolerating a situation that's unacceptable. It may help you better deal with such a situation and to see it more clearly, but don't use these suggestions to avoid taking needed action. Use them *as an aid* to taking needed action.

Intense is a word I'm using a lot lately to describe what's going on in our country and world. Words like "good", "bad", "worse", etc. are based in judgment and aren't nearly as accurate. They also create a lot of emotion that often isn't helpful.

When things are intense, your habits, addictions and distractions are like release valves, lowering the intensity of your feelings to get them back into your comfort zone. Sometimes that's a very wise course of action and really serves you.

Self-care is hugely important in times like this. After all, it's far better to lower the intensity than to have an explosion. Taking a break can allow you to realign with your intention and yourself (vs. something outside of you), and to come at the situation with a fresh perspective.

Sometimes, though, we reduce the intensity unnecessarily, and unhelpfully. Pressure can help us step into something new, to let go of old stories about ourselves, or to love a part of us that we've been pushing away. Remember, diamonds form under intense pressure.

By increasing your capacity to be with intensity, you can stay present in more and more situations. Your system gets the *experience* of being in situations that feel challenging and intense, and realizes that you're still safe. This helps **rewire your nervous system so that you get triggered by fewer and fewer things.**

Plus, **building your capacity this way will help you become more embodied.** Energetically, you'll be in parts of your body you've previously abandoned. This brings greater energy and health to those parts. It helps you process the emotions that you've stored in your body, and creates more inner spaciousness. Creativity, joy and self-expression blossom in this space, so those naturally increase as part of this process.

The big questions are:

- **How do you know whether it's time to take a break, or time to stay with the intensity?**
- **How do you increase your capacity to hold intensity?**

Should I stay or should I go (take a break)?

The answer to this question comes from your inner guidance. If I've done a Human Design reading with you, practice following your inner authority to get clear about your next steps. Either way, the key is to listen to your body and inner guidance rather than trying to figure it out with your mind. Your brain is meant to implement your ideas. Your ideas come from your awareness, your creativity, your intuition and your heart or gut, all of which live in your body.

If you aren't sure of your inner guidance, try journaling about it or talking it over with someone who will listen and allow you to come to your own knowing. Doing the Future Now exercise for staying and then for going can also help you *feel* which is more resonant for you.

If you still aren't sure, just make the choice and tell yourself this is research. You're not trying to get the "right" answer (so judgmental!). You're practicing following your inner guidance and seeing what happens. So make up an answer and go for it.

If you decide to take a break, I strongly encourage you to pick something from your list below of truly nourishing activities. Try to avoid the grey area of something that distracts you but isn't strengthening or nurturing you. That's what often leads us to feeling "blah".

How do I increase my capacity to hold intensity?

Everything you're doing in this program is helping you to increase your capacity – including building awareness, clearing out the S.T.U.F.F., showing up for yourself, and building trust with yourself and others. This month, we're adding to your awareness and toolset.

Some great activities for increasing your capacity to hold intensity include:

- **Step 1** – Focus on what's happening *in the moment* and remind yourself that you're okay. Take a breath. [If you're not okay, get out of the situation and get help immediately.]
- **Refuturing!** By shifting into "what if it's possible", you shift out of reaction mode and into creation mode, which makes a tremendous difference.
- Do the **heart or head energy pose**. Feel your feelings. Notice what's going on in your body.
- **Channel breathing** (we'll do this on Wednesday's Clearing Call). Breath work helps you stay in your body while processing emotions. It can be very grounding

and centering. Done mindfully, it also helps you build neural circuitry that reconnects you with areas in your body that you haven't been inhabiting.

- **Double your body over on itself.** You can do the Child's Pose asana from yoga, or sit on the floor with your knees drawn up and your forehead on your knees or on your fists on your knees. Or sit in a chair and wrap your arms across your abdomen and lean over as much as is comfortable. Or picture yourself doing one of these and really feel it in your body. Now breathe into your body from all around you, and breathe out into the space all around you.

Creating Your Intensity Toolset

The following questions, combined with the suggestions above, will help you build your resources for handling intensity, as well as your awareness of some of your patterns.

When things get intense, I tend to*:

[*It might help to think about things like: Do I pretend to be okay? Do I dissociate? Do I joke to break the tension (and if so, when is that helpful and when is it not)?]

When I need a break, activities that nourish my mind, body and/or soul include:

My "grey" activities include:

The activities for increasing my capacity that I want to be especially mindful of are:

Now, think of a situation that currently feels intense for you.

What's happening:

My "shoulds" about this situation (for me, the other person/people, the situation itself):

Who or how I want to be in this situation: (I want to be someone who...)

At least 3 Refuturing Statements that expand my energy and perspective:

I choose _____.

Is it time for me to take a break? _____ If yes, I'll _____.

An action I'll take related to this situation is _____
and I'll do it by _____.