

 CHOOSE THRIVE OVER SURVIVE ACTIVITY

Review the list of activities provided by Joshua Freedman, www.sixseconds.com, to create new pathways to the road of thriving and away from the road of surviving.

- **Tune into your own “Danger Radar”** feelings to learn what triggers your Flight, Fight, Freeze or Flock response. For the next day or two, notice yourself as you either get angry, frustrated, afraid or defensive. What other feelings do you have at the same time? When do you find yourself wanting to fight? To flee? To freeze (or shut down)? To flock or herd? What physical sensations do you have—in your palms, your gut, and your neck, back or shoulders?
- **Play the “silent movie game”** at lunch, on the bus or in an airport: Watch people and see if you can guess what is going on inside them. The game is more fun when you have someone playing along—each of you observe the same scene, then compare notes on what you think each person was feeling.
- **Look at your own micro-expressions.** Get someone to videotape you doing an activity that causes a variety of feelings (such as talking to your mother-in-law). Then watch the tape pausing every few seconds. If you are feeling bold, invite your “silent movie game” partner to watch with you; you are likely to be amazed at how much she or he is able to see.
- **Create a “stress-o-meter.”** It can be as simple as an index card with a scale from 1-10, and a paperclip you slide up and down. When you are really fatigued, stretched, at the “end of your rope” or anxious, put the clip near 10. When you are cool and collected, put it near 1. A few times each day, check in with yourself, notice your stress level, and mark it on the stress-o-meter. Do not do anything to manage the stress right now—just notice.
- At the same time, **notice how your own level of reactivity changes** along with the stress-o-meter. Again, do not judge it or change it, just notice how your stress-o-meter level affects your Danger Radar. You can make this more fun by putting a bunch of pennies in one pocket, or on the corner of your desk. Every time you feel reactive, put one penny in a jar.
- **Check your own congruence or authenticity.** When you are saying something you do not truly mean, what are you feeling emotionally and physically? When you are not completely congruent, how does that affect your voice, posture, energy level, neck pain, ability to sit still and clenching of muscles (such as your toes)? Once again, the exercise is not about being more congruent, it is about noticing the subtle signals that go along with hiding (or trying to hide) some parts of your feelings.