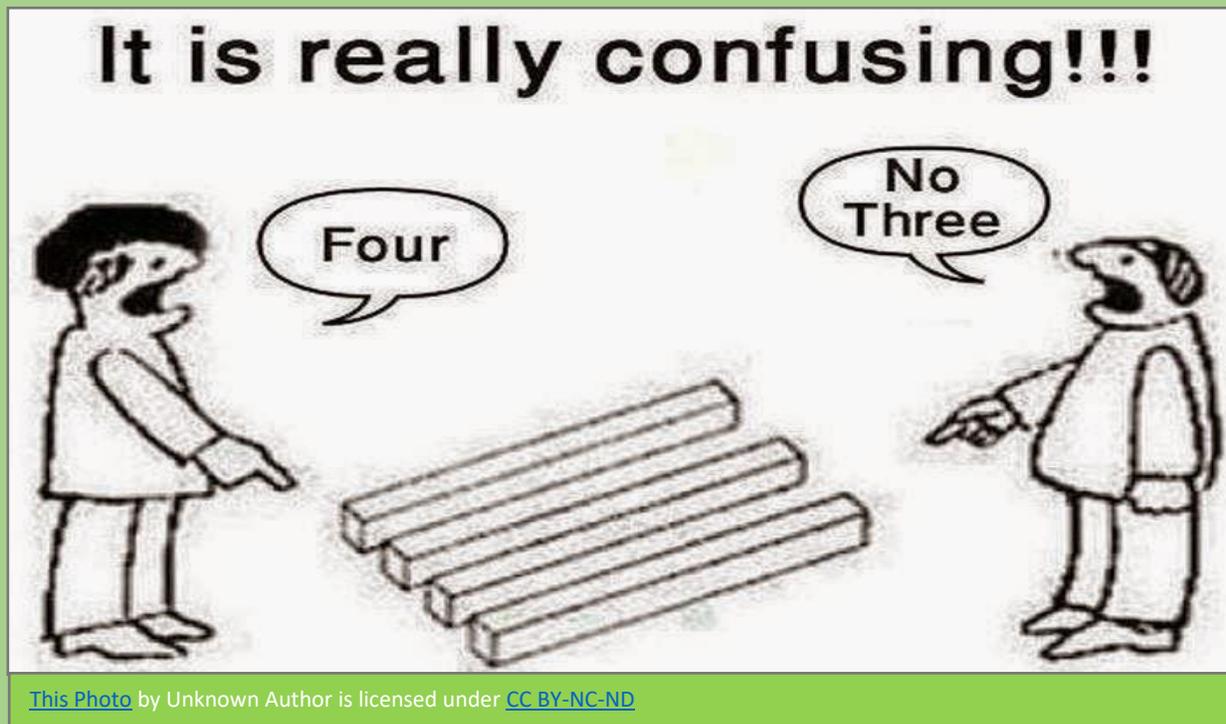


STOP AND THINK

Jumping to conclusions can be very damaging to relationships, but these three tips can help you think more clearly about the things you see (or think you see).

- **Pause.** Relationship expert Hal Runkel stresses the importance of “the pause.” Pausing allows people to take in what they are seeing, obtain more information and then make a decision about the best way to respond.
- **Dig deeper.** Ask questions and see if more information is available. Gather all the information you can and look for other evidence on the subject – whether you agree with it or not.
- **Give the benefit of the doubt.** Seeing is not always believing, especially at first or if you are being manipulated in some way. Relationships are built on trust, so make sure you know everything you can possibly know before you make an impulse decision about a matter.



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Extra tips for when you are in a disagreement with someone

1. Recognize what is giving you the emotion.

Notice when sensations are building inside of you. Maybe it's a rising heat in your body, a pulse in your head, a knot in your stomach, or a tightening in your chest.

Recognize these triggers as signs to activate your *internal pause button*.

2. Press pause.

Mentally say, "pause," as if you're reaching for that remote control.

3. Take a deep breath.

Getting a quick hit of extra oxygen to your brain helps you compose your thoughts and brings you into the present moment.

4. Observe.

For interactions with people, just hold off and listen. There's no rule that you have to say anything immediately. Notice the thoughts that go through your mind and simply observe them without attachment.

To curb impulse eating or spending, rewind to a goal you've set yourself around this kind of situation or a mantra you've created. Fast forward to the best possible outcome. How do you want this to pan out?

Again, allow yourself to simply observe the thoughts that pass through your mind.

5. Press play.

Now you're ready to act. Mindfully.

You may be thinking, "Sounds great in theory, but in the heat of the moment all of that is going to take too long!"

Yes, it may feel like that at first. If you're hard-wired to react immediately, it's a case of reminding yourself that it's ok to wait.

Giving yourself extra time before reacting can make a huge difference. Pressing the *pause* button gives you a chance to rewind, make a good choice, and then press play again to continue in a better way.

It puts the power into your own hands to make good decisions and take control of your life. You gain deeper relationships and learn so much more by talking less and **listening more.**

Sources:

<https://firstthings.org/3-ways-to-avoid-jumping-to-conclusions/>

<https://tinybuddha.com/blog/think-before-reacting-use-mental-pause-button/>