

Switch #1

For Yourself



Label it

- 1 Stop. Recognise the emotion that is aggravating your Ape.
- 2 Acknowledge the emotion you are masking.
- 3 Identify and label the emotion.
- 4 Identify the trigger that may have caused the emotion.



When you mask your emotions, you limit your cognitive capacity. Use the labelling switch to free cognitive capacity for the task at hand.

Switch #2

For Yourself



Time

- 1 Set a rule not to react within a set time frame (eg. 24 hours).
- 2 When something triggers your Ape, don't respond, not even a phone call, nothing.
- 3 Once the time limit is up, reassess if more time is required.



Giving your Ape some time helps create distance between the cause and any effect, and can allow you to become more mindful of context and circumstances.

Switch #3

For Yourself



Mentor

- 1 Recall one of your mentors or respected role models.
- 2 How would they respond (think, feel, act) to this situation?
- 3 What would your role model / mentor advise you to do?



Identifying with a role model / mentor you respect will focus your attention on constructive problem solving and reduce the chance you'll regret your actions later.

Switch #4

For Yourself



Stories

- 1 Try to think of a story that would justify someone's poor behaviour.

(For example, if they cut you off in traffic, make up a story to say they are rushing to day care to pick up a sick child.)

- 2 Practice empathy by making up dramatic stories about random strangers and see how it makes you feel.



Look for the best in people. Sometimes good people make bad decisions. It shouldn't define them and you shouldn't assume the worst.

Switch #5

For Yourself



Significance

- 1 Consider whether this will be an issue in 10 years.
- 2 What are the 3 most important things in your life or career at the moment?
- 3 Consider how this fits into your bigger picture.



When we are controlled by our Ape, it's difficult to see issues with perspective, but doing so can help us return to our rational selves.

Switch #6

For Yourself



- 1 Choose a person who is a trusted listener and ask if they mind you 'venting'.
- 2 Once you have had a rant, ask yourself:
 - How have you solved similar situations in the past?
 - How might this approach be adapted to the current situation?



Talking through the emotion toward solving the problem helps shift the focus from reacting to responding.

Switch #7

For Yourself



Photo

- 1 Select a photo of someone you love or inspires you.
- 2 Get it framed so it's physically present in a place that's easy to see at a glance.
- 3 When your Ape starts to stomp, look at the photo for 30 seconds.
- 4 Observe as your focus shifts from Ape stomping to a less emotional state.



Focusing on this person enables a positive mindset, which allows your brain to become rational and logical again.

Switch #8

For Yourself



Music

- 1 Have a favourite song easily accessible on your phone and computer.
- 2 When your Ape starts to beat it's chest, listen to the song.
- 3 If you're Ape is still triggered, listen to it again or use another switch.



Music triggers memories and areas in the brain that release chemicals, which enable you to release the negative patterns.

Switch #9

For Yourself



Breathe

- 1 Focus only on your breathing.
- 2 Place your hand on your stomach and breathe deeply, allowing your stomach to expand while you inhale.
- 3 Repeat at least 5 times.



Deep breathing lowers your stress hormones by 30%, which has an instant physiological impact on your body.

Switch #10

For Yourself



Fake email

1 Open up a note taking app or word document and write the email or text you *want* to send.

2 Once you have finished, delete your writing and then compose the email or text you *should* send.



NOTE: *Apes should never send emails! Simply by writing your Ape thoughts down, you are more likely to focus on the desired outcome rather than reacting to the individual.*

Switch #11

For Yourself



Walk

- 1 Go for a walk.
- 2 Notice something in the physical world and be intentionally curious.
- 3 Discipline yourself to think about what has caused the switch.



Walking releases the natural 'feel good' hormone in the brain, instantly lifting your Ape's mood and allowing you to see the bigger picture.

Switch #12

For Yourself



Reframe

- 1 Write down the story you are telling yourself.
- 2 Change the language, removing any personal judgment and be less emotive.
- 3 Challenge whether this is assumption or fact. What evidence is there to support this story you're telling?
- 4 So now, what is the story you can tell yourself?



We bombard our minds with negative thoughts, and terrifying reasons not to do things. These self limiting beliefs just prevent you from becoming the best version of yourself.