

NAMP POST-ROLE SELF-DEBRIEF

Taking Care of Yourself After a Challenging SP Scenario

You have just completed a difficult or emotionally demanding scenario. Maybe it was intense, exhausting, or unsettling, and now you are wondering: How do I leave the role behind? How do I let it go and not take it home with me?

There is no single method for coming down after a tough portrayal. Everyone processes differently. Below are some suggestions to help you decompress, reset, and feel supported.

Letting Go of the Role

Some SPs bounce back quickly, while others need time and space to transition out of character. If you are feeling off, consider trying one or more of the following:

- **Debrief with Other SPs:** If others portrayed the same role, take time to connect afterward. Share stories, laugh, and release tension together.
- **Talk to a Friend:** Calling someone to chat about something completely unrelated can help reset your perspective.
- **Watch Something Light:** A feel-good show or even cartoons can shift your mindset and help you relax.
- **Take a Nap or Meditate:** If your mind is racing but your body is tired, try soft music, breathing exercises, or guided meditation.
- **Connect with Experienced SPs or Actors:** Many have useful tips for managing intense emotions after challenging scenarios.
- **Read or Listen to Something Uplifting:** A book or podcast can be a welcome distraction and help shift your focus.
- **Get Moving:** Physical activity such as walking, stretching, or any type of exercise can help your body release stress.
- **Reach Out to the SP Office:** If something is lingering, email namp-sp@ualberta.ca to arrange a call back. We are here to listen and support you.

When You Have Trouble Letting Go

Sometimes a scenario sticks with you longer than expected. You might notice:

- Difficulty focusing on daily tasks
- Emotional distress or irritability
- Replaying the interaction in your mind
- Feeling low or disconnected
- Imagining symptoms related to the role

These reactions are not unusual. They may signal that your mind and body are still processing the experience.

Looking After Your Emotional Well-being

- **Know Your Limits:** Be honest with yourself if a role brings up strong emotions. Recognize when something feels too close to home.
- **Choose Roles Thoughtfully:** Avoid roles that relate to unresolved personal experiences or situations that may feel too real.
- **Make a Plan:** If you have reacted strongly to a role before, create a strategy for how you will debrief and care for yourself afterward.
- **Consider Retiring a Role:** If a recurring role continues to affect you negatively, it may be time to step away from that portrayal.
- **Communicate with Us:** If you are struggling to shake off a role or feel emotionally unsettled, please let us know. We can help.

Final Thoughts

As a Standardized Patient, your preparation for each case is important. Equally important is how you care for yourself afterward. Taking time to come down from a demanding scenario is not only healthy, it is necessary. Your well-being matters to us, to the program, and most of all, to you.