

Mental Reboot Strategy for Interviews and Coaching

■ Step-by-Step Mental Reboot When You Get Stuck:

1. Verbal Reset Phrase:

Say: "Let me take 10 seconds to reset and break this down from first principles."

- This calms you and shows poise.

2. Use the 9-Step Template as a Lifeline:

- Clarify the question
- Try small example (e.g., [1,2,3])
- Pick the right data structure
- Speak the algorithm out loud
- Write pseudocode

3. Write or Draw Something:

- Trace array or heap values manually
- Sketch or bullet key operations

4. Ask a Clarifying Question:

Say: "If I insert 1,2,3 — median is 2, right?"

- Buys time, reorients thinking, may earn hints.

5. Talk Before Code:

Say: "Let me describe what I want to do before coding it."

- This separates logic from syntax under pressure.

■ Remember:

- Structure beats speed.
- Saying "Let me reset" makes you look calm, not lost.
- Interviewers want clarity, not perfection.

You're in control — reboot, recover, and refocus.