

TIME OUT PROCEDURE:

Protect your relationship from toxicity in Three Steps

1. **Call a time-out** if you feel that you **or** your partner are unable to fight fairly due to flooding, defensiveness, confusion, etc. (Use this with your children as well!). Simply say: "I'm calling a time out."

2. Once a TIME-OUT is called by either party, **BOTH of you are to stop talking** on that subject.

The time out may last up to: _____ hours.

(You decide this window of time as a couple; be conservative and make sure you set aside ENOUGH time for both of you to calm down).

You should wait a minimum of 30 minutes to lower your heart rate and blood pressure.

3. Whoever CALLED the time-out is to then **re-initiate the discussion** (call a time in) within the agreed upon maximum time-out period.

Re-use the time-out as needed...make sure you are slowing down and using the Speaker Listener Dialogue process if you keep having to use the time-out!

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