

HOW TO TAKE A 'TIME-OUT' WHEN ARGUING

Directions

If you are arguing with another person and you begin to accuse, criticize, or yell, then it is probably a time to take a "time-out." A time-out provides people with an opportunity to cool down, identify their feelings, and start to work productively towards solving a problem.

1. Recognizing the signs that you need a "time-out."

Check off the statements that describe how you typically feel in an argument.

- | | | |
|---|------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Your fists are clenched. | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| Your face is flushed. | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| You start breathing fast. | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| You feel teary. | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| You feel like screaming or throwing something. | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| You feel out of control. | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| You feel that something really bad will happen. | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |

What other signs tell you things have become too intense for you to have a productive interaction with another person:

2. Requesting a time out.

You can say something like: "I'm too angry/upset to talk right now; I need to take a time-out. Please give me an hour to calm down and gather my thoughts."

What are you most comfortable saying when you want a time-out?

3. Relax and stay calm.

There are many ways to relax and calm down, such as deep breathing, taking a walk, or listening to quiet music.

What are some other things you can do to calm down?

4. Focus on what is important.

Think about why you are angry. Write down a positive statement that would help you resolve the problem.
