

HANDOUT 5- TIME OUT TECHNIQUE

Time Out is an opportunity to **step back** from a trigger situation and **assess Behaviors, Emotions, Sensations, and Thinking**, allow yourself to **cool down**, as well as **considering** available **options** before deciding on a particular course of action. The goal is to avoid response choices that activate the aggression-relapse cycle.

TIME OUT STEPS

1. Recognize Your Anger:

- a. Monitor the conflict and be aware when it is no longer a constructive discussion.
- b. Identify subtle shifts in **Behaviors, Emotions, Sensations, and Thinking**

2. Identify Your Need for a Time Out

- a. Remind yourself that your feelings and thoughts are becoming unmanageable
- b. Tell the other person that you need to take a Time Out.
- c. Do not get the last word in.

3. Leave Quietly and Practice Anger Reduction Skills

- a. Go to a safe place. Take at least 30 minutes.
- b. Do some physical activity i.e., walking, running, bicycling, lifting weights etc
- c. Practice Positive Self Talk and/or Relaxation Techniques.
- d. Focus on the event, not who is at fault.
- e. Remind yourself that it is not personal, you may be dealing with someone else's inappropriate anger.
- f. Remind yourself that you cannot change the behaviors of others, but can choose how you respond.
- g. When you regain a sense of self-control, praise yourself for avoiding aggressive behaviors.

4. Return, Check In and Discuss Situation:

- a. Ask if it is a good time to talk.
- b. Explain why you felt angry.
- c. Attempt to resolve the conflict, focus on the event and not who is at fault.
- d. If you cannot resolve the conflict, table it for another time and follow through later.
- e. Focus on WIN/WIN solutions that are acceptable to both parties.
- f. If you become angry again, take another time out.

5. When Return and Check In Are Not an Option

- a. Use steps 1 through 3.
- b. Contact a safe and supportive person.
- c. Explain why you felt angry, keeping the focus on events.
- d. Ask for feedback

TIME OUT IS NOT AN AVOIDANCE

**Holding on to anger increases the chance of relapse to aggression.
Processing the event is necessary to DEFUSE ANGER and PREVENT and
ANGER EXPLOSION.**