

Couples Conflict Reset

A structured pause for reducing escalation and returning to the conversation with greater care.

1. Pause and regulate

Do not abandon the conversation

- ☐ Name the need for a pause: 'I want to work this out, and I need time to calm down.'
- ☐ Agree on a return time. Aim for at least 20 minutes and return within 24 hours.
- ☐ Use the break to settle your body - not to rehearse your argument.

2. Reflect before returning

What was I feeling underneath my first reaction?

What did I need, hope for, or fear in that moment?

3. Begin again with a softened start

Complete: 'I feel _____ about _____, and I need or hope for _____.'

Repair phrases to try

- ☐ Can we start over?
- ☐ I hear your point.
- ☐ That came out harsher than I intended.
- ☐ We are on the same team.