

## Time-out Rules

### Dos:

1. Take a time-out when you recognize your cues (elevated heart rate, increased breathing, feeling warm, tense muscles, etc) and before your anger level escalates.
2. Tell your partner you are taking a time-out.
3. Tell your partner how long you will be gone. It is recommended to start at 20 minutes.
4. Your partner is not obligated to take a time-out, you take a time-out for *yourself*.
5. Call a friend for support.
6. Do calming exercises like walking, focus on breathing or reading.
7. Think positive thoughts.
8. If you are still agitated and need more time than you agreed, call your partner and let them know.
9. When you return and you notice your cues again, take another time-out.

### Don'ts:

1. Do not take a time-out to avoid conflict.
2. Do not drink, use drugs or drive.
3. Do not dwell on the problem that caused you to become angry.
4. When you return, do not attempt to resolve the conflict you were having until the next day.

### Important Note:

You may want to practice a time-out when you are not angry so that you and your partner understand the process and each other's expectations.