Time-Out and Return

Communication & Boundaries | 30 minutes | 3-12 participants | Adults and teens 13+ with appropriate facilitation

Purpose

Make a pause plan that includes a signal and a realistic way to revisit a conversation.

Materials: Paper or a printable handout, Pens or an accessible writing alternative, Optional blank cards or simple drawing materials

Invite and agree - 3 minutes

Name the purpose and the right to pass, observe, write, or use fiction. Agree that people share only their own experiences and do not promise absolute group confidentiality.

Introduce the example - 3 minutes

A low-stakes disagreement becomes tiring. Ask what is known and what is still a guess.

Practice: Planning workshop - 17 minutes

Make a pause plan that includes a signal and a realistic way to revisit a conversation. Sketch several possible responses, compare access and likely tradeoffs, and choose one adjustable plan with a backup.

Reflect together - 4 minutes

What makes a pause different from abandoning the issue? Ask what fit, what did not fit, and what would make the exercise more accessible. Do not interpret another person's response.

Choose a next step - 3 minutes

Invite one optional action, support request, or question to carry forward. Passing is a valid closing response. Confirm how to seek appropriate support outside the activity.

Facilitator fit and boundaries

Practice with low-stakes examples. Consider power differences and safety; do not rehearse confronting an unsafe person.

Offer observation, private writing, or a fictional example. Adapt instructions and group size to access needs. No client responses are collected by this page.

Original AI-assisted educational draft; independent clinical review pending. Version 1.0. Conceptual reading: TIP 41: Substance Abuse Treatment: Group Therapy, TIP 57: Trauma-informed Care in Behavioral Health Services. Source links appear on the online activity page.