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 DEFUSEANGER and PREVENT and ANGER EXPLOSION.