

P.A.U.S.E.™

A Simple Tool for When the Same Argument Keeps Happening

You don't have to solve everything right now. Sometimes you just need to PAUSE. When conflict starts going in circles, use these five steps to slow the pattern and give yourselves a better chance to reconnect.

P — PAUSE THE PATTERN

Stop. Slow down. Notice what's happening.

Ask: "Are we actually solving this, or are we repeating the same argument?"

If you're repeating the pattern, pause before continuing.

A — ACKNOWLEDGE THE EMOTION

Name what you're feeling before trying to fix the problem.

"I'm feeling really frustrated right now."

"I think we're both getting hurt."

"I need you to understand why this matters to me."

Remember: you don't have to agree with the emotion to acknowledge it.

U — UNDERSTAND YOUR SEASON

Ask: "What does our relationship need from us right now?"

- **PREVENTION** Let's address this before it grows.
- **GROWTH** Let's learn something new about each other.
- **MAINTENANCE** Let's protect what is working.
- **RESTORATION** Something needs healing or repair.

The goal isn't to win the argument. It's to understand what your relationship needs.

S — SOFTEN YOUR START-UP

Talk about the problem without attacking your partner.

Instead of: *"You never listen to me!"*

Try: *"I don't feel heard right now. Can we slow down and talk about this?"*

Instead of: *"You don't care about anything I say."*

Try: *"This is important to me, and I need to feel like we're on the same team."*

Start with: **I feel...** · **I need...** · **I would like...**

E — EXIT THE ARGUMENT, NOT THE RELATIONSHIP

If you're too activated to have a productive conversation, take a break.

Don't disappear. Don't threaten the relationship. Don't use the break to punish your partner.

Say: "I don't want us to hurt each other with our words. I need a break. Let's come back to this at ____."

A PAUSE needs a RETURN. Take the time you need to calm down — then come back and continue the conversation.

Your PAUSE Plan

Our signal that we need a PAUSE:

Where will we take our break?

How long will we pause?

When will we return to the conversation?

One thing we want to remember during conflict:

One thing to remember

The goal of a PAUSE isn't to avoid the conversation. It's to return to the conversation differently.

Pause. Regulate. Reconnect. Then talk.

Want to understand what your relationship needs right now?

Take the free Relationship Wellness Check and discover whether your relationship may currently need Prevention, Growth, Maintenance, or Restoration.

[Take the free assessment → shalommh.com/assessment](https://shalommh.com/assessment)