

# When to Talk After a Fight With Your Wife – Checklist

*A quick reference for the moment you're deciding whether it's time to talk.*

## Before You Start

- ☐ Check your heart rate and breathing. Both should feel settled, not just "less bad."
- ☐ Ask yourself if you're still rehearsing a comeback in your head.
- ☐ Make sure at least 20 minutes have passed since the fight ended.

## What To Watch For

- ☐ You feel like fixing it fast just to make the discomfort stop, not because you're actually ready.
- ☐ You've been sitting in silence for hours and calling it "cooling off" when it's really avoidance.
- ☐ She's mid-task, driving, or dealing with the kids when you're about to bring it up.

## What To Say

- ☐ "I've had some time to think, and I want to come back to what happened earlier. Is now an okay time, or do you need more of it?"
- ☐ "I don't want to catch you off guard. Are you in a place where you could talk, or do you need more time first?"
- ☐ "I hear that you want to talk about this now. Can we talk in twenty minutes? I'm not walking away from this."

## What Not To Do

- ☐ Don't bring it up in the first five minutes after the fight ends.
- ☐ Don't wait three full days and call it strategy.
- ☐ Don't leave "later" open-ended. Always name a specific return time.
- ☐ Don't go silent and expect her to know that's you cooling down rather than shutting her out.

## Repair Move

If your timing was off and the fight restarted, say: "That one's on me. I brought it up before either of us was really ready. Can we try again once we've both cooled off, maybe tonight?" Then name a real time and follow through.

## Success Check

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Did she respond without immediately getting defensive again? Did the conversation end softer than it started, even a little?