My Pause and Return Plan

Standard anger-management worksheet | Guide and example

Who this is for

For adults planning how to take an agreed break before a conversation escalates.

What this helps with

Recognise when to pause; communicate the break; make a clear plan to check back.

Why this can help

A planned pause can create space to choose your next action. Including a return plan helps keep the original concern from being lost or avoided.

How to use this worksheet

1. Plan this at a calm time. Where appropriate, discuss it with the person involved.

2. Choose warning signs, a brief phrase, somewhere safe to pause and an activity that helps you settle.

3. Agree how and when to check back. If you need longer, communicate a revised plan where safe. Review after use.

Guided example - fictional

My signs: Voice getting louder; repeatedly making the same point.

My phrase: "I want to sort this out. I need a break so I can speak clearly."

During the break: Go to a quiet room and let my breathing settle. Avoid sending angry messages.

Check-back plan: "I will check back at 7.30." If still too wound up, explain and agree another time.

Return focus: Discuss one issue and make one specific request.

Optional next step: Rehearse your chosen response at a calmer time.

Original educational tool informed by NHS anger advice and NICE ADHD guidance.
Sources: nhs.uk (Get help with anger); nice.org.uk/guidance/ng87. Checked 6 Nov 2026.

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Standard anger-management worksheet | Your turn

Use one event or practice attempt. A few words are enough; leave out identifying details.

My early signs that a pause would help:

The phrase I will use to explain the pause:

Where I can pause safely and what I will do:

How and when I will check back:

If more time is needed, my revised-plan phrase:

When we return, the one concern I want to discuss:

Reflect and choose your next step

Did the pause support a safer, clearer response?

What helped or got in the way of checking back?

What will I change before the next conversation?

Use a pause to support safety, not to punish or control. Do not force a conversation if anyone feels unsafe. Threats, violence or intimidation need specialist support. If this feels too much or anger is causing harm, speak with your GP or therapist. If anyone is in immediate danger, call 999.

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