

The Pause Before You React

A tiny delay prevents huge regret.

Track: Community Lessons

Estimated time: 9 min

Generated: 2026-02-25 09:37 UTC

Source URL: <https://common-sense-church.com/lessons/pause-before-react>

Principle: Speed is the enemy of decency.

The fastest response is rarely the wisest one, especially when your body is activated. This lesson is about building a small gap between impulse and action. The Failure Mode: Your Nervous System Tries To Drive When you feel triggered: - you narrow to threat, - you speak louder than you mean, - you interpret everything as disrespect, - and you create damage you then have to clean up. The Pause Ladder Use the smallest pause that works.

1) One breath. (Enough to stop the first impulse.) 2) 60 seconds. (Enough to regain choice.) 3) 10 minutes. (Enough to cool the body.) 4) Sleep on it. (Enough to protect relationships and your reputation.) The Holding Message (When You Must Reply) If a response is required, send a placeholder: - "I saw this. I'm not ready to respond well yet. I'll reply later today." - "I want to be careful. Can we talk at 3pm?" Draft And Delete Write the angry draft. Get it out of your system. Then delete it. If you still believe it later, write it again with a different tone. The Practice (This Week) - Wait 60 seconds before replying to anything that spikes emotion. - If you're activated, use a holding message. - If it's public, delay longer. Public regret is expensive. Reflection (Optional) What situations consistently hijack your tone?