

## Couch Talk<sup>10</sup>

The Couch Talk benefits from a regular, weekly, scheduled time.

That said, we're not looking for this to consume whole hours, but only up to thirty minutes.

To honor that time limit, we do three things:

1. We choose and agree upon a day and a time.
2. We use a timer.
3. We take turns speaking:
  - a. Speaker A gets ten minutes (alternate who goes first)
  - b. Speaker B gets ten minutes
  - c. "Discussion" gets ten minutes

The setup is that simple: thirty minutes every week, by the timer, divided into ten-minute increments. If the timer goes off in the middle of something, we wrap up in a few short seconds or table the discussion until the following week. We don't stress out if we miss a week—we just reschedule a time during the week, or if everything falls apart, we practice self-regulation and plan to pick it up again the following week.

A note on "discussion": This isn't another opportunity for one speaker to share their opinion or make their point. This is an opportunity for each listener to listen more - to ask clarifying and curious questions.

Your goal is NOT to prove or justify your position. Your goal is to better understand your partner's point and to make them feel felt, seen, and cared for.

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<sup>10</sup> Adapted from Stan Tatkin, M. (2018). We do: Saying yes to a relationship of depth, true connection, and enduring love. Sounds True.; Nagler, J. (2018). Naked marriage: How to have a lifetime of love, sex, joy, and happiness. Simon & Schuster.