

TURBULENT TIMES REQUIRE STRONGER TOOLS

PAUSE • SIFT • DECIDE

A Media Sorting Guide

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STORY

What's the claim—and where did it come from?

- Name the source and how it knows
- Separate facts from feelings
- Name what's missing / assumed
- When was it made — is it current?

IMPACT

What is this doing to people and relationships?

- Fear / panic
- Division / scapegoating
- Confusion / distortion
- Destabilization / escalation

FUNCTION

What is this story doing for the speaker?

- Belonging / Identity
- Simplicity / Certainty
- Protection / Control
- Status / Moral Superiority

TRUTH

What's emotionally true vs. factually true?

- What can I verify right now?
- What would change my mind?
- What's the best evidence against it?

Check: facts + patterns + incentives (individual / social / structural)

DECIDE

What action reduces harm and protects people?

- Don't amplify yet (if uncertain)
- Verify (2+ independent sources)
- Ask / seek context
- Share with context (if it holds up)
- De-escalate
- Protect elders / protect community

