

ReGAIN

REGAINING AFTER A TRIGGERED STATE

When you have upsetting thoughts, feelings, or memories come up out of nowhere..

R

RECOGNIZE

- Recognize that you are probably in a triggered state.
- You might notice your responses are stronger than what makes sense in this situation.
- Remind yourself that the past feels present now, but you are just remembering the past.

G

GROUND

- Use grounding skills to help yourself manage the activation.
- Use breathing, self-talk ("I am safe," "This feeling will pass," or "I am in control."), progressive muscle relaxation, or 54321 (5 things you can see, 4 things you can touch, 3 things you can hear, 2 things you can smell, and 1 thing you can taste.)

A

ALLOW

- Allow yourself to experience what's coming up with compassion. Try to notice it, rather than judge it.
- This is a good time to use your butterfly hug and tap while you notice the upset.
- We move faster through discomfort when we notice it feel it, rather than pushing it away.

I

INVESTIGATE

- Investigate if you are triggered, and if so, the source of the trigger and source of the suffering.
- Where does the trigger come from? Witnessing violence? Feeling neglected?
- What is it about the trigger that is upsetting? Does it make you feel like something is wrong with you, or that something bad will happen again?

N

NON-IDENTIFY

- Non-identify with triggered thoughts, feelings and memories
- Remind yourself that you are an observer of your thoughts and feelings, you are not your thoughts and feelings.
- "This is not me, these are triggered reactions. This is my past talking. This is the past coming up, what I am feeling is not in the present.

Developed by Miranda Arellano, MC, RP.

Resources: Briere, J. (in press). Treating risky and compulsive behaviour in trauma survivors: Early maltreatment, attachment disturbance, and the role of triggered states. NY: Guilford.

Trigger Review

- Someone crying
- Feeling Abandoned
- Sexual things
- Criticism
- Someone being angry
- Someone who is high or drunk
- Someone raising their hand around you
- Someone saying abusive or mean things to you
- People wanting to be too close
- Family get together
- Seeing violence on tv, at the movies, or on the internet
- Being alone with someone
- People in authority
- Competition
- Being touched
- Being lied to
- Someone flirting with you or making sexual comments
- Someone acting like they are better than you
- Someone who reminds you of your mother
- Someone who reminds you of your father
- Being let down by someone
- Being yelled at
- Mean or dirty looks
- Being laughed at
- Being accused of something you didn't do
- Being ignored
- Feeling alone
- Other triggers: _____

Pick your top three worst triggers above and answer the questions below with each of your top triggers.

Trigger #1: _____

What do you feel when you are triggered? (mark all of the ones you feel)

- Fear or anxiety
- Shame
- Anger
- Disgust
- Hunger
- Betrayal
- Horror
- Sadness
- Guilt
- Alone
- Grief
- Confusion
- Embarrassment
- Emptiness
- Humiliation
- Sexual excitement

Of the feelings you chose, which are the worst two? _____

What do you think when you are triggered? (mark all the ones you think)

- You need to escape
- You are helpless
- Things are hopeless
- You have been abandoned
- You are ugly or disgusting
- You are going to die
- You are in danger
- Something bad is about to happen
- You are a bad person
- Nobody loves you
- You hate someone else
- You hate yourself
- You want to hurt yourself
- You want to hurt someone else
- You are in trouble

Of the thoughts you chose, which are the worst two? _____

What else happens when you are triggered? (mark all that happen)

- A flashback
- You space out or go away in your mind
- You get a headache
- Bodily reaction (rapid heartbeat, shortness of breath, dizziness)
- Nausea
- You have to do something to make the feelings go away
- You faint or pass out
- You notice that your reaction is too strong and doesn't fit the situation

Repeat the above steps with your other top triggers.