

The goal is to be aware of your triggers. When you're in tune with your SELF you can quite literally walk yourself through any given scenario with grace, choosing ideal responses that you will feel proud of. This boosts self-trust, self-confidence and self-love.

gaining awareness of triggers and learning to mindfully respond

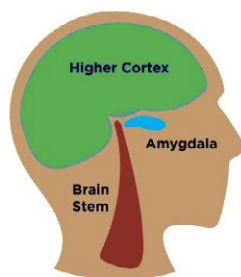
IDENTIFYING YOUR COMMON TRIGGERS

Triggers can cause a chain reaction in your mind and body, flooding you with emotions, hormones, and nerve impulses that may have more to do with the past than the present.

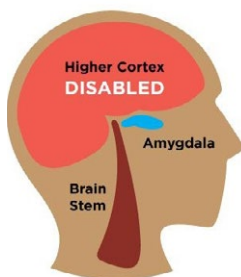
When this happens, your higher cortex and rationale shut-down, making it difficult, if not impossible, to think clearly and respond rationally to your current experience. Anxiety, panic, anger, jealousy, self-berating, shame attacks, resentment and other heightened emotions are examples triggers' impact.

Triggers are personal. Different things trigger different people. Thus, triggers are windows into your subconscious programming. Your reactions, choices, sense of self, and many aspects of your life are feeding off of this programming, and taking direction from it.

Your subconscious programming is part nature (primal fears, survival needs, and genetics) and part nurture (early childhood experiences, family dynamic, trauma, relationships, etc).



**SELF-CONNECTED TO YOUR PRESENT EMOTIONS
ALLOW TIME FOR CALM AND TO CLEAR THINKING
SELF-LEADERSHIP WITH THE INTENT TO LISTEN AND LEARN**



**TRIGGERED (FIGHT-OR-FLIGHT) OUR AMYGDALA HIJACKS RATIONALITY
DISCONNECTED FROM OUR OWN EMOTIONS CAN RESULT IN
REACTIVITY, DEFENSIVENESS AND MALADAPTIVE PATTERNS**

"Emotional triggers are happening for us, not to us. Triggers are gifts."

Ina Catrinescu

identifying YOUR COMMON TRIGGERS

Identifying triggers and allowing for emotional processing with practices like R.A.I.N. allows you to access your Authenticity so you may choose rational RESPONSES and clearly communicate your needs, wants, limits, etc. Plus, every time you process through a trigger, instead of reacting you have an opportunity to heal trauma by processing all layers of Protective Emotions.

Note: The goal isn't to get rid of your triggers. Not only is this impossible, but we need triggers for REAL threats in life.

TRIGGERS TEND TO STIR UP PROTECTIVE EMOTIONS AND REACTIVITY

THESE EMOTIONS NEED YOU TO UNDERSTAND AND PROCESS THEM

- 1. Anger, blame, resentment, etc.
Alarms for possible violation to boundary, safety, or value
- 2. Fear, worry, jealousy, envy, etc.
Activates for possible threat or "what if"
- 3. Sad, hurt, disappointment, etc.
Slows for needed healing, crying, letting go, and relief
- 4. Shame, insecurities, regrets, limiting beliefs, trauma, etc.
Collapses to enforce "should's" and social connection

EXPRESSING OR ATTEMPTING TO AVOID TRIGGERED EMOTIONS CAN RESULT IN REACTIVITY

Expressing or reacting to Protective Emotions isn't going to get you what you want and need in life. In fact, it tends to result in a myriad of maladaptive protective behaviors (fight-flight-freeze-fawn) and reactivity that can negatively influence relationships, sabotage goals, and cause havoc.

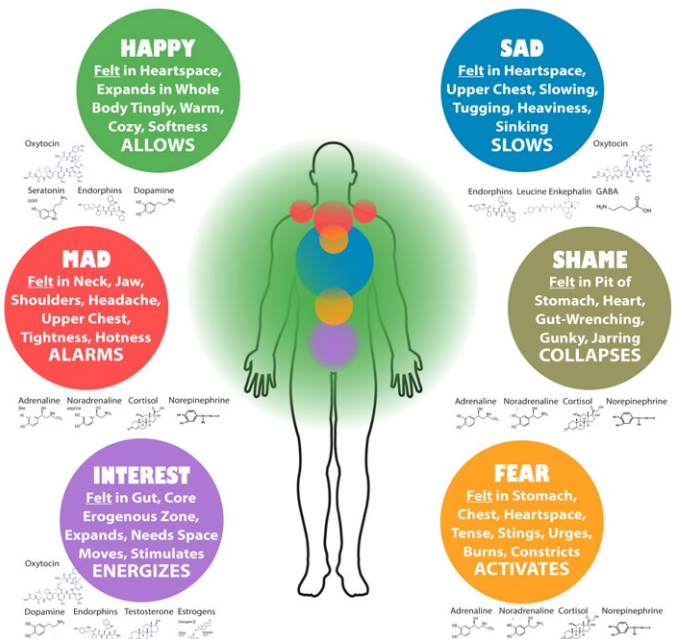
PROCESSING THROUGH PROTECTIVE EMOTIONS LEADS YOU TO...

YOUR AUTHENTICITY: UNDER LAYERS OF PROTECTIVE EMOTIONS



AUTHENTICITY: REAL NEEDS AND WANTS (FOR YOU TO COMMUNICATE)

5. Genuine needs, wants, desires, values, needed boundaries; asking for help or guidance for your fears and hurts; asking for physical comfort, affirmation, gifts, quality time (Five Love Languages); sharing your passions, experiences, interests, gratitudes, possibilities, goals, etc. Opens you up to lessons learned, creative solutions, self-forgiveness, compassion, understanding, healing and connection.



STEP 1: IDENTIFY YOUR MOST IMPACTFUL TRIGGERS

THESE ARE COMMON TRIGGERS, ESPECIALLY WITH FAMILY, FRIENDS AND IN RELATIONSHIPS. IDENTIFY AND RATE HOW THESE TYPICALLY IMPACT YOU. USE AS GUIDE AND ADD TO IT AS YOU IDENTIFY MORE. **SAVE AND TYPE WITHIN**

INDICATE HOW TRIGGERING THESE EXPERIENCES TEND TO BE:	NO IMPACT	SOME IMPACT	HIGH IMPACT
Feeling excluded or like a third wheel			
Feeling powerless			
Feeling unheard or not understood			
Feeling scolded			
Feeling blamed			
Feeling disrespected			
Feeling judged			
Feeling ignored or like I'm not getting enough affection			
Feeling dismissed or like I don't matter to someone I care about			
Feeling lonely or empty inside			
Feeling like the 'bad guy'			
Feeling like I'm not needed			
Feeling like I am being controlled or manipulated			
Feeling unsafe			
Feeling like a family member or a loved-one is unsafe			
Feeling like things are unfair			
Feeling frustrated			
Feeling like I can't speak up for myself			
Feeling like I am boring or uninteresting			
Feeling unattractive			
Feeling trapped			
Feeling unappreciated or taken for granted			

INDICATE HOW TRIGGERING THESE EXPERIENCES TEND TO BE:

**NO
IMPACT** **SOME
IMPACT** **HIGH
IMPACT**

Someone acting guarded or closed-off towards me (as if they don't trust me)

Painful emotions, such as anxiety, disheartened, lonely, sadness, disappointment, guilt

Someone leaving sooner than expected (or not parting in expected way)

Feeling trapped or out of control (in a situation, ie: meeting, or place, ie: an airplane)

Someone being unavailable to me (such as not texting or calling me back right way)

Helping others but not receiving a thank you or appreciation in return

Someone 'better' than me: better looking, smarter, more successful, etc.

Feeling disappointed or disrespected: someone being late, not making plans, etc.

Dealing with conflict or the possibility of having to talk about a mistake I may have made

Being relied on too much, or feeling trapped in a situation or obligation

Feeling forced to small talk or interact with people I hardly know

Feeling overwhelmed with way too much work or others' expectations of me

Feeling pressured to say "yes" to plans or helping someone, etc., when I want to say "no"

Feeling left-out or like I don't belong (whether perceived or factual)

Messes, clutter, or feeling disorganized - or coming home to a cluttered house

Feeling cornered (as if I need to make a huge decision way too fast)

Feeling like I'm disappointing someone (due to outright complaints or perceived suffering)

Making a mistake, failing, or not living up to my expectations of myself

Seems specific people or personality types trigger me more than anything

Feeling lazy, lost, or like I am not getting enough done

Relying on others, asking for help, or communicating my needs, wants or boundaries

"Be grateful for triggers, they point you to where you are not free."

Tristan Sophia, PhD

REFLECTING ON TRIGGERS

What thoughts and/or questions do you have about triggers?

How may identifying your triggers be useful for you?

How do you plan on "catching" your triggers in the moment (mindfulness) so you learn to feel into your emotions and use tools, like Evacuation Plan, Adaptive Responses and Emotional Health Skills like R.A.I.N. to bring yourself into CALM, rather than REACT irrationally with old patterns?

When you are mindfully present, you have access to *the space and time between the trigger and the response*. What skills and strengths do you feel you have already that will help you respond ideally to triggers (by taking time to process your emotions) instead of reactivity?

IDENTIFY YOUR ABILITIES TO RESPOND (RATHER THAN REACT) TO TRIGGERS

Responding rather than reacting requires a PAUSE to observe your thoughts, feel your emotions, and allow for calm rationale. This can make all the difference in strengthening or breaking a relationship; feeling good about yourself or having major regrets. Also refer to the Emotional Health Skills page (save before clicking the link): <https://www.creatingyourbalance.com/emotions>

I pause, accept 100% responsibility for my emotions. I use **Emotional Health Skills** instead of reacting (even if it takes days)

I state my need for space to process my emotions, I explore solutions in my mind before saying a word (even if it takes days)

I take the time to weigh the pros and cons and consider what would be best for myself and others in the situation

I do not force myself to do something I am terrified of, not ready for, or truly do not want to do. I say 'No!'

I take the space and time to observe my inner dialogue and thoughts, so I may identify my Real Needs, Wants and Limits

I distance myself from the person or experience and even use my Emergency Evacuation Plan as needed

If someone is yelling at me, being rude, or mistreating me in any way, I allow myself to LEAVE right away

I realize I need to communicate my Real Needs, Wants and Limits, instead of just Protective Emotions (anger, hurt, fear, etc.)

If I feel lonely, I realize it's a clear and natural sign that I need to plan ways to fulfill my purpose or connect with others