



Trauma-informed support for survivors rebuilding after abuse

A Self-Reflection Worksheet

Emotional triggers are experiences, situations, behaviours or environments that activate strong emotional or nervous system responses.

Triggers are not signs of weakness or failure.

They are often connected to:

- Trauma or emotional stress
- Past experiences
- Nervous system overwhelm
- Fear, rejection or emotional invalidation
- Burnout or survival mode

Many people do not fully recognise their triggers until they begin noticing repeated emotional patterns.

This worksheet is designed to support gentle self-awareness without judgement.

1. Situations That Tend to Trigger Me

Examples may include:

- Conflict or raised voices
- Feeling ignored or rejected
- Being criticised
- Feeling overwhelmed or pressured

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Registered Address: c/o RISC, 35-39 London Street, Reading, RG1 4PS

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- Emotional unpredictability
- Certain environments or people
- Sensory overload
- Feeling controlled or emotionally unsafe

Reflection Space

What situations, interactions or experiences tend to trigger emotional overwhelm, anxiety, shutdown or strong reactions for you?

2. What Happens Emotionally?

Triggers can create emotional responses such as:

- Anxiety or panic
- Anger or irritability
- Shame or embarrassment

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- Emotional flooding
- Emotional numbness or shutdown
- Fear or hypervigilance
- Overthinking or spiralling thoughts

Reflection Space

What emotional reactions do you notice when triggered?

3. What Happens in My Body?

The nervous system often responds physically to emotional triggers.

This may include:

- Muscle tension
- Racing heart
- Exhaustion or shutdown
- Feeling shaky or restless
- Difficulty concentrating

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- Feeling frozen or mentally overwhelmed
- Headaches, stomach tension or sensory overload

Reflection Space

What physical sensations or nervous system responses do you notice?

4. Patterns I Have Noticed

Reflection Space

Do you notice any repeated patterns around:

- Certain people?
- Specific environments?
- Conflict or rejection?
- Feeling criticised or misunderstood?
- Burnout or overwhelm?

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5. What Helps Me Feel Safer?

Examples may include:

- Calm communication
- Space and quiet
- Predictability
- Rest and recovery
- Supportive people
- Reduced sensory overload
- Time to process emotions
- Feeling emotionally heard and respected

Reflection Space

What helps you feel calmer, safer or more emotionally regulated when triggered?

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6. Self-Compassion Reflection

Triggers are often connected to emotional survival, nervous system stress or past experiences.

Understanding triggers is not about blaming yourself.

It is about building self-awareness, emotional safety and support.

Important Reminder

You are not weak, dramatic or “too sensitive” because certain experiences affect you deeply.

Your nervous system may simply be responding to stress, overwhelm or emotional experiences that mattered.

Support & Further Resources

Self-awareness can be an important step toward healing, emotional regulation and nervous system safety.

WeAreUnmuted

Turning silence into understanding through lived experience.

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