

TRIGGERS AND SAFETY SIGNALS

Tools for Building Awareness and Enhancing Nervous System Safety



Build awareness, feel safer in your body, and support your nervous system.

Understanding Triggers & Safety

Your nervous system is always scanning for danger and safety.

Triggers are cues (internal or external) that make your body feel unsafe or overwhelmed.

Safety signals are cues that help your body feel calm, grounded, and secure.

Both are natural. This worksheet helps you notice them with curiosity—not judgment.

Noticing My Triggers

What situations, thoughts, or sensations tend to activate stress in me?

Examples: loud noises, conflict, certain memories, pressure, being ignored

How My Body Responds

When I feel triggered, I notice:

- My body feels _____
- My heart rate _____
- My breathing _____
- My thoughts _____
- My urges (fight, run, shut down, etc.) _____

Early Warning Signs

Before I feel overwhelmed, I can notice:

- Muscle tension
 - Restlessness
 - Racing thoughts
 - Fatigue / shutdown
 - Irritability
 - Other: _____
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Safety Signals

What helps my body feel safe, calm, or supported?

Examples: soft lighting, quiet spaces, kind people, nature, music

My Safe Supports

People, places, or things that help me feel safe:

- **People:** _____
 - **Places:** _____
 - **Activities:** _____
 - **Objects (comfort items):** _____
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Regulation Tools

When I feel triggered, I can try:

- Slow breathing (inhale 4, exhale 6)
 - Grounding (name 5 things you see, etc.)
 - Gentle movement (stretching, walking)
 - Self-talk (“I am safe right now”)
 - Taking a break / stepping away
 - Other: _____
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My Personal Safety Plan

When I notice a trigger, I will:

To help my body return to calm, I will:

One small action that helps me feel safer:

Reflection

- What did I learn about my triggers?
- What safety signals work best for me?
- How can I support myself with more kindness?

Notes

Gentle Reminder

Your reactions make sense. Your body is trying to protect you. With awareness and practice, you can gently guide yourself back to safety.

“Safety is something you can build, one small moment at a time.”