

What are emotional triggers?

Everyone has emotional triggers, though these look a little different from person to person. Triggers can include unwanted memories, uncomfortable topics, another person's actions or choice of words, and even your own behaviours.



Examples

Being rejected

Challenged beliefs

Disapproval

Criticism/negative feedback

Dishonesty

Family or friendship friction

Feeling controlled

Helplessness



Recognising your triggers

Recognising what triggers you in order to adequately deal with those feelings is important to maintain good emotional health. Usually this involves a few steps:

1. Notice your bodily reactions, feelings and thoughts.
2. Identify and label them.
3. Identify what triggered you.

Practice...



It is important to first recognise your emotional triggers. When faced with a situation that upsets you (such as receiving negative feedback), what do you feel? What does your body feel like? You can use the boxes below to aid you in identifying your emotions and bodily sensations.



Emotions

I feel...

Anxious	Ashamed
Angry	Bitter
Upset	Hopeless
Sad	Sceptical
Guilty	Discouraged
Frustrated	Depressed



Bodily sensations

My body...

Pounding heart	Numbness
Upset stomach	Tight Jaw
Dizziness	Headache
Sweating	Hot flushes
Trembling	Chills
Pounding heart	Chest Pain



Once you have done that, can you also identify what caused these feelings? Was it something specific that was said to you? Was it a sound, smell or the tone of voice? Or maybe it was the lack of a behaviour by someone?