



NATAJSA
WAGNER

Psychotherapy & Counselling

Journaling Prompts to Understand Triggers

adapted from the work of Lisa Ferentz

Remember: The goal is not about never getting triggered, but it is about my ability to rebound when it happens. It's not that I don't get triggered, it's about noticing what happens and being able to rebound quickly.

Psychoeducation + mindfulness help us turn our frontal lobes on. Namely, the Medial pre-frontal cortex. Naming and acknowledging this is a body-based memory/feeling state helps us to move out of our emotional/limbic brain and turn on our pre-frontal cortex.

This journaling prompt will support you in understanding how you process the cognitive, emotional, relational or sensory experiences that can cause triggering and create some of the responses that arise from being triggered.

When you have some time for quiet reflection, think about and visualize a recent time when you were triggered or overwhelmed. Allow yourself to touch lightly on this event, and pause if needed.

Next put the experience into context by understanding what may have caused or contributed to the triggering by filling out the details below.

This is also good information to bring into a therapy session with your therapist.

To begin, ideally pause when you feel and notice the trigger. This can also be done in reflection afterwards.

Relationship Dynamics

Who were with you, what happened?

Emotions

What feelings were coming up? There could be feelings of fear, anxiety, rejection, disappointment etc

Awareness

Use your five sense perceptions, What did you see, hear, taste, touch, feel when you were triggered?

Context

What is the date, time, location? Is the time of year relevant?

Thoughts

What's were the thought processes that were happening?

Somatic Experience

What were the sensations in your body?