

HEALTHY MIND PSYCHOLOGY UK

TRACK YOUR TRIGGERS



YOUR FREE JOURNAL TEMPLATE TO
HELP YOU NOTICE AND NAVIGATE
TRIGGERING FEELINGS

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WHY JOURNAL?

Why journal about our triggering experiences and feelings?

Making sense of our thoughts, or even just noticing them in the first place, can be tough. Our thoughts are often contradictory, swirling around in our minds in a big, messy ball that can be hard to untangle.

The simple act of channelling these thoughts into the organised structure of the written language, or even the spoken language if verbalising your thoughts comes more easily to you, can really help to contain them.

Journalling is a way of taking that big messy thought ball and creating some sense and structure, which can then be explored as we start to analyse themes and patterns.



WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF JOURNALLING?

Research suggests that journalling can help us accept our emotions and thoughts, rather than judging them. This acceptance helps us to avoid reacting to and exacerbating our negative mental experiences and has been linked to lower negative emotion in response to stressors and improved psychological health over time (Ford, Lam, John, & Mauss, 2018).

Keeping a record of personal thoughts and feelings can help boost your mental health in a number of ways (Smith, 2020):

- Supports your emotional regulation
- Helps you to identify and understand your emotional triggers
- Allows you to externalise your worries and fears
- Reduces the intensity of your anxiety
- Boosts your physical health



HOW TO USE THIS JOURNAL TEMPLATE

The Trigger Tracker

Use the 'Trigger Tracker' page to record your experiences of feeling triggered. What were you doing at the time? What did you notice about how you felt and behaved? Did you use any coping strategies to help you through the experience? You can copy or print this page as many times as you like to build up a complete picture of what you notice about your triggering experiences. At the bottom of the page, there is space for you to note down any patterns or common themes.

Your Personal Trigger Plan

Use the 'My Personal Trigger Plan' page to record what you have found out about your triggering experiences and to make a plan for how to get through these situations. There is space for you to note down things that might help you when you're feeling triggered, people that you could turn to for help, ways to distract yourself from the immediate situation and to collate self-help support and resources. Review this page regularly and adjust your plan until you find what works best for you.

TRIGGER TRACKER

what do you notice?

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THE PATTERNS AND COMMON THEMES EMERGING ARE:

1.
2.
3.

MY PERSONAL *trigger plan*

I KNOW I'M TRIGGERED WHEN I NOTICE:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

HOW I FEEL WHEN I'M TRIGGERED:



ANGRY



ASHAMED



UPSET



SCARED



ANXIOUS

OTHER FEELINGS I HAVE WHEN I'M TRIGGERED:



SOME SAFE PEOPLE I CAN REACH OUT TO ARE:

OTHER RESOURCES I CAN USE FOR SELF-HELP AND SUPPORT:

WAYS TO HELP KEEP MYSELF AND MY SPACE SAFE:

THINGS THAT HELP ME WHEN I FEEL THIS WAY ARE:

SOME GOOD WAYS TO DISTRACT MYSELF ARE:

REFERENCES

Ford, B. Q., Lam, P., John, O. P., & Mauss, I. B. (2018). The psychological health benefits of accepting negative emotions and thoughts: Laboratory, diary, and longitudinal evidence. Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 115(6), 1075-1092.
www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/28703602/

Smith. (2020, Nov, 25). Could keeping a journal help your mental health?. Retrieved (March, 21, 2024) from www.patient.info/news-and-features/could-keeping-a-journal-help-your-mental-health

FOR MORE HELP AND SUPPORT:

www.healthymindpsychology.co.uk/