



PST RESOURCE OVERVIEW TEMPLATE

A. NAME of the resource / tool	Emotional Triggers Worksheet
B. WHAT is the purpose of the resource / tool?	Identifying things that “push your buttons” is the first step in learning how to harness angry emotions and turn them into positive ones. This worksheet helps individuals identify their triggers for negative emotions (anger, frustration, etc.).
C. WHO developed the resource / tool? (If it was adapted from an existing document, please include a citation for the original source.)	Original Source Not Known
D. HOW should the resource / tool be used? <i>i. What circumstances are ideal/appropriate?</i> <i>ii. By whom and when?</i> <i>iii. Is a particular skill set or special preparation needed?</i>	As a reference for: <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Exploring group dynamics and how members engage with others.▪ Supporting members in developing self care and stress management strategies.▪ Creating group agreements that promote consideration for others, mutual respect and personal accountability.▪ Coaching others through conflict resolution.
E. WHY is this resource being recommended? (What makes it especially effective or useful for community-based work?)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Occasional conflict is a natural part of any type of group work and community building.▪ This worksheet can help group members develop critical emotional competence skills, including the ability to identify and manage one’s emotions. This includes knowing how to nourish your emotional state, take turns, delay gratification, and cope with failure and loss. It also involves knowing how to control impulses, use good judgement and adapt emotions in response to others’ emotions and reactions – all of which are common characteristics of exemplary leaders.

Find Your Emotional Triggers

What Triggers Your Emotions?

The strengths that have helped you success are also your greatest emotional triggers. When the brain perceives that someone or some situation is threatening, then our emotions can become triggered.

When we are triggered we often react with anger, or fear, we then quickly rationalize the behavior so that it makes sense to us. These reactions can possibly cause damage to our current and future relationships.

The key is to catch yourself reacting when your emotions are triggered. Then you can discover if the threat is real or not.

The following list includes some of the most common emotional triggers. Meaning people often triggered or react when they feel that they are not getting or will not get one of these things that are important to them.

Common Emotional Triggers		
Acceptance	Respect	Be Liked
Be Understood	Be Needed	Be Valued
Be in control	Be right	Be treated fairly
Attention	Comfort	Freedom
Peacefulness	Balance	Consistency
Order	Variety	Love
Safety	Predictability	Included
Fun	New Challenges	Autonomy

To start controlling your emotional triggers, chose three items from the list that most often set off your emotions when you don't get these needs met.

It is critical to note that needs are not bad. The reason you have these needs is that at some point in your life, the need served you. For example, your experiences may have taught you that success in life depends on maintaining control, establishing a safe environment and having people around you who appreciate your intelligence.

Find Your Emotional Triggers

However, the more you become attached to these needs, the more your brain will be on the lookout for circumstances that threaten your ability to have these needs met. Then your needs become emotional triggers.

At this point, you must judge the truth of the situation. Are you really losing this need or not? Is the person actively denying your need or are you taking the situation too personally? If it's true that someone is ignoring your need or blocking you from achieving it, can you either ask for what you need or, if it doesn't really matter, can you let the need go?

Without consciously acknowledging the need that is triggering the emotional reaction, we become enslaved to the need. On the other hand, if we honestly declare our needs—that we had expected people to treat us in a particular way and had hoped events would unfold as we had planned—then we can begin to see life more objectively. From this perspective, we are freer to choose our reactions.

Being Present

As soon as you notice that you are emotionally reacting, you have to shift your emotional state in order to think through what your trigger might be. Therefore, practice the following technique to help you make the shift:

Relax – breathe and release the tension in your body.

Detach – clear your mind of all thoughts.

Center – drop your awareness to the center of your body just below your navel. Feel yourself breathe. This helps to clear the mind.

Focus (and implant) – choose one keyword or thought that represents how you want to feel or who you want to be in this moment.

Once you shift your emotional state, you are free to examine if someone is actually taking something away from you or not. You can then ask for what you need or let it go and move on. Keep breathing and thinking of your keyword or thought. Then you will be able to control your reactions and responses.

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