

TRIGGERED → STEADY

A nervous system-informed toolkit

When your nervous system feels activated, the goal is to have more choice.

You can use this sequence to move from triggered to steady.

Notice → Regulate → Boundary → Repair

Quick check-in: What response is showing up?

Fight (move toward): heat, tight jaw, defensiveness, urge to argue/control

Flight (move away): urgency, racing thoughts, busy-ness, avoidance, "I need out"

Freeze (shut down): blank, numb, foggy, stuck, can't speak/move

Fawn (appease): over-apologize, over-explain, say yes when no, lose your needs

Reminder: These are protection responses. They make sense.

Early warning signs (check yours)

- tight chest/jaw/shoulders
- racing thoughts / spiraling
- urgency to fix it NOW
- blank mind / can't find words

- numb / disconnected / foggy
- over-apologizing / over-explaining
- avoiding / withdrawing
- irritability / snapping

Other signs: _____

60-Second Reset

- Orient: look around and name 3 neutral objects
- Exhale longer: in 4, out 6 (x5)
- Name it: "My body is in protection."
- Next right step: "What do I need in the next 10 minutes?"

Regulated Nervous System, Boundary Scripts (Clear, Kind, Brief)

Pick one you can actually say when activated:

- "I want to talk about this, and I need a pause."
- "I'm feeling overwhelmed – can we revisit this at ____?"
- "That doesn't work for me."
- "I can do ___, but I can't do ____."
- "If voices get raised, I'm going to step away and come back when we're calmer."
- "I need time to think. I'll get back to you by ____."

My go-to boundary: _____

Notice

Regulate

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The Pause Plan

Pause phrase: "I need ____ minutes. I'll come back at ____."

During pause: breathe • water • walk • ground • regulate

Not during pause: arguing • long texts • proving a point

Repair (how we come back)

Repair builds safety over time.

- "I got activated when ____."
- "What I needed was ____."
- "I'm sorry for ____."
- "Next time I'll try ____."
- "Can we try again / revisit this?"