

# PAUSE

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A format to navigate triggers and craft a coping plan

***Observe, preferably before taking action if possible. This may be a good time to stop, breathe and think! These questions can be helpful in the moment, though it may not be convenient to do this work now. That's okay, just do it when you can!***

What's happening in my life right this moment?

- Being triggered is part of being alive!
- Please try to be compassionate instead of judgmental of your reaction.

What emotions am I having?

- Please use the emotion scale of 1 to 10 to evaluate the intensity of your feelings.

What am I thinking?

- Are my thoughts rational, distorted or irrational?
- Get it all on paper if you need to and can in the moment.

What am I feeling in my body?

- Are my muscles tense? Is my heart pounding? Am I breathing shallow, hard or not at all?
- Practice diaphragmatic or relaxation breathing to help my body cope with its reaction.

What do I need right now?

- When we are triggered, we need to bring ourselves back to this moment.
- We need to do our best to keep our thinking from exploding into all sorts of directions.

What am I thinking about doing? What have I done in response to my reaction?

- If you haven't done anything yet, think about what future you would like to say about how you handled this situation.
- Use the fast forward question: When you're looking back on this, and you're proud of how you handled the situation, what would that look like?

How do I proceed with what I need?

- Use my trigger plan: PAUSE!
- This will be thoughtfully acting instead of impulsively reacting.

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- P = Pay attention to your physical reaction.
- A = Analyze your emotions and thoughts.
- U = Understand what you need right now.



- S = Set up a simple plan to meet your needs.
- E = Engage your plan by putting it into action.