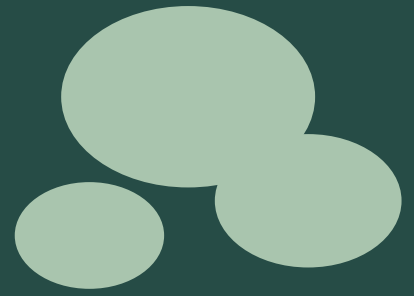


# Understanding Your Trauma Response

Your nervous system is trying to protect you - you are not broken



## A response can continue after the danger has passed

Your body may react to a reminder as though the original threat is happening now. This is automatic, not a choice or a weakness.

### FIGHT

Anger, irritability, arguing, feeling trapped, tense muscles or needing to regain control. The energy says: "I need to protect myself."

### FLIGHT

Restlessness, panic, overworking, escaping, avoiding, racing thoughts or feeling unable to settle. The energy says: "I need to get away."

### FREEZE OR SHUTDOWN

Feeling stuck, numb, foggy, disconnected, unable to speak or make decisions, or moving very slowly. Your system may be conserving energy.

### PLEASE OR APPEASE

Agreeing, apologising, putting others first, hiding your needs or trying to prevent conflict. This may have helped you find safety before.

## Help your body notice the present

- Look around slowly and name where you are, the date, and three things you can see.
- Press your feet into the floor or hold a safe object with a clear texture or temperature.
- Let your breath leave gently and slowly. Choose what feels manageable; grounding should not be forced.
- Reduce demands and seek a safe person, quieter place or more physical space if you need it.

## Support can help

Speak to your GP or a trauma-informed professional if flashbacks, nightmares, avoidance, numbness or being constantly on alert are continuing or affecting daily life. Effective treatments can include trauma-focused CBT and EMDR.

## Urgent safety

If you may harm yourself or someone else, call 999, go to A&E, or contact an urgent mental health service now.

**The response made sense somewhere. Healing helps it learn that now is different.**