

Trauma Triggers & Early Warning Signs

A detailed trigger-mapping resource focused on patterns, preparation and choice rather than avoidance.

Triggers can be varied

Reminders can be external, such as places, sounds, smells, people or media, and internal, such as emotions, thoughts, tiredness, pain or body sensations.

My trigger map

Places or environments

Sounds, smells or sensory reminders

People, interactions or relationship dynamics

Dates, anniversaries or times of year

Body sensations, tiredness or pain

Thoughts or emotions that can act as reminders

My early warning signs

What happens in my body first?

What happens to my thoughts?

What do I feel an urge to do: leave, freeze, fight, please, hide or disconnect?

Planning without blaming myself

What could make a known trigger more manageable?

What grounding tool could I take with me?

Who could know my plan?

What permission can I give myself if I need to pause or leave?

Gentle safety note: This resource is for reflection and stabilisation, not for forcing yourself to revisit traumatic memories. If you feel unable to keep yourself safe or are in a mental health emergency, seek urgent professional help.