

## Some Ways To Cope With Triggers

Anyone who has suffered trauma knows at least some about triggers. They are something that reminds you of past trauma & can leave you feeling very shaken up because of forcing you to remember something so unpleasant.

Triggers can be such a miserable thing to experience! They feel like there is no reason for them when you're going through them, but I believe they actually do have a purpose.

When you are healed in a specific area, you can experience a trigger, & although it certainly isn't very pleasant, it isn't devastating either. It reminds me of what it feels like when you remember a nightmare. Unpleasant but also not terribly upsetting.

When you aren't healed in some area however, that is when triggers can be helpful. They show you the areas where you need some healing. Paying attention to exactly what emotions the trigger made you feel can be an excellent start to healing in this area.

When you're triggered, I firmly believe it's wise to consider exactly what you felt & why you felt it in order to heal. For example, were you angered because you felt invalidated, powerless, ignored, or disrespected? Did you feel shame because you felt judged, unimportant, or mocked? Or, were you hurting because you felt excluded, unloved or as if no one cared at all about you?

Pinpointing what exactly made you feel what you feel is very important to your healing, because once you realize the root of your feelings, you can heal. What helps me if I'm unsure exactly why I feel what I do is to ask God to show me the root of this feeling. Where did this start? Usually then I remember some incident from a long time ago that shows me where the problem began. Once I remember that, I try to remember everything possible about that incident, even seemingly unimportant details like what clothes I was wearing. I also try to feel all the feelings associated with it, as difficult as that may be sometimes. The more thoroughly an incident can be remembered, I believe the more healing takes place. The more healing that happens, the less you will experience triggers like this in the future.

One important thing to remember is when you do this, take breaks. Emotional healing is very difficult & painful work. It also doesn't happen quickly. Because of these factors, it can get to be too much sometimes, especially when the trauma is extremely bad. When those times happen, it's best to take a break. Stop focusing on your healing & focus on something else that has absolutely nothing to do with the trauma for a little while. You need to put your emotions in a box on a shelf for a time, & take some time to do something fun. Watch a movie, read, work on a craft, snuggle your furkids, spend time with a good friend sharing some laughs... whatever you do, make sure it is lighthearted & fun. If it can make you laugh, all the better.

After you have relaxed & feel less overwhelmed, when you get back to working on your healing, you will be in a better frame of mind to do so.

Triggers can be difficult to deal with, I know. Frankly, they just stink. However, they can be a very helpful tool in your mental & emotional healing. Why not use them that way & make the pain they cause count for something?