

Cycles, Triggers & Reactions

What is an Emotional Trigger?

An emotional trigger is anything — a word, tone, memory, or event — that stirs up a strong emotional reaction, often tied to past pain.

You might feel it in your body before your brain catches up: a racing heart, tension, or a sudden urge to shut down.

Triggers aren't a sign of weakness — they're invitations to pause, notice, and care for a part of you that still hurts.

How does Avoidance keep me stuck?

Avoidance feels like relief in the moment — but over time, it shrinks your world.

The more we avoid what feels uncomfortable (conflict, emotions, tasks), the more power those things hold over us.

It's not laziness or failure — it's your nervous system trying to protect you.

Gentle exposure, paired with support, is how we start to reclaim our sense of safety and confidence.

What is Emotional Dysregulation?

Emotional dysregulation means feeling emotions so intensely that it's hard to manage your reactions.

You might:

- Cry easily or feel rage out of nowhere
- Go numb, shut down, or disconnect
- Feel like your response doesn't match the situation

This isn't a personal failure — it often comes from trauma, chronic stress, or being unsupported while growing up. With practice and tools, regulation is possible.

Why do I shut-down or lash out when overwhelmed?

When your brain senses danger — emotional or physical — it flips into protection mode.

- **Shutting down** (freeze) helps you feel safe by disconnecting
- **Lashing out** (fight) helps you feel in control

You're not broken — your nervous system is doing its best. The more awareness and support you have, the more you can respond instead of react.

What does it mean when people say "That's just your Nervous System"?

Your nervous system is the part of you that scans for safety — constantly, even without your awareness.

When it senses threat (real or perceived), it shifts into **fight, flight, freeze, or fawn** to protect you.

That racing heart, the urge to snap or disappear, the overwhelm? That's not you being dramatic — it's your body trying to help.

Understanding your nervous system gives you power to work *with* it, not against it.