

"When we are *triggered*, the memory tape snaps us back into a time, place and experience that ignites the chemicals and cells in our bodies to react in a way that shuts down our rational thought, baseline and control and replaces it with either fight, flight, freeze or fawn.

This happens because the experience we had before was real, terrifying, painful and our bodies and brain, remember this and store it away. Triggers bring it to the surface and make the brain and body feel like it is under threat or in danger.

We can learn to control this. You are not broken and there is nothing wrong with you. This is a **NORMAL** reaction and your body's learned way to protect you."

# Triggers: Soothing, releasing & naming it!

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## Brain Science

There is a lot of info out there, be careful and mindful how much and from whom you are receiving information about your *brain on trauma*.

[Check out this amazing guide about her brain and trauma from OAITH!](#)



## The Amygdala speaks up! and out!

Alie Ward, the host of [ologies](#) one of my favourite podcasts calls the amygdala the "screaming almond of the brain" this is super true especially for people who experienced trauma. What does this look like? reacting strongly, coming back down and feeling like shit because you "overreacted" or "hurt someone, even though your reaction is valid and often needed for release.

## What to do to soothe that screaming almond in the moment?

1. Breathe and name the things around you that you see
2. Harm Reduce
3. Name the feeling out loud, scream it out, but get it out. Write it down, rip it up or keep it in a safe place.
4. Ask for support or find time to be alone and safe with yourself, journal that out and just sit with it.

## What helps the brain and trauma?

Holistic approaches are key to unlocking resiliency, coping skills and healing or repair. No matter what path you choose to get some support whether clinical or other, don't forget that your body, culture and mind hold a lot of those keys already, supports help strengthen these skills.



## Set Boundaries

Setting boundaries is a powerful way to name the things you like and don't like in your space or for yourself. Setting boundaries and communicating them to partners, parents, friends, co-workers and health professionals is your right and is ok!

Q: I know (blank) makes me feel unsafe or activated. How will I communicate this?

[Click here to download a DI activity to help you with this process](#)

## The Reality and the Road ahead

Many survivors often feel "stuck" in their trauma and believe it is because of something they are doing wrong. This is often not the case.

Remember survivors, our society, our culture, our access to healthy and safe jobs, economic stability and safe housing all impact how we can recover and find safety.

Remember survivors, if you are living in violence now, you are doing everything right, just to survive.

The road to healing and recovery is long and you are not alone on your path.



## Get survivor centred support and care

survivor-centred trauma care can look and sound like many different things. For some it is reclaiming safety and healing through;

- music and art
- advocacy and activism
- CBT/DBT
- Economic stability and support
- Therapy
- Somatic based movement/experiences
- Body love and movement
- BDSM and Kink
- Peer support
- Education or new skill building
- Animal Care and Nature
- Spiritual Care and much, much more.

Visit our website to see our resources, which include a resource manual with over 200+ survivor centric programs and services across Ontario.

### Sources

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