

County of San Benito
Behavioral Health Department

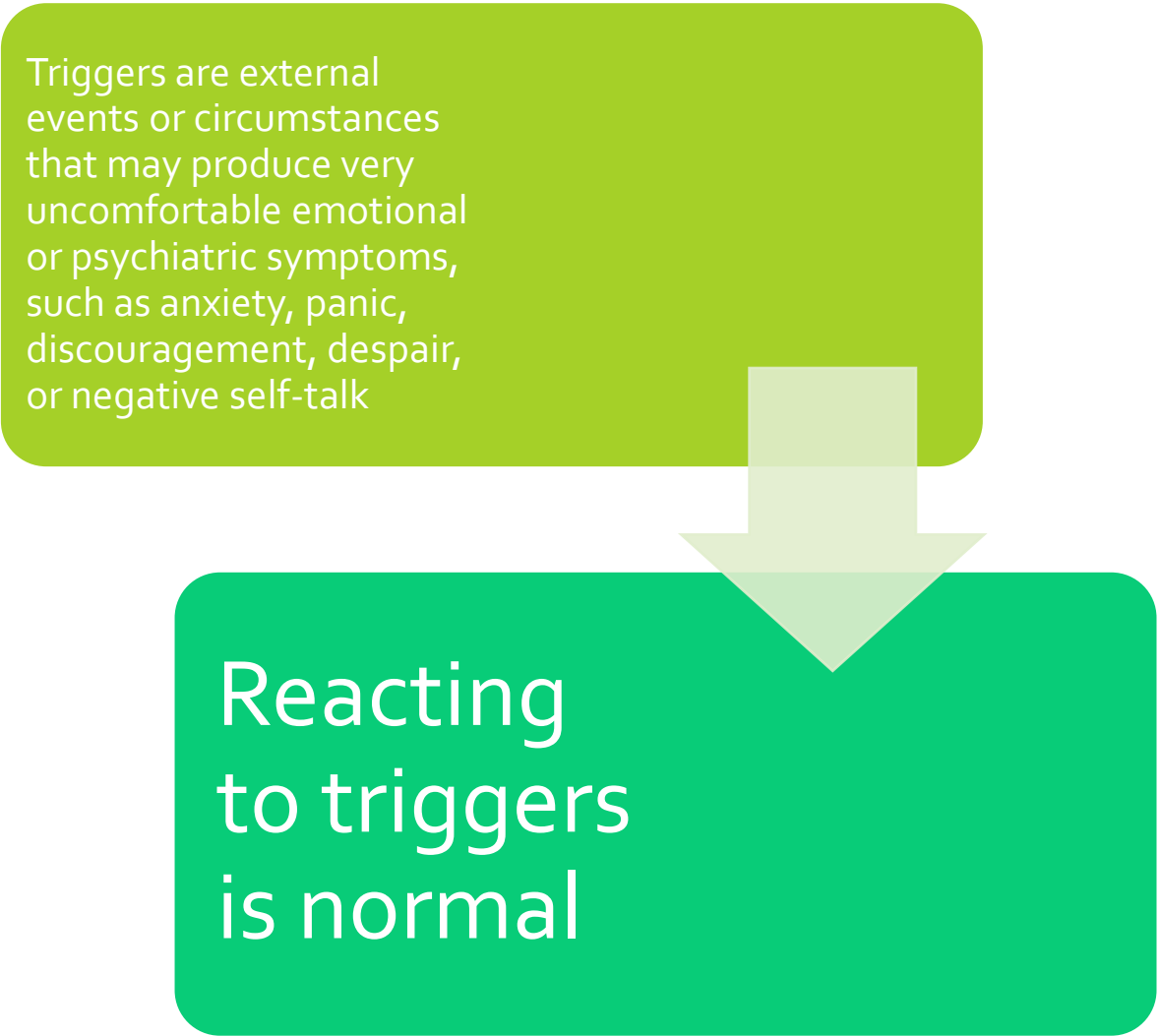


IDENTIFYING TRIGGERS AND
DEVELOPING COPING SKILLS FOR
STRESSFUL SITUATIONS

Presented by:

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Triggers are external events or circumstances that may produce very uncomfortable emotional or psychiatric symptoms, such as anxiety, panic, discouragement, despair, or negative self-talk



Reacting
to triggers
is normal

TRIGGERS

IDENTIFYING TRIGGERS

- Reminders of unwanted memories, uncomfortable topics, another person's words or actions, even your own behaviors.

Rejection

Betrayal

Unjust treatment

Challenged beliefs

Helplessness or loss of control

Being excluded or ignored

Disapproval or criticism

Feeling unwanted or unneeded

Feeling smothered or too needed

Insecurity

Loss of independence

NOT A TRIGGER

It's normal to feel upset, anxious, or extremely uncomfortable when we encounter difficult content. Having these strong reactions is normal and learning to regulate them is part of healthy emotional development.



TRIGGER

Trauma triggers are different. They often include a loss of a person's sense of time, space, and/or self. Emotion is amplified, completely muffled, or sometimes seemingly unrelated to a situation. Triggers are like a TRAPDOOR in the brain.



WHAT IS COPING?

- The way in which we respond to or manage stress/uncomfortable emotions – the ways in which we respond to life's demands

TYPES OF COPING SKILLS

Self-Soothing

(Comforting yourself through your five senses)

1. Something to touch
(ex: stuffed animal, stress ball)
2. Something to hear
(ex: music, meditation guides)
3. Something to see
(ex: snowglobe, happy pictures)
4. Something to taste
(ex: mints, tea, sour candy)
5. Something to smell
(ex: lotion, candles, perfume)

Distraction

(Taking your mind off the problem for a while)

Examples:

Puzzles, books, artwork, crafts, knitting, crocheting, sewing, crossword puzzles, sudoku, positive websites, music, movies, etc.

Opposite Action

(Doing something the opposite of your impulse that's consistent with a more positive emotion)

1. Affirmations and Inspiration
(ex: looking at or drawing motivational statements or images)
2. Something funny or cheering
(ex: funny movies / TV / books)

Emotional Awareness

(Tools for identifying and expressing your feelings)

Examples:

A list or chart of emotions, a journal, writing supplies, drawing / art supplies

Mindfulness

(Tools for centering and grounding yourself in the present moment)

Examples:

Meditation or relaxation recordings, grounding objects (like a rock or paperweight), yoga mat, breathing exercises.

Crisis Plan

(Contact info of supports and resources, for when coping skills aren't enough.)

**Family / Friends
Therapist
Psychiatrist
Hotline
Crisis Team / ER
911**

CONSEQUENCES OF NOT COPING EFFECTIVELY



AVOIDANCE OF
UNDERLYING
CONCERNS



PROLONGED
DISTRESS



SHORT TERM
GAIN – LONGER
TERM PAIN



WORSENING OF
INITIAL
SYMPTOMS

WHAT COPING SKILLS WILL WORK FOR ME?

- It's important to understand that coping skills look differently for different people and work differently based on the situation or circumstance. What works for your friend or your neighbor might not work for you, and vice versa.
- Often, we must go through some trial and error to figure out which coping skills work best for us.
- Test out new coping skills in less intense situations before testing them out in more intense situations— @FleurishPsych



Take care of your physical health



Maintain social connections



Take a break



Keep a routine



Spend time outside



Reach out for help

TIPS...(BUT
CONSIDER WHAT
WORKS FOR YOU!)

COVID DISTRESS MIGHT LOOK LIKE:

Increased anxiety and uncertainty

Feelings of loneliness or sadness

Changes in eating or sleeping patterns

Changes in substance use

Information/update burnout

Exacerbation of existing mental health concerns

What have you noticed?

RESOURCES

San Benito County Behavioral Health Department

- 1131 San Felipe Road
Hollister, CA 95023
(831) 636-4020
- [Cosb.us/departments/behavioral-health](https://cosb.us/departments/behavioral-health)

24/7 Crisis Phone Line

- (888) 636-4020

Pandemic Related stress/anxiety warmline

- (833) 317-HOPE

National Suicide Hotline

- (800) 273-8255