

# TRIGGER & SELF-CARE GUIDE

The HEAL Project | [heal2end.org](http://heal2end.org) | @heal2end

## SO YOU ARE PARTICIPATING IN A PROGRAM BY THE HEAL PROJECT

**Here are a few things to keep in mind:**

- If you are concerned about triggers, **clear your day** after the program and intentionally make sure to have few responsibilities.
- There will be sharing of **potentially triggering stories and opinions.**
- Be prepared to **pause and check in with yourself** as you participate. Use the signs of triggers list below as needed. We have provided a list of self-care tips in case of finding yourself triggered. However, **you know best how to take care of yourself.**
- The making of our programming is triggering at times for us too. We go slow, take time off, cry, and do self-care as needed. Openly talking about these issues is part of our healing process. **We are honored to do it in community with you.**

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## SIGNS OF BEING TRIGGERED

- **EMOTIONAL SIGNS**

confusion, anger, nervousness, anxiety, panic, sadness, suddenly feeling unsafe, alert, and cautious

- **MENTAL SIGNS**

dissociation, loss of patience, dizziness, disorientation, regression

- **PHYSICAL SIGNS**

heart racing, sweating, sudden fatigue, upset stomach, muscle pain, shaking, intense lethargy, choking up

## WATCH OUT FOR

- **URGE FOR EXCESS BEHAVIOR**

eating, working, using substances, having sex, watching tv, ruminating shopping

- **FLASHBACKS**

visual flashbacks, emotional flashbacks (body memory), sensory flashbacks

# 10 SELF-CARE TIPS

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**You are safe:** tell yourself “I am safe. I am OK.” Remind yourself that you are an adult capable of taking very good care of yourself. Remind yourself that these feelings will pass and you will feel better.

**Rage:** punch a pillow, cry, scream, go for a run.

**Touch:** place your hand on the back of the neck and squeeze, caress your own arm, hug yourself lovingly, and hold for a few minutes.

**Slow Down:** breathe, stretch, cancel plans, nap, listen to soft music, meditate.

**Sex/Kink:** if sex/kink helps you re-center, schedule a scene or play date.

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**Outside:** get out of the house and perhaps go for a walk, hike, swim, drive, or just sit outside.

**Vent:** talk to a friend and express your feelings (e.g. sadness, guilt, anger). Call a hotline for support.

**Inner Child Work:** pour out (say out loud) your feelings as if you were a small child (e.g. I hate her for doing that). Talk gently with the inner child and reassure protection and safety.

**Grief:** if possible, try to identify the source of your trigger and the associated wound. Allow yourself to grieve.

**Gratitude:** offer yourself gratitude for your commitment to your well-being, healing and growth.