Think Less, Vibe More
Week 8: Triggers/ Window of Tolerance

Presented by Student Health and Counseling Services
Safe Person Exercise

Think of an imaginary or real person(s) who is WISE, NURTURING, PROTECTIVE.

They are well intentioned, know you very well, cannot criticize you and always has something for you.

Eg. family members (not parents), teachers, friend, mentors, public figure, celebrity, literary figures, cartoon characters, religious figure, animals, protector symbols, mythical figures, amalgam of parts of self.
**Zoom Guidelines**

01. Please mute your audio while others are talking and type any questions into the chat box.

02. Your video can be off or on, whatever makes you most comfortable.

03. Confidentiality & Zoom limitations.

04. Any other suggestions?

**Community Agreements**

1. Push yourself to participate.
2. Focus on your own experience.
3. Share headlines, not details.
4. Step forward, step back.
5. Ask others before giving them feedback.
6. Assume positive intent from others.
7. Take responsibility for your needs.
8. Other suggestions?
Weekly Check In

Review: Creating Meanings
How are you *(weather analogy)*? What safe vibing skill did you use this week?

- ✓ Ask for Help
- ✓ Cry
- ✓ Choose self respect
- ✓ Take good care of your body
- ✓ Compassion
- ✓ Create a new story
- ✓ Structure your day
- ✓ Trust the process
- ✓ Reframe setbacks
- ✓ Focus on now
01. Triggers

What are they & What do they look like?
About Triggers

Triggers are:
- Anything that sets off an intense emotional reaction often causing extreme distress or overwhelm (fight, flight, freeze, fawn)
- Internal (something that comes from a thought or emotion)
- External (something in the outside world that causes a reaction)

Triggers can be sudden.

Triggers can affect your ability to remain present in the moment.

It may bring up specific thought patterns (eg. from trauma) or influence your behavior.
# Triggers Look Like

## Reflection: What are your triggers?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>INTERNAL TRIGGERS (eg)</th>
<th>EXTERNAL TRIGGERS (eg)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- Feelings of anger, anxiety/stress, or sadness</td>
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<td>- Memories</td>
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<td>- Loneliness</td>
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<td>- Frustration</td>
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<td>- Feeling out of control</td>
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<td>- Feeling vulnerable</td>
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<td>- Racing heartbeat</td>
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<td>- Physical pain</td>
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<td>- Negative self-talk</td>
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<td>- Intrusive thoughts</td>
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<td>- Seeing something on the news or online</td>
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<td>- Watching a movie or television show</td>
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<td>- Certain smells</td>
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<td>- The anniversary of a significant or traumatic event</td>
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<td>- Holidays</td>
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<td>- Visiting a specific place</td>
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<td>- Seeing a certain person</td>
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<td>- Social pressure</td>
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<td>- Relationship conflicts</td>
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Window of Tolerance

Triggers can send you out of the window
Not something you chose
Reactions take over
  - Hyperarousal
    - anxious, angry, out of control, panic
    - body wants to fight or run away
  Or
  - Hypoarousal
    - spacey, zoned out, numb, frozen
    - body wants to shut down, collapse
    - threatened, dissociative

How Trauma Can Affect Your Window Of Tolerance

Hyperarousal
- Anxious, Angry, Out of Control, Overwhelmed
- Your body wants to fight or run away
- It’s not something you choose – these reactions just take over.

Hyperarousal
- When stress and trauma shrink your window of tolerance, it doesn’t take much to throw you off balance.

Hypoarousal
- Spacy, Zoned Out, Numb, Frozen
- Your body wants to shut down
- It’s not something you choose – these reactions just take over.

Working with a practitioner can help expand your window of tolerance so that you are more able to cope with challenges.
**Window of Tolerance**

How to get back into our window of tolerance (eg)

- **Hyperarousal**
  - +Diaphragmatic Breathing
  - +Yoga
  - +Meditation
  - +Drinking water or creating saliva

- **Hypoarousal**
  - +Grounding tools (naming, 4 Elements)
  - +Breathwork
  - +Physical movement
  - +Humor
  - +Scaling

Widening our Window of Tolerance (eg):

- +Regular compassion focused strategies
- +Safe visualization/ resourcing
- +Building social connections
- +Practicing mindfulness
- +Practicing safe containment
- +Processing our trauma
02. Exploring your relationship with your triggers

Me & My Triggers
Evaluate Your Triggers

- It is okay to sometimes avoid external triggers
  - as long as this avoidance doesn’t negatively interfere with your day-to-day quality of life
- Try to continually evaluate your triggers and to practice good coping strategies (widen your window of tolerance)
- **Strive for Balance:** you may feel too much at times, (hyperarousal) and too little at other times (hypoarousal). To best fight triggers, the goal is balance; practice active awareness, be conscious, and in touch with reality so that triggers do not control you
Evaluate Your Triggers

When you find yourself faced with a trigger, do your best to ask yourself the following questions:

- What type of situation are you in? Are you safe?
- What is happening around you?
- What kind of emotions are you feeling?
- What thoughts are you having?
- What does your body feel like?

Remember, Recognize, Acknowledge, Investigate, Nurture (RAIN)

What are some ways you can nurture yourself when triggered?
05. Reflect & Debrief
Reflect & Debrief


Check Out Question
1 thing you are taking away from the group & 1 technique you are committing to do for yourself this week
Additional Resources

● **Apps**: Wysa, MoodMission, Shine, Happify, Calm, MindShine, QuitThat!

● **Counseling Groups** throughout every week
  ○ TLVM Part 2 Group (Rising Strong)
  ○ TLVM offered in Spring
  ○ The Struggle is Real (Dep group)

● **Student Well-Being**
● **SHCS Instagram** - @eastbayshcs
● **Feedback Form**
Additional Resources

- **Apps:** Wysa, MoodMission, Shine, Happify, Calm, MindShine, QuitThat!
- **Counseling Groups** throughout the week
- **Student Wellness Resources (linked in QR code)**
- **Student well being:** Basic needs
- **Pioneers for HOPE** - support with food and housing
  : @Pioneersforhope
- **SHCS Instagram** - @eastbayshcs
Thanks for joining!

We hope to see you next week for our last week/ reviewing our time together!