

## How to Respond to Triggers

Triggers can arise from people, things, or situations, leading to reactions that range from mild to severely traumatic. A trigger might be a visual cue (like a flash of light or a certain body language), a sound (such as a creaking step or a particular tone of voice), a scent (like a specific perfume or cologne), or a feeling of touch. This stimulus can evoke the old lie that originated from the initial event. Although individuals may logically understand it isn't the same experience, they might cope by rationalizing with thoughts like, "This is not real." However, this rationalization does not alleviate feelings of anxiety, fear, persistent dread, or helplessness, as it fails to anchor them in the present moment or the truth of God.

### Establish a Plan for Triggered Trauma and Lies (Grounding Techniques)

**Note:** You might want to save this information on your phone or somewhere handy.

1. Use the 4-7-8 Breathing Technique to help settle your emotions down (or help prepare to sleep).
  - a. Inhale: 4 seconds
  - b. Hold your breath: 7 seconds.
  - c. Exhale: 8 seconds.
  - d. Repeat several times until your heart slows down and you feel calmer.
2. Locate where you are by touching and labeling two things near you.
  - a. *This is my friend's table.*
  - b. *This is my friend's coffee cup. We are having coffee.*
3. Identify where you are and the date.
  - a. *It is Monday, January 1<sup>st</sup>.*
  - b. *I am having coffee in my friend's kitchen.*
4. Identify what triggered a disproportionate emotional response.
  - a. *That cologne is the same as the neighbors.*
  - b. *It feels the same as a time I was not safe.*
5. Tell yourself scriptural truths that counter the lie-based feelings.
  - a. *God keeps me safe and helps me.*
  - b. *God is with me, and I am not on my own.*
  - c. *God loves and accepts me and will give me His strength.*
6. Give your feelings time to realign with the present.
  - Praise and worship music may be beneficial.

### Prayer

*Father God,  
I agree with Your truth that I am (proclaim the truth). Thank you, Father, that my life is in your hands.  
Father, you are here [state where] with me now. Holy Spirit, renew my mind and feelings and fill me  
with your truth and peace. Amen*