

# WHEN YOUR TRIGGER HITS



**BREATHE.** Sounds simple, but when you're in a panic it isn't. **SLOWLY** inhale through the nose and exhale slowly through the mouth or nose. Do at least 3 times, but there is no limit. Do this as long as it takes.

**PROGRESSIVE MUSCLE RELAXATION.** Relax your entire body then tense a single muscle group for five seconds, then completely release. Do the same for the next muscle group. Move from your feet, to calf, thigh, glutes, stomach, arms, shoulders, and face. You're teaching your body to relax by showing it the opposite.

**MUSIC.** Listening to music can actually reduce cortisol, the stress hormone. And let's hold on the head banging music or sad love songs. Try some calming music or happy sing along music.

**MEDITATION.** Lots of methods here so choose your favorite. Get comfortable. Relax and clear the mind.

**MEDICATION.** Can't recommend anything specific, I'm not a doctor. And I don't even play one on TV. However, consult your physician because there are options when used correctly.

**EXERCISE.** If you have the opportunity, get physical. Do some pushups. Go for a brisk walk or a jog. Hit the gym. Shoot a hoop or throw the frisbee with your dog. Just move.

**CONFIDANT.** Who is your BFF? Might be a family member or a workmate or a life-long friend. And most people have more than one. These are the people you can share ANYTHING with. So go ahead and share.

**VISUALZATION.** Shut your eyes and transport yourself to your place of calm. A happy place. Maybe the beach, or riding a horse, or watching the sunset. Shut your eyes and put yourself there.

**SIX O'CLOCK NEWS.** Will it make the six o'clock news? Often the event that set you off will not. Train your brain to keep things in perspective by placing it in the "inconvenience" pile instead of the "stress" pile.

**KINDNESS.** Immediately perform a random act of kindness. Call an ailing friend, or help your neighbor with a task, or just compliment somebody. Doing something nice for someone refocuses your brain.

**WWTPD.** What would that person do. Think of the most positive, pleasant person you know and ask yourself, "What would they do?" Or "How would they handle the situation." Emulate that person's positivity.

**DISTRACTION.** Move your mind off the trigger by distracting it with a mental activity. A puzzle, or painting, woodworking, a to-do project, reading a book, a movie, or a video game. Distract your brain.

**WHAT'S MOST IMPORTANT?** Focus on what's really important. In your mind list the things you have, instead of all the things you don't. This will redirect you away from the trigger into a feeling of gratitude.

**FIND YOUR DAY.** Everyone has had a horrendous day. And yet, you survived. Compared to that day, all other days pale in comparison. Use that day as your benchmark to carry on, and to measure happiness.



**MAYFIELD PRESENTATIONS**

**816-532-8702**

**Mark@MarkMayfield.com**

**www.markmayfield.com**

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