



WHAT ARE MY TRIGGERS?

AM I EFFECTIVELY COMMUNICATING OR SHUTTING DOWN?

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LEARNING OUTCOMES

- What are triggers?
- What are YOUR triggers?
- Navigating Triggering Conversations
 - Personally
 - Professionally
- Why is this important in advising?

CULTURAL LENS

Cultural lens refers to the unique perspective one has of the world as a result of their background.

Cultural lens can be shaped by many factors including:

- Up-bringing (family and friends)
- Education
- Religion & Political Beliefs
- Environment

The background is a solid blue gradient. In the corners, there are decorative white line art elements resembling circuit boards or neural networks, with lines and small circles connecting them.

Being aware of your cultural lens is
key to recognizing when you are
“triggered”.

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SO, WHAT IS A TRIGGER?

Any stimulus (external or internal) through which
a person experiences an emotional reaction.

The image features a blue gradient background with white circuit-like lines and circles in the corners. The text is centered in a large, white, sans-serif font.

WHAT ARE YOUR
TRIGGERS?

HOW DID YOU FEEL WHEN FILLING THIS ACTIVITY OUT?

Possible trigger “symptoms”

- Feelings of unexpectedness
- Strong intensity of feelings
- Disorientation
- Lack of control

TRIGGERING EVENT CYCLE

- Step 1: Stimulus Occurs

- Ex. A peer interrupts something I'm doing to "take over" because I wasn't "doing it right"

- Step 2: The stimulus triggers intrapersonal roots

- Ex. My grandma when making Xmas cookies

- Step 3: The intrapersonal roots form a lens through which meaning is made of the experience

- Ex. My way isn't "right"; I'm doing something wrong

TRIGGERING EVENT CYCLE



- Step 4: Cognitive, emotional, and physiological reactions occur
 - Ex. I get angry, defensive, roll my eyes, sigh heavily
- Step 5: Intentions behind responding are influenced by Step 3
 - Ex. “Take it back” from them
- Step 6: You react
 - Ex. I tell them there is no right way, I was doing just fine...let me do it
- Step 7: Your reaction may be a new trigger for others
 - Ex. I may be seen as inflexible, childish, not open-minded, or too defensive since “they were only trying to help”



Now, think about your advising
appointments...

Has a student ever exhibited
triggering symptoms in your meeting?

Or have YOU been triggered by
something they may have said?



NAVIGATING TRIGGERING SITUATIONS

- Avoid Attacking, Belittling, and Convicting
- Explore, clarify, ask questions, step back
 - What are ways we can do this in a student meeting?
 - Recognizing their change in tone of voice or in body language
 - Suggest....
 - “Why don’t we take a break?”
 - “Why don’t I follow up with you after speaking with another advisor about your situation?”
 - “Why don’t you reschedule (come back) when you’re feeling a bit better?”
- Use centering exercises, deep breathing
- Search for aspects of your cultural lens that have fueled your reaction

WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

- Recognition of effective communication

- Are you immediately shutting down in your conversations with colleagues, students, or loved ones?

- Self-reflection

- Being a healthy advisor and learning more about yourself and your own emotional intelligence will allow you to be a better advisor to your students, colleague to your peers, and partner/family member

- Taking a moment...

- Prepping for appointments
 - Asking for advice from a colleague
 - Being clear in advisement to the student— setting expectations, registering, etc.