

# Trigger Recovery Guide

Help to turn your triggers from a source of pain  
into a tool for your healing

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Connections That Heal

# *Trigger Recovery Guide* KEY TO HEALING

Hello, New Friend!

I'm so glad you've downloaded this Trigger Recovery Guide. I hope it will be a helpful companion on your journey toward healing and freedom after the trauma of abuse or betrayal.

When we experience trauma—whether from abuse, neglect, a car accident, or something harder to define—our nervous system remembers it, even when our minds want to move on. A trigger is anything that reminds our nervous system of that pain: a door slamming, brakes squealing, a raised voice, or even a look on someone's face. In those moments, our body sends signals that we're unsafe, pulling us back to the feelings of the original trauma.

If you've picked up this guide, I'm guessing you know what that feels like—and you're looking for relief.

The truth is, trauma is real, and unhealed trauma has a ripple effect in our lives and relationships. The good news? Healing has a ripple effect too—bringing peace and freedom not just to you, but to those around you.

Let's get started.

*Stephanie*  
Connections That Heal

Healing from trauma is a journey,  
not a one-time event.

# *Trigger Recovery Guide*

## MY BACKSTORY

I had to learn to trust the process and keep digging deeper, with curiosity. This is how we heal and grow.

When I left my destructive marriage with a life-saving divorce, I asked for the marital home. It wasn't worth much—unfinished, with a leaky roof—but it was paid for. That gave me a rent-free place to homeschool my youngest and figure out my next steps.

A generous gift helped me replace the roof, and I hired someone to repair and paint the ceiling. I saw the house as a debt-free blessing, even with its flaws.

But as I began the DIY work myself to repair and finish the house, unexpected feelings emerged—triggers that made my body feel unsafe, and doubts about keeping the house. Using what I'd learned about trauma, I processed the emotions, grieved my losses, released my anger, and began creating a home where I felt safe.

Staying—out of financial necessity—became an unplanned doorway to healing I didn't know I needed.

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## THE TRIGGER

My first trigger may sound small, but maybe you'll relate.

I was preparing to paint my new bedroom—the first space I would make my own. I emptied the room, took things off the walls, and reached for a screwdriver to remove the switch plates. Suddenly, my chest tightened, my heart pounded, and I was exhausted before doing anything.

I felt unsafe in my own home. Why?

Pausing, I took a deep breath and silently asked God, “What is going on here? Why do I feel this tension and confusion?”

Then, memories surfaced:

- Bringing my own tools into my marriage, only to have them disappear, one by one.
- My husband's chiding remarks about me “not putting things away,” his mischievous smile as he denied knowing where they were.
- My confusion—Am I going crazy? What's wrong with me? Why can't I find a simple screwdriver?
- And the birthday outing, when he made a show of buying me a new toolbox and tools. I'd added pink tape to mark them as mine. But those tools disappeared too—just more slowly this time.

Suddenly, it clicked. Searching for tools had once led to shame and self-doubt. Now, it was leading me to memories of those bad places—places where I couldn't yet see the truth.

But now I could.

# *Trigger Recovery Guide*

## THE TRIGGER

The trigger brought me not to the scene of the crime, but to its impact: trauma stored in my nervous system. This wasn't a curse—it was a gift. Triggers weren't here to harm me; they were messengers pointing to pain I was finally ready to process.

This trigger wasn't a curse.  
It was a gift.

I sat with the truth. I felt the loss, named it, and grieved it. And I felt the anger at the injustice of living this for years, and being told so many times to “pray harder” and “do more [fill in the blank]”. What I couldn't see back then—what felt so confusing and chaotic—was now clear.

Healing required walking through that anger and grief.

And the trigger? It wasn't my enemy. It was an invitation.

The trigger wasn't the enemy.  
It was an invitation.

What if, instead of fearing triggers, we could see them as guides—leading us to the next step in our freedom journey?

# Checking In

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Do you find yourself in a place that has LOTS of triggers or reminders of your trauma? Have you left the place of trauma? Does it help you to be removed from the physical location?

If you are still in that place and need to make a choice, would you prefer to stay and face the trauma, or move to a new place and process the trauma from a distance?

*Spoiler alert: There are no wrong answers here. And the really good news is that wherever we go, when we are walking with God, He is with us. It's okay if you think one way now and change your mind later, too!*

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Healing is most often a journey, not a single moment.

# Trigger Recovery Guide

## LET'S BREAK IT DOWN

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Over the past four years of DIYing my house, I've had plenty of opportunities to practice this process! The good news? It gets easier with time and practice, and I believe it will for you too. These steps don't always happen in a perfect order, but they can help you move toward healing.

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### **Recognize the Trigger**

My first clue? My body tensed, my heart pounded, and I felt exhausted just thinking about my next step—finding the screwdriver. That's when I realized: I was triggered.

What signals tell you that you're triggered? Do they always look the same, or do they vary? Can you pause and name what you're feeling and where you sense it in your body?

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### **Get Grounded**

To connect with yourself and God, you first need to step out of survival mode. Otherwise, you'll stay stuck, reacting from trauma.

A simple way to ground yourself is through slow, deep breathing—it reassures your brain that you are safe. Even singing can help!

What's your go-to grounding method? Is it something you can do naturally, almost without thinking?

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# Trigger Recovery Guide

## LET'S BREAK IT DOWN

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### Here's something worth knowing before you start asking questions:

*Your emotions aren't random, and they aren't lying to you.*

*They're actually telling you the truth – about what you believe. Fear, shame, anger, confusion – each one is carrying information about a belief that's living somewhere inside you. Getting curious means getting interested in what that belief might be.*

# 3

### Get Curious

Ask yourself—and God—curious questions about the situation. If you're unsure where to start, simply ask Him what He wants you to ask.

Some questions to get you started:

- What's up with this/what's happening?
- Where is this feeling/thought/symptom coming from?
- What do You want me to hear around this? / Where are You in this?
- Is there a lie I'm believing? What's the truth I need to see?

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### Keep In Mind:

*If emotions intensify, revisit grounding exercises. That's not failure—it's part of the process.*

*If you are walking through these steps and aren't "hearing" anything, that doesn't mean there is something wrong with you. It may mean your body wants you to have support to walk through this. If you have a trauma-informed coach or counselor, or a safe, empathetic friend, you can do this with them. Support and connection help the healing process.*

# Trigger Recovery Guide

## LET'S BREAK IT DOWN

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### 4

#### **Walk Through What Comes—thoughts, feelings, memories**

As memories and thoughts surface, take time to hold them. Feel the emotions. It's okay to cry, yell, or even punch a pillow. Journaling can help you process and remember.

If you're in a shared space, especially with children, consider jotting quick notes to revisit later in private.

**This is also a tender place to invite God in.** *As memories and feelings surface, you don't have to hold them alone. You can simply say, "Lord, what do You want me to see here?" or "What do You want me to know about this?" Then listen — not for a loud answer, but for a quiet impression, a scripture that surfaces, a sense of peace, or a gentle knowing. He is not afraid of what comes up. He was there then, and He is here now.*

**A gentle note:** *Sometimes, as you open this door, something may surface that feels bigger than you can hold alone. That's not a sign you're doing it wrong — it may be an invitation to process this with support. Other times, nothing comes — and that too is okay. God is wise and kind, and He may be waiting to walk that particular path with you alongside a safe person. If you find yourself in either of those places, please don't stay there alone. Reach out to a safe friend, a trauma-informed therapist or coach, or feel free to email me or [book a personal connection call](#). That's not too much — that's exactly what support is for.*

#### **Keep In Mind:**

**Healing is most often a journey, not a single moment.** *Some breakthroughs happen instantly, but most healing unfolds over time—like climbing a spiral staircase, re-visiting places from a new perspective each time you rise higher.*

# Trigger Recovery Guide

## LET'S BREAK IT DOWN

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### **Consider Boundaries**

As you reflect on what this trigger has revealed, you may recognize the need for new boundaries to protect your heart. Boundaries aren't about controlling others; they're about deciding in advance how you will respond in certain situations to maintain safety and well-being.

A boundary defines:

- Who I am and who I am not (my identity, values, and responsibilities)
- What I am responsible for and what I am not (my emotions, actions, and choices versus others')
- What I will allow in my life and what I will not (behavior, treatment, and interactions I accept or reject)
- What I will give and what I will not (my time, energy, and resources within healthy limits)

### **Examples of Healthy Boundaries:**

"I will not engage in conversations that make me doubt my reality and worth." (This might mean blocking numbers, setting email-only communication, or ending discussions that feel manipulative.)

"I choose who has access to me and my space." (This could involve changing locks, setting visitation rules, or declining events where unsafe people will be present.)

"I will not overextend myself to meet others' expectations at the cost of my well-being." (This may look like limiting social commitments, stepping away from unhealthy dynamics, or prioritizing rest.)

Boundaries are an essential part of healing, helping you move forward with clarity, peace, and self-respect. What's one boundary you recognize you need today?

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## WHEN A TRIGGER ISN'T A TRIGGER

Sometimes, you recognize the trigger, try to ground yourself, get curious, and walk through what comes...

And it still feels scary and dangerous -- You can't get grounded and out of fight or flight mode no matter what you try.

What do you do then?

This is the moment to ask: Am I processing an old trauma, or is this actually a new trauma?

...is this a new trauma?

### **Helpful Insight:**

*I've seen this happen with women in relationships after trauma. They believe they're just being triggered and need to work harder to push through negative feelings about a person or situation. But the reality? They're with someone unsafe. Their body isn't reacting to the past—it's warning them about a present danger.*

*Shifting the **WAY** we think about triggers is key to healing after abuse or betrayal. Instead of seeing them as threats that keep us stuck in fear, we can recognize them as invitations to heal stored trauma—or as red flags alerting us to real-time harm. Either way, they're guiding us toward peace and freedom.*

# *Trigger Recovery Guide*

## WHEN A TRIGGER ISN'T A TRIGGER

Questions to Ask:

- Is this person or situation aligned with/respectful of my boundaries? Am I safe to have boundaries with them?
- Does this feel familiar in a way that hurts me now? Or is it pointing to an old wound I need to process?
- Are my concerns being considered or dismissed? Do I feel validated?
- What lie am I believing? What truth replaces it?

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**If you are dealing with a new trauma,  
the first priority is to get safe.**

# Trigger Recovery Guide

## GLIMMERS

We've talked a lot about trauma triggers, but have you heard of glimmers?

Glimmers are the opposite of triggers—they're the little moments that spark peace, joy, or delight. The sight of blue sky, the glow of a sunset, the sound of ocean waves, or the warmth of the sun on your shoulders—these are all glimmers. They remind our nervous system that safety and goodness exist, helping to gently rewire our brains toward healing.

Watch for the glimmers!

Beyond nature, glimmers can also be found in everyday interactions and experiences. The delight of a child's laughter, the comfort of a friend's kind words, or the shared joy in a safe friendship can all serve as glimmers. These moments, whether found in nature, human connection, or our connection with God, help reassure our nervous system of safety and goodness, gently guiding us toward healing.


You can even ask God for glimmers.

Start watching for glimmers. Notice them. Pause to soak in the feeling they bring. You can even ask God for glimmers. A friend calls beautiful moments—especially in nature—Selfies from God. I love that! Those unexpected gifts, like a butterfly landing near you, or the scent of fresh rain, are God's way of saying, "I see you. I love you. I delight in you."

I don't know about you, but I can't get too many glimmers!

# Reflection

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What glimmers have you already noticed? 

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What little things bring you joy? 

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Ask God to show you more... and keep watching. 

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# Trigger Recovery Guide

## LAST THOUGHTS

**Healing from trauma is a journey, not a one-time event.** Each trigger you process, each glimmer you notice, and each step you take toward freedom adds up over time. You're not alone in this—God sees you, loves you, and is leading you toward healing. The truth is, He came to set us free and give us abundant life. He wants that for us even more than we do.

As you move forward, here are some ways to continue this journey:

- **Practice This Process Regularly** – Triggers will still come, but now you have a framework to process them. The more you use these steps, the more natural they'll become.
- **Surround Yourself with Support** – Healing happens in connection. Seek out safe, trauma-aware friends, mentors, or a coach who can walk alongside you.
- **Create Spaces of Safety & Peace** – Whether in your home, your schedule, or your relationships, prioritize environments that support your healing.
- **Keep Watching for Glimmers** – Healing isn't just about processing pain; it's about welcoming joy, too. Stay open to the moments God sends to remind you of His love for you.

Healing is most often a journey,  
not a single moment.

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## NEXT STEPS

You've just done something brave. Taking an honest look at what your triggers are carrying – and what to do with them – is real work. Don't minimize it.

As you continue this journey, here are a few ways to keep going:

**Follow along:** For encouragement, teaching, and more tools, find me on YouTube at @stephanieofgreenpastures and on Instagram at @connections.that.heal.

**Ready to not do this alone?** The Community Check-In is a small, paid community where women gather twice a month on Zoom – to share honestly, move at their own pace, and receive support. I guide each session. You might be rooted in faith, exploring, or reconsidering – you're welcome here either way.

**Want to ease in first?** Create & Connect is a free monthly Zoom meeting – a gentle space to experience what safe connection feels like before committing to anything more. Come as you are.

**Need personal support right now?** You don't have to wait. Email me or book a personal connection call – I'm here.

*Keep going. You're worth it.*

It's tempting to believe that if it isn't fixed now,  
we're doing it wrong.  
The truth is, the process takes time and the  
work of connecting and reflecting.

# About THE AUTHOR

Hi, I'm Stephanie, the heart behind "Connections That Heal." From the start of my marriage, I felt something wasn't right. Even though everything seemed perfect on the outside, I couldn't shake the confusion growing inside me. As the years went by, this feeling only got stronger.

Around our 25th anniversary, things started to become clearer. But it wasn't until three and a half years later that a major revelation shed light on nearly 30 years of my life.

Now, five years after leaving the marriage, I'm still uncovering truths about my past. The difference is, today I have the tools to process these insights and seek support when I need it.

Throughout my healing journey, I've met many women facing similar challenges. I've noticed that emotional triggers often linger long after leaving an abusive relationship, affecting not just the individuals but also those around them. Realizing that these triggers can be guides to areas needing healing, I created the "Trigger Recovery Guide." This resource is here to help women turn their triggers from sources of pain into tools for recovery.

If this guide speaks to you, I'd love to hear your story. If you have questions or need more support, please reach out. We're in this together.

Warmly,

*Stephanie*

DO YOU NEED  
MORE HELP?  
SCHEDULE A CALL



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# Notes & Notices

## **Disclaimer**

This guide is for educational and informational purposes only. It is not intended to replace professional counseling, therapy, medical advice, or diagnosis. While I hope these reflections and tools bring clarity and encouragement, please seek support from a qualified professional if you are in crisis or need more personalized help.

## **Limitation of Liability**

Every effort has been made to present this content thoughtfully and helpfully. However, your healing journey is personal and complex. By using this guide, you agree that I (Stephanie Blyler) cannot be held responsible for any outcomes or decisions you make based on this content. Always proceed with wisdom and care for yourself.

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