



Exercise: Emotional Triggers

We all have certain reactions that are more likely to trigger emotions for us. Most of us are relatively comfortable with encountering certain types of negative emotional states or behaviours, and quite uncomfortable with others (e.g., you may find it relatively easy to interact with a worker who is sad and tearful, but find it nerve-racking to deal with a hostile worker). Understanding your emotional triggers helps you plan ahead for how to address different situations.

What are some of your emotional triggers? Choose from among the following list or add your own.

Passive-aggressive behaviour

Whining

Crying

Blaming

Criticizing/judging

Frustration/irritation

Worry/nervousness

Anger

Victim mentality

Aggression

Hostility

Need to please

Silent treatment

Manipulation

Deceit/lying

Dislike

Disappointment

Sadness

Unhappiness

Sarcasm

High-strung temperament

Arrogance

Conceitedness



Think of the various emotional states you have encountered among individuals with whom you currently work. Which do you find easiest to deal with?

Negative Emotions I Can Deal with Easily (minor triggers)	Negative Emotions that Are More Challenging to Encounter (major triggers)
<i>e.g., frustration</i>	<i>e.g., despair</i>

Identify those that are most challenging for you. Think about what specifically makes the challenging emotions difficult to deal with. Think about times you effectively dealt with a worker's challenging emotional reaction or state. What made it easier for you to deal with? Was it the person, the place, the situation, your current emotional state or something else?

Negative Emotions that are Major Triggers	What I Find Specifically Challenging	Factors that May Help Reduce the Challenges