

Identifying Triggers

You're not alone in your feelings of overwhelm - I've been there too!

In today's fast-paced, high-pressure world, it's a common experience. Overwhelm happens when our mental, emotional, or physical resources are stretched to their limits, making it hard to cope. Things like stress, unresolved emotions, and external pressures can all play a part.

When we're overwhelmed, our brain's stress response - led by the amygdala and hypothalamus - kicks into overdrive. This can make it tough to think clearly, prioritize, or manage emotions. But the good news is, pinpointing what's triggering your overwhelm can make a big difference.

By understanding the patterns behind what stresses us out, we activate the part of our brain responsible for logical thinking and planning: the prefrontal cortex. This helps us problem-solve and take meaningful steps to feel better.

The worksheet below is here to help you identify those triggers and find practical ways to regain balance.

Overwhelm often signals that your mind and body need attention. By identifying your triggers and taking proactive steps, you can create a healthier relationship with stress and build resilience. Revisit this worksheet regularly to refine your strategies and track your growth.

You've got this!


Identifying Triggers


Think about 2-3 recent times when you felt overwhelmed.

Use the prompts below to guide your reflections:

- What was happening when you started to feel overwhelmed?

Moment 1 


Moment 2 

Moment 3 

- Were there specific events, people, or situations that contributed to the feeling?

Moment 1 


Moment 2 

Moment 3 

- How did your body react? (e.g., tight chest, racing heart, fatigue)

Moment 1 

Moment 2 

Moment 3 

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Take a look back at your answers on the previous page.

- Are there common themes or triggers in the situations? (e.g., deadlines, conflicts, lack of sleep)



- What emotions came up most often when you felt overwhelmed? (e.g., anxiety, frustration, helplessness)



- Are there specific times of day or environments where overwhelm tends to occur? (e.g., mornings, noisy places)



Identifying Triggers

For each trigger you identified, think about one practical step you can take to reduce its impact.

For example:

- Trigger: Tight deadlines.
- Strategy: Break tasks into smaller steps and set mini-deadlines.

- Trigger: Crowded environments.
- Strategy: Plan quiet breaks or wear noise-cancelling headphones.

Trigger



Strategy



Trigger



Strategy



Trigger



Strategy



