

Warning Signs & Triggers

NAME: _____ **DATE:** _____

Introduction:

Understanding your personal warning signs and triggers is crucial for recognizing when you may need extra support or to take action to protect your mental health. Use this worksheet to reflect on both emotional and physical warning signs, as well as triggers that may affect your well-being.

1. Emotional & Behavioral Warning Signs

List the emotional and behavioral changes you experience when you're feeling overwhelmed, anxious, or depressed. These signs can help you recognize when your mental health is starting to decline.

- Sudden changes in mood (irritability, sadness, anxiety)
- Withdrawing from friends, family, or activities
- Difficulty concentrating or making decisions
- Feeling hopeless, helpless, or worthless
- Increased use of alcohol or substances
- Disrupted sleep (too much or too little)
- Changes in appetite or weight
- Thoughts of self-harm or suicide

Write your personal emotional warning signs:

2. Physical Warning Signs

Your body often sends signals when you're under stress or struggling with your mental health. Identifying these physical symptoms can help you respond early.

- Fatigue or low energy
- Frequent headaches or stomachaches
- Muscle tension or aches
- Racing heart or shallow breathing
- Trouble sleeping or staying asleep
- Changes in appetite or digestion

Write your personal physical warning signs:

3. Identifying Triggers

Triggers are events, situations, or experiences that can bring up negative emotions or cause stress. Identifying them can help you prepare for or avoid these triggers in the future.

- Conflict with family or friends
- Financial stress or job pressure
- Traumatic news or events
- Feeling isolated or rejected
- Loss or grief
- Overwhelming workload or deadlines

Write down your personal triggers:

4. Action Plan for Warning Signs & Triggers

Once you notice your warning signs or identify a trigger, it's important to take steps to manage your emotions and prevent further distress.

What can you do when you notice these signs?

- Reach out to a trusted friend or therapist
- Practice grounding techniques or mindfulness exercises
- Engage in a healthy coping activity (exercise, journaling, deep breathing)
- Use a personal safety plan if you're feeling overwhelmed

List specific actions you will take when noticing warning signs or encountering triggers:

5. Reach Out for Support

Recognizing warning signs and triggers is an important first step, but reaching out for help is essential when things become overwhelming.

Who can you reach out to for support?

- A friend or family member
- A therapist or counselor
- A crisis hotline or support service

List the people or services you can contact for help:

Final Thoughts:

By being aware of your warning signs and triggers, you're taking an important step toward protecting your mental health. Keep this worksheet in an accessible place and refer to it when you notice changes in your emotional or physical state. Remember, you're not alone—help is available when you need it.