

THE 4 F'S OF TRAUMA

EXPERIENCES - BEHAVIOURS - RECOVERY

Common Experiences

- Tense muscles
- Increased heart rate
- Increased body temperature
- Angry
- Embarrassed
- Threatened
- High energy
- Faster/ shallow breathing

Common Behaviours

- Rage outbursts
- Bullying
- Intimidation
- Criticizing
- Controlling
- Incessant monologuing
- Acts of entitlement
- Exertion of power

Recovery Strategies

- Self-initiated time outs
- Accept support
- Safe space
- Physical movement
- Have gratitude
- Offer forgiveness
- Healthy communication

FIGHT



FLIGHT



Common Experiences

- Anxiety
- On edge
- Tense limbs
- Obsessive thoughts
- Difficulty relaxing
- Easily distracted
- Difficulty focusing
- Tunnel vision
- Excessive sweating

Common Behaviours

- Worry/ Rumination
- Perfectionism
- Hypervigilance
- Micromanaging
- Overachieving
- Escape route planning
- Use of safety behaviours
- Avoidance
- Repetitive compulsions
- Always on the go

Recovery Strategies

- Decrease habitual responses/ rituals
- Being with, not fighting anxiety
- Introspection
- Shrink the inner critic
- Pace yourself

FREEZE



FAWN



Common Experiences

- Numb/ dissociated
- Low energy
- Reduced heart rate
- Stiff, heavy, cold
- Terror
- Stuck/ paralyzed
- Breath holding

Common Behaviours

- Isolation
- Avoidance of decisions or situations
- Rumination
- Over sleeping
- Day dreaming
- Self -deprecation

Recovery Strategies

- Understanding the needs of your 'inner parts'
- Coping skills for dissociation
- Mindfulness/ grounding
- Self acceptance & compassion
- Relational healing
- Start saying 'yes'
- Somatic or energy focused therapies

- Overwhelm
- Emotional burnout
- Shame
- Dissatisfied with self

Common Behaviours

- Difficulty saying 'no'
- Acceptance seeking
- Over caring
- Exploited by others
- Lack of boundaries
- Codependance
- People pleasing
- Flatters others

Recovery Strategies

- Build healthy, authentic relationships
- Challenge limiting beliefs
- Self-acceptance and self-love
- Journaling/ talking in a safe space
- Self-validation
- Strengthen assertiveness
- Start saying 'no'
- Creative outlets