

DECODE TEEN EMOTIONS

Episode 3 Worksheet

Trigger Tracking — What Sets You Off?



Listen to the episode, then work through each section below. Take your time — this is just for you! 🖋️

🔥 WHAT IS A TRIGGER?

In the episode, Susan explains that triggers are situations that set off a strong emotional reaction — especially anger or frustration. They can be obvious (being yelled at) or subtle (feeling left out, ignored, or misunderstood).

Every trigger has 3 parts:

1. The SITUATION

What's happening around you

2. Your BODY

What you feel physically

3. Your THOUGHTS

What runs through your mind

👉 Knowing all 3 = power to change your reaction!

SECTION 1: IDENTIFY YOUR TRIGGERS 🎯

What situations or events typically make you feel angry, irritated, or stressed?

✅ Check all the triggers that resonate with you:

- Being interrupted or talked over
- Feeling ignored or left out
- Being criticized or judged
- Feeling like you don't matter
- Someone nagging you about chores/tasks
- Being told what to do

- Seeing friends hang out without you
- Noise or chaos when you're exhausted
- Feeling out of control of your time
- Drama in a group chat or on social media
- Feeling disrespected in public
- Other: _____



 Describe YOUR biggest trigger in your own words:

 What makes THIS particular trigger so hard for you?

SECTION 2: OBSERVE YOUR PHYSICAL REACTIONS

Maya described her body reaction perfectly: tight chest, shoulders going up, jaw locking. Your body always sends warning signals BEFORE you explode. Learning to spot them is key!

 What happens in your body when you're triggered? Circle or check all that apply:

- Heart racing or pounding
- Jaw clenching
- Fists tightening
- Chest tightening
- Shoulders tensing up

- Stomach dropping or twisting
- Face getting hot
- Shaky hands
- Buzzing or racing feeling
- Other: _____

 Complete this sentence about YOUR body:

When _____ happened, my body felt _____.

SECTION 3: TRACK YOUR MENTAL REACTIONS

In the episode, Maya's thoughts sounded like: "They don't care about you," "You're just extra," "Why do you even try?" — even though no one actually said those things. These thought loops speed everything up.

 Which of these thoughts sound familiar to you? Check all that apply:

"This is so unfair."

"They hate me / don't want me."



- "No one cares about me."
- "I always mess things up."
- "Everyone is judging me."
- "I'm not good enough."

- "I'm the only one who feels this way."
- "This is going to be a disaster."
- "I'm just extra / invisible."
- My own: _____

 **Complete this sentence:**

My main thoughts were: _____

Underneath my anger, I actually felt: _____

SECTION 4: REFLECT ON THE PATTERNS

Maya discovered her formula: "I'm worn out + I see proof that I'm not 'enough' socially = instant anger." Once you spot your pattern, you can interrupt it before it explodes.

 **Do you notice any common patterns in how you react? Check all that apply:**

- I always get set off when I'm tired or drained
- I blow up more when I feel disrespected or embarrassed
- I shut down when someone raises their voice
- I snap more in public / when I feel watched
- My triggers are worse after a long day at school
- Social media / my phone makes my reactions bigger

 **Write your own "trigger formula":**

When _____ **AND** _____ happen, I usually react by _____.

SECTION 5: COMMIT TO A NEW RESPONSE

Susan reminded us: it's NOT about never being angry. It's about making the space between "something happens" and "you react" just a little bigger. Choose ONE small, realistic thing to try next time.

 **My OLD reaction:**

 **My NEW plan:**



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 **Pick ONE small step from these examples, or write your own:**

- When I feel my chest tighten, I'll take 3 slow breaths before saying anything
- If I see a triggering post/text, I'll put my phone down for 5 minutes first
- When I walk in after school, I'll ask for 10–20 minutes of quiet before talking
- I'll journal for 2 minutes before sending a message I might regret
- My own:** _____

 **Write your commitment sentence:**

Next time this trigger shows up, I will try: _____

BONUS: REFLECT ON THE STORIES FROM THE EPISODE

The episode shared two real stories — Ava (after-school overload) and Maya (social media left out). Use one to reflect:

Which story felt most like YOU, and why? _____	What would YOU have done differently in that situation? _____
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★ THIS WEEK'S CHALLENGE ★

Pick ONE trigger you noticed today while listening. This week, use the 5 steps at least once and write them down:

- Trigger — what happened
- Body — what you felt physically
- Thoughts — what looped in your head
- Pattern — what does this keep showing you?



New response — one small thing you tried

Even doing this ONCE can make things click: "Oh, that's why I keep blowing up at the same stuff!" 🧠

😊 **MOOD TRACKER** — How are you feeling after this worksheet? Circle one:



*"Between stimulus and response, there is a space.
In that space is our power to choose our response."*

— Viktor Frankl

Next episode: Hormones — what they're doing to your brain and why emotions sometimes feel out of control. 🎧

