

Safely exploring your triggers as they come up is one of the best ways to learn about what's going on with you. If you feel triggered about ending a relationship, for example, figure out why. Then figure out *why* the why is happening. For example, if it's because you don't want to let go of the fantasy, ask yourself why the fantasy is so important to you. What does this situation or person represent and why does it matter so much? Just keep asking "why" and follow the trail back to wherever it ends up.

It could look something like this:

Why am I triggered?

Because it feels like I'm being abandoned

Why is being abandoned scary or bad?

Because if someone abandons me, it means something is wrong with me or I'm not good enough

Why do I think it means that?

Because that's what I was told by my mother/father/spouse/etc.

Because I believe if I was good enough, the relationship wouldn't end

Why did they tell me that?

Because they are fallible people with their own problems and it has nothing to do with me

Why do I fear being abandoned?

Because I'm afraid no one will be there for me

Because I fear how it will make me feel about myself

Why do I fear these things?

Because I feel like I can't trust or rely on myself to be there for me

Because I was emotionally/physically abandoned by important caretakers

Because I don't validate myself

Why don't I trust or rely on myself?

Because I have not always acted in my own best interest

Because I was taught to believe my worth depends of what others think of me or what I can do for them

Etc.

This is of course just an example displaying a format you can use to explore your feelings, beliefs and narratives. Your list of questions and answers may look very different, but doing this safely and in a supportive environment can help you get to the root of the problem. Try to ask "why" for all of the answers you give. Once you do that, you can start working on addressing the things you uncover in a healthy way, which will help you break these narratives and the patterns of behavior that are attached to them.

Another important aspect of doing this is to start making decisions and engaging in actions that reflect the logical, reasonable part of yourself rather than your emotions. What we need to do is not always what we want to do, but if we are going to start taking better care of ourselves, we must put our own best interests first - even if we don't want to do it or if it feels uncomfortable at first.