*SELF-REFLECTION EXERCISE*

*Topics: Identify emotional triggers*

***KNOW YOUR TRIGGERS***

An emotional trigger is nothing more than a factor that triggers very strong emotions in us, often seemingly inappropriate to the situation. An emotional trigger in parenting is any behavior or action of our child that makes us feel in a negative way. If we can identify our emotional triggers, we can choose to not expose ourselves to situations that harm our mental health and create even more problems in the family relations. Simply speaking, a trigger is an emotional reaction to a situation that we somehow associate with a past (even childhood) event.

We can name many triggers for parents to experience while raising children, for example:

* Children crying.
* When children don’t share.
* Child is unkind.
* Children being dishonest.
* When Children talk back.
* Children being rude, etc.

**SELF-REFLECTION EXERCISE**

Make a list of your triggers and then and transform emotions into feelings. The following questions can help with this:

What am I feeling? (Name the emotion, such as anger).

What triggered it? (Name the situation: “my child does not clean after himself/herself”)

Why is it making me angry? (Let's name your assumption, e.g. "He/she/ wants me to clean after him/her”)

What do I associate this situation with? (Let's grab the first association that comes to mind, e.g. "I was the oldest child and always had to clean after my siblings which was humiliated to me")

Are you sure that your child had bad intentions? (If the answer is YES, it is a good idea to write out the arguments that support this).

When you have worked through the situation you can talk about it with your child - not only to explain your reaction and apologize. It's also an important time when you can point out that the behavior is making you uncomfortable, and work out together how to resolve the situation so that it doesn't trigger in the future.