Difficult Dates and Reminders

Make a flexible plan for a date or situation you expect may be difficult, without retelling a traumatic experience.

Educational planning | Review with your counselor when trauma symptoms are significant

Reminders can bring changes in sleep, feelings, or attention. Planning can make support easier to reach. This is a coping plan, not trauma-memory processing or an EMDR procedure. Write by hand, or type and save a copy.

1. Name only what is useful

A short label is enough. You can leave out details.

Date or situation I am planning for:

Early signs that I may need extra support:

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2. Plan an ordinary anchor

Choose something manageable: a regular meal, a brief familiar activity, time with someone supportive, or a quieter schedule.

My anchor and when I will use it:

One demand I could reduce or ask for help with:

3. Choose support ahead of time

Use a coping option that has already been helpful or that your clinician has recommended. Pause an optional coping exercise if it leaves you more overwhelmed or disconnected. Discuss changes to a clinician-guided treatment plan with your clinician.

My preferred coping option:

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Someone I can contact and what I will ask for:

An alternative if this plan is not helpful:

4. Agree on the next step

If there is an immediate threat, prioritize leaving danger or obtaining emergency help. A coping exercise cannot establish whether a situation is safe.

When I will reach out to my clinician or another support:

Afterward: What helped? What should change next time?

If reminders cause severe distress, disorientation, or difficulty functioning, make this plan with a trauma-trained clinician. Do not deliberately seek out trauma cues or begin memory work using this page.