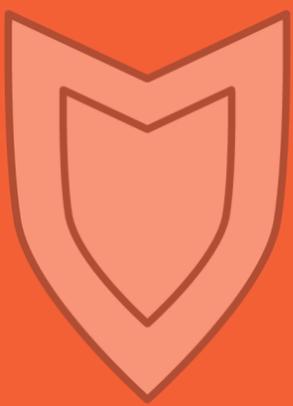


5 F's of Trauma



*Fight, Flight, Freeze, Feign, Flop:
How Your Brain Keeps You Safe*

Your brain has an instinctual 'survival compass' designed to keep you safe when things feel overwhelming. Fight, Flight, Freeze, Feign, and Flop are protective shifts your nervous system uses to navigate danger. Understanding these responses is the first step toward embarking on a journey of safety and healing."



fight

Body feel: High energy/mobilized (the "gas pedal")

- Irritability, balling fists, tight jaw.

Focus: Moving toward the threat to overpower it.

Thought: "I have to be in control." "I must be strong to survive."

Emergency Anchor: Cold water on the face (Mammalian Dive Reflex)



flight

Body feel: High energy/mobilized (the "gas pedal")

- Restlessness, "busy-ness," trapped feeling.

Focus: Moving away from the threat to outrun it.

Thought: "I just need to get out of here." "I must get away to survive."

Emergency Anchor: Wall sits or pushing against a wall (Heavy muscle input)



freeze

Body feel: Low energy/immobilized (the "brakes")

- Held breath, feeling "stuck" or "ice-cold."

Focus: Being still to hide or assess.

Thought: "I can't move/I'm not here." "I must be still to survive."

Emergency Anchor: Name 5 things you see (Bringing the "self" back to the room).



flop

Body feel: Low energy/Immobilized (the "brakes")

- Muscle limpness, "fainting," total shutdown.

Focus: Mimicking death/unconsciousness to stop further harm.

Thought: "I give up. I am nothing." "I must stop moving to survive."

Emergency Anchor: Gentle movement, like wiggling toes or sniffing a strong scent like peppermint.



feign (fawn/friend)

Body feel: Relational (the "social hybrid")

- People-pleasing, hypervigilance to others' moods.

Focus: Negotiating with the threat to stay safe.

Thought: "If I'm useful and nice, they won't hurt me." "I must please them to survive."

Emergency Anchor: Taking one breath before saying "Yes" to a request.