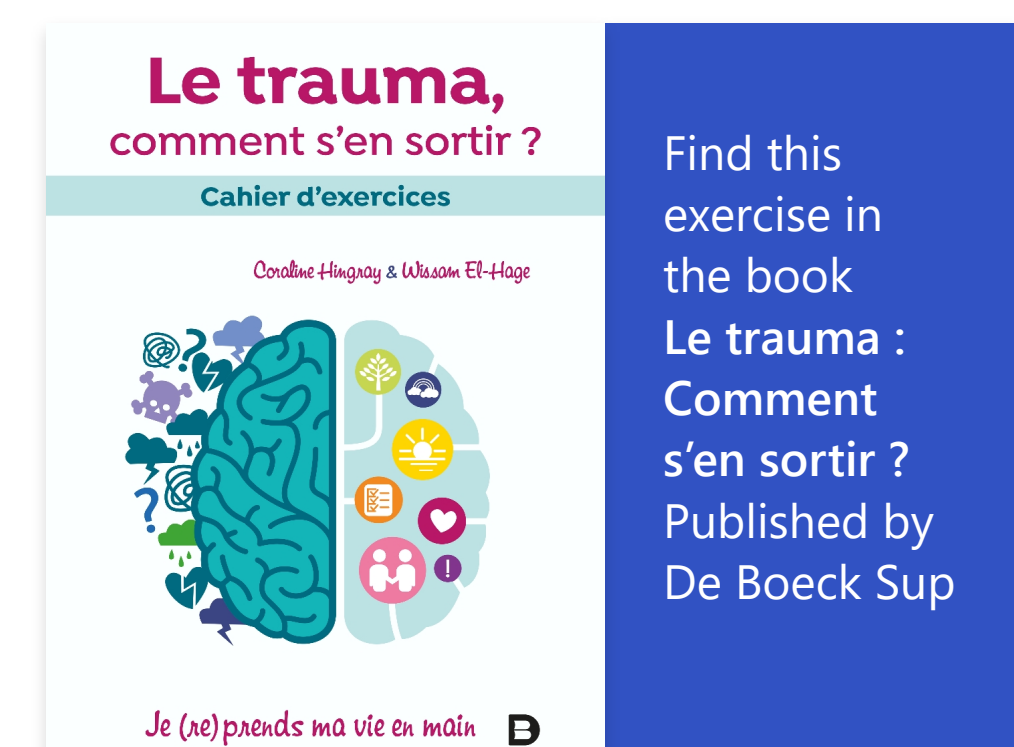


Practical information

WHAT ARE TRIGGERS?



An intrusive memory

It is very similar to a flashback in a film. The mechanisms for suppressing the memory are defective. It is a bit like a scratched record playing the same fragments of emotional memories over and over again. Triggers in everyday life, which may seem neutral or harmless, can be reminders of the trauma, provoking the return of images or feelings, a flashback or a reliving of the traumatic memory with the same emotions, especially of danger. Fear is reactivated spontaneously, automatically, even in a non-dangerous situation, causing anxiety and distress. This is what we call intrusive memories associated with post-traumatic stress.

A non-integrated memory

Traumatic memories are associated with strong negative emotions. It is therefore difficult for you to digest them and integrate them normally into your memory and life story. We call this a non-integrated traumatic memory. It will produce uncontrolled and intrusive flashbacks of the trauma, a constant shifting between past and present, in a repeated attempt to integrate the painful memory into your life story.

Identify emotional triggers

You can recognise emotional triggers and reduce negative responses. By paying attention to your reactions, you will be able to identify a trigger (word, colour, smell, place, person, etc.) that provokes strong emotions in you. You can use a journal to describe the situation, look for triggers and recognise your emotions. This will guide you in your understanding. Identifying your triggers will help you to control them and anticipate the constant repetition of the memory.

