

PTSD Response Map®

First Edition

PTSD Response Map©

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By Alien Algorithms Ltd®

Introduction:

PTSD is not an illness. It is a misfired survival system — a perfectly functioning emergency protocol stuck in a loop because it was never designed to run this long.

The mind, body, and memory systems — instead of resetting — reignite based on patterns, sensory echoes, and emotional flashes.

This Response Map defines PTSD as a dynamic, patterned feedback system with stages, energy transfers, and identifiable interruption points.

Mapping the system means the survivor can predict, manage, and eventually exit the storm — without needing to erase their past.

Stage 1: Trigger Initiation

Definition:

An external or internal signal that matches a sensory, emotional, or cognitive fragment from the original trauma event.

Examples:

Sound (e.g., yelling, slamming doors)

Smell (e.g., smoke, alcohol, blood)

Body position (e.g., lying down helpless)

Environmental cues (e.g., crowded spaces, uniforms)

Emotional states (e.g., shame, helplessness, rage)

Energy Flow:

Hyper-activation: Nervous system spikes immediately.

Time compression: Brain shortcut bypasses rational filtering.

Stage 2: Emotional Flash Activation

Definition:

The body/mind replays the emotional signature of the trauma faster than logical memory.
The event feels present even if the rational mind knows it isn't.

Emotional Flash Characteristics:

Terror
Rage
Helplessness
Shame
Betrayal
Grief

These flood before conscious thought can frame them.

Energy Flow:

Outward explosion of emotional intensity
Memory override by survival emotion patterns
Loss of verbal / logical function

Stage 3: Cognitive Fragmentation**Definition:**

The collapse or disruption of normal thinking patterns.
The mind fractures into survival states.

Survival Symptoms:

Partial time loss
Disorientation (what year is it? where am I?)
Intrusive thoughts ("mind attacks")
Self-perception distortions ("I'm weak" / "I'm evil" / "I'm powerless")

Signs:

Verbal stuttering or silence
Rapid shifts between anger and terror
Blank stares, difficulty answering simple questions
Loss of ability to plan next steps

Energy Flow:

Inward collapse of organized thought

Short-circuiting between memory files and present awareness

Emotional commands override rational commands

Stage 4: Physiological Echo

Definition:

The body physically replays trauma responses even in safe environments.
The old emergency systems engage as if the threat were still present.

Physiology re-activates:

Fight: yelling, throwing, chest puffing

Flight: fleeing, panic, hiding

Freeze: immobility, flat affect, shutdown

Body Symptoms:

Accelerated heart rate

Hyperventilation or restricted breathing

Sweating

Muscle tension

Shaking

Numbness

Energy Flow:

Emergency survival systems engage fully

Adrenal system surges uncontrollably

Physical sensations mirror historical threat response patterns

Stage 5: Loop/Cascade or Collapse/Dissociation

This is the "fork" moment:

5A: Loop / Cascade

Definition:

If unbroken, the system feeds itself.

Trigger sensitivity increases

More body energy feeds more emotional flooding

More emotional flooding feeds deeper cognitive shattering

Each revolution tightens the spiral, leading to complete system burnout over time (CPTSD).

Energy Flow:

Outward spiral of increasing dysregulation

5B: Collapse / Dissociation

Definition:

If the nervous system overloads:

Full emotional shutdown

Numbness, detachment, derealization

Extreme sleepiness or physical collapse

"Blank slate" feeling (cannot remember what happened)

This is self-protection when the loop cannot sustain itself.

Energy Flow:

Inward implosion toward shutdown

Energy retracts from emotional and sensory engagement

Overall Energy Map:

Spike → Explosion → Fracture → Surge → Spiral/Collapse → Reset
(Visually: like a hurricane with a tornado at the center)

Points of Potential System Exit (Interruption Points):

1. Trigger Awareness:

Name the sensory hit before emotional flooding starts.
("I heard a slam — that's a trigger, not a threat.")

2. Physical Grounding:

Touch the environment (e.g., press feet to the ground, grip a cold object) to anchor the body before the mind spirals.
Physical presence beats mental chaos.

3. Breathing Intervention:

Deep, slow exhale to hack the vagus nerve response and slow the emotional flood before it peaks.
(Not forced calmness — simple breath control.)

4. Recognize the Fork:

When the energy spiral is forming, intentionally collapse into stillness rather than feeding the loop.
Collapse safely if you must — it prevents system burnout.

5. Post-Storm Mapping:

After the storm passes, write or speak what you saw, felt, and thought — no matter how small.
Every map drawn makes future storms smaller.

Summary:

PTSD is not a scar. PTSD is an active weather system trapped inside the body-mind interface. You do not erase the system. You learn to forecast it, sail through it, and rebuild a sky wide enough that the storm shrinks and passes without fear.

Core Laws of PTSD Navigation:

1. See It Before You Feel It.

The earlier you name the trigger, the smaller the emotional explosion.

2. Anchor the Body Before the Mind.

Physical presence rebuilds thought faster than trying to “think yourself safe.”

3. Recognize the Fork.

Feel when the Loop is forming.

Choose collapse into breathing stillness instead of chaos if you must — it's safer.

4. Storms Burn Out. You Outlast Them.

You don't beat the flash. You outlast it by refusing to feed it with terror.

5. Pattern Mastery is Freedom.

Once you see the pattern consistently, it cannot run you the same way again.

Note:

Severe or entrenched PTSD patterns may require support systems (trusted individuals, therapies, or safe spaces) to fully stabilize.

This Response Map empowers self-navigation — it does not replace personal choice in seeking extra support if needed.

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