

Do You Flee, Fight, or Freeze?

Through the defense response the amygdala is communicating to us that we should flee, fight, or freeze, not in words, but in the way our bodies and minds react. Sometimes you may recognize that you have a more dominant tendency toward one or two of these strategies. Check off which of the responses you tend to see in yourself to identify what approach the amygdala most frequently encourages you to take.

Fleeing

- ☐ I typically avoid situations that stress me.
- ☐ Whenever things start to go wrong, I just want to leave.
- ☐ When things don't go smoothly, I have no interest in about it.
- ☐ I have a tendency to put off things I need to do.
- ☐ I will pretend I don't know about something, in order to avoid addressing it.
- ☐ I frequently cancel activities that I planned to participate in.
- ☐ I often wish I could just run away from it all.
- ☐ I can come up with a million excuses not to do something.

Fighting

- ☐ When I am stressed, I find myself wanting to hit something or someone.
- ☐ When someone offends me, I feel like fighting with them.
- ☐ I often snap at others when they frustrate me.
- ☐ I throw or kick things when I am angry.
- ☐ When someone says something rude to me, I don't let them get away with it.
- ☐ I have a hard time sitting still or keeping my mouth shut in a tense situation.
- ☐ If someone startles me, I am at risk to strike them.
- ☐ Sometimes I physically hurt myself rather than hurting someone else.

Freezing

- ☐ I frequently find myself at loss for words when I am stressed.
- ☐ When I panic, I have a hard time doing anything constructive.
- ☐ In difficult situations I stay quiet and hope no one notices me.
- ☐ When I'm stressed I frequently find myself unable to take action.
- ☐ When something is frightening, my muscles become tense and stiff.
- ☐ If someone startles me, I freeze and don't move.
- ☐ I'm slow to react or recover in a stressful situation.
- ☐ I shut down and feel paralyzed when someone is angry.

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