project reassure

Self-Advocates

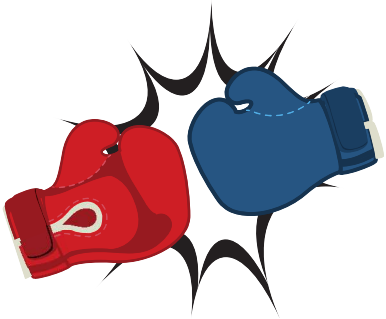
THE FOUR F's

When your brain thinks there is a threat, it will send signals to your body to react to help keep you safe. This can happen when it is a real danger or if you think there is a danger, but there is not.

There are different ways your body can react when your brain thinks there is a threat. These are sometimes called the "Four F's".

Fight: The brain and body prepare to attack.

A person may look angry and ready to fight. They may yell at other people, pick fights, or have a bad temper.



Flight: The brain and body prepare to get away.

The brain and body prepare to run away or escape. A person may look anxious and afraid. They may try to avoid threats by staying away from people.

Freeze: The brain and body "freeze".

A person may feel like they cannot move or respond. They may stare and “space out” or may feel sad or ashamed.

Feign/Fawn: The brain and body worry about the next danger.

A person may feel like they need to say “yes” and make people happy to avoid threats from other people. They may have a hard time setting healthy limits, rules, or boundaries for their own needs.

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