

Grounding

What is Grounding?

Grounding is a self-soothing skill used when you are dealing with stress, anxiety or overwhelming feelings. It allows you to stay in the present, helps you reorient yourself in the current reality. When you are overwhelmed, it is like your brain forgets where you are, it makes it harder to focus, make decisions or problem solve, grounding allows you to bring attention into your body, calm the nervous system and be present.

Grounding techniques

1. 5,4,3,2,1 method:

- ✓ Name 5 things you can see, 4 things you can feel, 3 you can hear, 2 you can smell and 1 you can taste.
- ✓ This method anchors your mind in the present with the use of all 5 senses.

2. Grounding object

- ✓ Use a grounding object like stones, crystals, textured items
- ✓ Hold the object in your hand, rub it, focus on the texture or the weight of the object.
- ✓ This method diverts your attention from the distress and regulates the nervous system.

3. Breathing exercise

- ✓ Practice deep, slow breaths focusing on the sensation of air entering and exiting your body, take attention away from the distressing situation.
- ✓ You can use the 4-7-8 technique: inhale for a count of four, hold your breath for seven and exhale for eight.

4. Body scan

- ✓ Pay close attention to different parts of your body from head to toe
- ✓ Bring awareness to each part of your body, noticing any sensations, discomfort or tension.
- ✓ This is useful when you are feeling overwhelmed by the world around you

5. Anchoring statement

- ✓ Used to interrupt negative or intrusive thoughts and bring you back into the present.
- ✓ You can remind yourself of your name, age, the current date, or you can use statements that challenge the distressing thought, remind yourself your thoughts aren't always true.

6. Self-kindness

- ✓ Repeat kind, compassionate statements to yourself as if you were speaking to a child.
- ✓ Use this when you have negative or intrusive thoughts
- ✓ Tell yourself you are enough, smart, capable, strong, you are doing the best you can
- ✓ This allows you to remind yourself that you don't have to believe your negative thoughts.

7. Listen to Music

- ✓ You can put on your favourite song and focus on the lyrics or the melody, pretend you are listening to it for the first time.
- ✓ You can choose a soothing song and breathe to it, to relax your breathing

8. Visualization

- ✓ You can imagine roots growing out of the soles of your feet into the earth, providing you with stability.
- ✓ You can also imagine yourself in your favorite place or a place that is peaceful or safe to you. Immerse yourself in the sensory details of that environment.

9. Mindful movement

- ✓ This includes yoga, tai chi or stretching.
- ✓ Focus on the movements and your muscles stretching and the feeling of your body moving.
- ✓ This helps you stay present and connected to your body

Grounding yourself is not always an easy task, it may take time to find what technique works best for you and your situation. **It is important to practice these techniques when you are not stressed or overwhelmed** so it makes it easier to use them in those stressful moments

Additional tips to help you get the most out of these techniques

- **Practice:** practice grounding even when you aren't in the stressful situation. If you get used to the grounding exercise before you need to use it, it may be easier and take less effort when you want to use it in the stressful moment.
- **Make it a part of your life:** You can schedule grounding times for yourself during the week or connect a technique to something you already do, like do deep breaths when stuck at a traffic light or practice a grounding technique every morning.
- **Avoid assigning values:** If you're grounding yourself by noticing things in the environment avoid thinking about how you feel about them, focus on the basics of your surroundings and simply describe them.
- **Check in with yourself:** Before and after using a grounding technique, rate how distressed you are before and after grounding. Did it decrease? What technique works best at decreasing distress for you?

Benefits of incorporating grounding in your life

- Reduces Anxiety and Stress by shifting focus from distressing thoughts to physical sensations, providing immediate relief. By anchoring yourself it becomes easier to manage overwhelming emotions.
- Enhances Emotional Regulation by helping individuals develop a deeper awareness of their emotional states. This allows you to respond to emotions in a healthy manner.
- Promotes Physical Health: stress and anxiety take a toll on the body; grounding techniques encourage relaxation and reduce physical symptoms of stress.

References

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