

Mental Grounding

- ❖ **Describe what's around you**, using all your senses—for example, “There are two windows; the floor is blue carpet; the chair is next to the door; there is an oval mirror on the wall. . .” Describe anything in the space you are in, including numbers, shapes, colors, textures
- ❖ **Think in categories**. Think of “ice cream flavors,” “states,” “basketball teams”
- ❖ **Use numbers**. Try counting backwards from 100, do a times table
- ❖ **Play a memory game**. Look at a picture or photograph for 10 seconds, cover it and try to remember as much detail as you can
- ❖ **Imagine**. Think of a positive image where you are leaving painful things behind such as: Turning a page to a new chapter; closing a door and opening a new one.
- ❖ **Visualize a daily task you enjoy**. If you like making coffee, visualize yourself making it. “First I measure the beans, then I grind the coffee, next I boil some water, then...” Go through the process step by step.
- ❖ **Recite something safe and anchoring**. “My name is ___ ; today’s date is ___; I am located at ___. The time is ___.”
- ❖ **Read something, saying each word to yourself**. Or read each letter backward so that you focus on the
- ❖ letters and not on the meaning of words.
- ❖ **Make yourself laugh**. Find a funny clip, tell yourself a silly joke.

Physical Grounding

- ❖ **Put your hands in warm or cool water**. Focus on the temperature and how it feels.
- ❖ **Pick up or touch an item near you**. Notice its weight, colors, texture, temperature
- ❖ **Dig your heels into the floor**. Notice the tension in your heels, you are physically grounded to the floor.
- ❖ **Carry a grounding object in your pocket**—a small object (a fidget spinner, dice, pen)
- ❖ **Move your body**. Get up and move. Stretch, take a few steps, jump.
- ❖ **Hold something hot or cold**. Try holding a pocket warmer or a piece of ice.
- ❖ **Walk slowly, noticing each footstep**, saying “left” or “right” with each step.
- ❖ **Savor a food**. Take small bites/sips of something, fully enjoy each bite. Focus of the taste, texture, and smell.
- ❖ **Savor a scent**. Smell a fragrance you enjoy, like a perfume, essential oil, a cup of tea, an herb, spice, a citrus, your favorite soap. Inhale the scent and focus on it’s qualities (spicy, sweet, citrusy, etc)
- ❖ **Deep breaths**. Slowly inhale and slowly exhale. Count your breaths. Feel and count your chest rise and fall with each breath.
- ❖ **Listen to the noise**. What do you hear? Barking dogs? Birds chirping? Traffic? People nearby?
- ❖ **Feel your heart and body**. Is your heartbeat rapid or steady? Curl your fingers and toes. Are your arms loose or stiff at your sides?
- ❖ **5-4-3-2-1 method**. Use your senses: 5 things you hear, 4 things you see, 3 things you can touch, 2 things you can smell, 1 thing you can taste

Soothing Grounding

- ❖ **Say kind things to yourself, like** “You are worthy.” “This feeling will pass.” “I’m going to be OK.” Or make up your own kind statements and say them to yourself as often as you need to.
- ❖ **List your favorite things.** Favorite foods, songs, books, places, animals, etc.
- ❖ **Think about people and pets you care about** look at their pictures or just think about them
- ❖ **Remember the words to an inspiring song, quotation, or poem** that makes you feel better (e.g., the AA Serenity Prayer).
- ❖ **Think about your favorite safe place.** A place you visited, the home of someone you live, your own room. Try to remember the last time you were there, how it smelled and felt.
- ❖ **Hang out with your pet:** Be near your pet, notice their unique characteristics, body color, how they move, the sounds they make.
- ❖ **Plan a soothing activity for you.** Give yourself a foot bath. Wear soft PJs. Touch something comforting, like a favorite blanket. Listen to your favorite music.
- ❖ **Plan a safe activity for you.** Have dinner with a trusted friend. Go to a local museum. Take care of your plants/garden.

Remember

- ❖ Grounding can be done anywhere, any time.
- ❖ Create your own grounding strategies that work for you.
- ❖ Practice grounding even when you feel OK. The more you practice a technique in calm situations, the more likely you will remember to use it and the more effective it will be when things get stressful.