

Grounding Techniques

Ways to bring your attention back to the present moment when thoughts, memories, or emotions feel overwhelming.

Grounding uses your senses, body, attention, and self-talk to reconnect with what is happening right now.

Try different strategies and notice which ones help you feel more present.

Come Back to Your Senses

- 5-4-3-2-1: identify 5 things you see, 4 you hear, 3 you can touch, 2 you smell, and 1 you taste.
- Use cool water on your hands or face.
- Notice a distinct scent, such as soap, lotion, or mint.
- Hold an object and focus on its texture, temperature, weight, and shape.

Use Your Body

- Change your posture or stand up.
- Stretch slowly and notice the movement of your muscles.
- Press both feet firmly into the floor and notice the support beneath you.
- Curl and release your fingers or toes.

Redirect Your Attention

- Look outside and deliberately notice details in your surroundings.
- Talk with someone about an ordinary, present-day topic.
- Read, listen to music, or focus on another activity.
- Walk slowly and pay attention to each step.

Calm Your Body

- Slow your breathing and allow your exhale to become unhurried.
- Tense and release muscle groups, noticing the contrast.
- Try gentle stretching or another form of movement.
- Use safe, comforting physical connection, such as holding a pet or giving yourself a gentle hug.

Orient Yourself

- Name where you are right now.
- Name today's date or the current time.
- Notice what is different about the present compared with the upsetting memory or experience.
- Identify several things that confirm you are here, in this moment.

Use Supportive Self-Talk

- Remind yourself that a memory or thought is not the same as something happening right now.
- Use a brief coping statement that feels believable and reassuring.
- Speak to yourself with the same patience you would offer someone you care about.

Use Your Imagination

- Picture a place you associate with calm, comfort, or safety.
- Recall a positive memory in as much sensory detail as you can.
- Imagine the presence of a supportive, compassionate person.

Which grounding techniques work best for me?