



SIMPLE GROUNDING INTERVENTIONS

When people are distressed, engaging in activities that soothe, bring body awareness, and/or focus the mind on the present moment can be helpful. Remember to always seek permission to use grounding exercises before initiating them with anyone who is in distress. The following are some simple activities that can be useful.

5-4-3-2-1

Start by sitting comfortably, closing your eyes and taking a couple of deep breaths. Breath in through your nose (count to 3) and out through your mouth (count of 3).

Now open your eyes and look around you. As you continue to take long, slow breaths, name aloud (or to yourself if you are not in a position to speak) sensory stimuli from the present moment:

- 5 – things you can see (you can look within the room or out of the window)
- 4 – things you can feel (e.g., the solid chair beneath you, the fluffy carpet under your toes)
- 3 – things you can hear (e.g., traffic noise or birds outside, the hum of the air conditioner)
- 2 – things you can smell (e.g., hopefully something pleasant and nothing too bad!)
- 1 – things you can taste (e.g., toothpaste, popcorn)

Take a final deep breath to end.

DISTRACT YOURSELF

Pick a colour - How many things in different shades of that colour can you see around the room or out of the window? Still feeling stressed? Pick another colour and repeat.

Count backwards by 7, starting at 100. This isn't that easy and requires you to concentrate. This activity can also be helpful when you find it hard to sleep.

How many items in your immediate environment can you name starting with the letter A...B...C...etc?

BREATHING FOR RELAXATION

Sit in a comfortable position with your eyes either open or closed, which ever you prefer.

Place one hand on your chest and the other on your belly.

Inhale and exhale normally and observe your hands rising and falling.

Now, on the next in-breath, concentrate on it filling your whole body, notice your belly extending to make room for your breath.

Inhale long and slow through your nose, hold for a few seconds and then exhale long and slow through your mouth feeling your belly move in as your breath moves out.

Repeat as needed.