Grounding Skills

Use the present moment to reduce overwhelm, disconnection, or spiraling thoughts.

5-4-3-2-1 sensory grounding

- Name 5 things you can see.
- Notice 4 things you can physically feel.
- Identify 3 things you can hear.
- Notice 2 things you can smell.
- Name 1 thing you can taste - or one thing you appreciate right now.

Other options

Orienting	Slowly look around and name where you are, the date, and what is happening now.
Feet and pressure	Press both feet into the floor and notice the support beneath you.
Temperature	Hold a cool object, wash your hands, or notice the temperature of the air.
Paced breathing	Breathe gently and make the exhale a little longer than the inhale.
Categories	Name five animals, colors, cities, songs, or objects that begin with one letter.
Movement	Stretch, walk, push against a wall, or alternate tapping your hands on your thighs.

Use grounding safely

- Choose a skill that helps you feel more present rather than more distressed. If closing your eyes or focusing on breathing is uncomfortable, keep your eyes open and use external sights, sounds, or movement instead.

Practice worksheet

The situations in which grounding may help me:

Three grounding skills I want to practice:

What I notice before and after using a skill:

This handout is educational and is not a substitute for individualized assessment or treatment. If you are in immediate danger, call 911. In the United States, call or text 988 for crisis support.

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