

Grounding Techniques

Grounding is a practice of focusing on the present moment to relieve negative or challenging thoughts, emotions, or physical sensations.

Grounding techniques often use the five senses to pay attention to and connect with the environment internally or externally.

Grounding helps bring attention to oneself and refocuses the mind, orienting to the present.

Make It Yours

Throughout this tip sheet you will be given many suggestions for ways to ground oneself, but we want to encourage you to do what works for you.

If you find that one of these suggested grounding techniques are difficult, choose another that will work for you.

Feel free to use the resources provided and to seek more on your own, this is a small sample of the many suggested techniques.

OCYF Trauma Team

Tip Sheet – January 2024

Questions? RA-PWOCYFTRAUMA@pa.gov





Physical Grounding Techniques

- Take Deep Breaths counting to four slowly as you inhale and exhale
- Hold a small piece of ice (you could also freeze a lemon or lime for this) noticing the feel of it in your hand
- Take a short walk concentrating on your steps as you place one foot and then another on the ground
- Savor a food or a drink taking notice to the taste, smell, and flavor changes as it lingers on your tongue
- Take in the sights around you, watch for the movements (leaves/grass) and listen for the sounds (birds/cars/wind)
- Rub your hands together briskly, notice the feel of your hands as they become warm, notice the sound as they rub against one another
- Push your palms into one another and then release the tension, repeat a few times, noticing the sensation

Soothing Grounding Techniques

- Practice self-kindness with self-talk
- Recite a self-affirming statement, such as, "I am safe" or "I am strong."
- List your favorite things
- Listen to music

Mental Grounding Techniques

- Think of an enjoyable activity that you perform each day, think of each step in the process of completing this task
- Make up a silly joke or remember one
- Count from 100-1 backwards by fives.
- Use an anchoring statement such as "My name is..., I live in city, state, the date is..., the time is..., I am currently ..." Add affirming statements as needed.
- Recite a poem, song, or quote in your head or softly out loud, thinking through each phrase and visualize (if you choose to) the words as you think them

