

GROUNDING TECHNIQUES

What does it feel like when you worry, get overwhelmed, or panic? It can feel impossible to focus or think clearly about anything and sometimes our thoughts are so jumbled we can't keep track of them. Things may seem like they are happening around us in a blur, or someone has been talking for several minutes and we have no clue what they just said. Sometimes we feel paralyzed or frozen, unable to move or say or do anything. This can happen with other intense or extreme emotions, too, like when we feel hurt or abandoned, hopeless, frightened, or lost.

Grounding is an excellent tool for these kinds of situations, and is one that can be used just about anywhere. By bringing our mind and our body back to the present moment, we can sometimes allow ourselves the space for our brain to slow down and feel a bit more centered, at least enough so we can let someone know what's going on or that we need help, or figure out what to do next. There are many different ways of grounding, which is part of why it's such a great skill -- even if you don't find one of the options below helpful there are many others you can try. You can also create your own ways of grounding, by finding anything to focus your senses on and anchor you in the present moment.

There are many different grounding techniques, try these with your Big/Little.

5-4-3-2-1 Grounding Exercise

This technique will take you through your five senses to help remind you of the present. This is a calming technique that can help you get through tough or stressful situations. Complete the following worksheet:

Take a deep belly breath to begin.

5 - LOOK: Look around for 5 things that you can see, and say them out loud. For example, you could say, I see the computer, I see the cup, I see the picture frame.

4 - FEEL: Pay attention to your body and think of 4 things that you can feel, and say them out loud. For example, you could say, I feel my feet warm in my socks, I feel the hair on the back of my neck, or I feel the pillow I am sitting on.

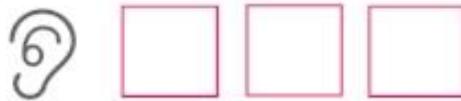
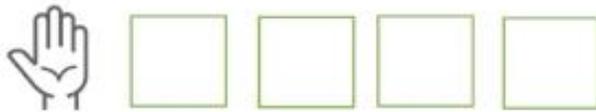
3 - LISTEN: Listen for 3 sounds. It could be the sound of traffic outside, the sound of typing or the sound of your tummy rumbling. Say the three things out loud.

2 - SMELL: Say two things you can smell. If you're allowed to, it's okay to move to another spot and sniff something. If you can't smell anything at the moment or you can't move, then name your 2 favorite smells.

1 - TASTE: Say one thing you can taste. It may be the toothpaste from brushing your teeth, or a mint from after lunch. If you can't taste anything, then say your favorite thing to taste.

Take another deep belly breath to end.

5 4 3 2 1 Grounding Exercise



More grounding techniques:

1. Imagine your favorite place - it's like taking a mini vacation wherever you are
2. Name animals alphabetically (alligator, bear, cow, dog, etc...)
3. Squeeze Something (play dough, clay, silly putty, your fists, a stress ball)
4. Get a Cold Drink of Water
5. Give yourself a hug - squeeze tight!
6. Remember the words to a song you love
7. Practice stretching and deep breathing like we talked about last week
8. Paint or color
9. Create a calm down spot
 - a. If you are at home, or when you get home, you can create a place specially designed to allow to calm down in a few steps:
 - i. Find a spot and make it cozy (maybe you can place a favorite blanket or stuffed animal inside)
 - ii. Add calming tools like a stress ball
 - iii. Go to this spot when you are feeling worried or overwhelmed so you can calm down