

# Grounding/ Centering Techniques

Here's a list of grounding techniques to help calm yourself when anxious or stressed. Find one or two that work best for you. If focusing on your body is stressful, then start with the techniques that focus more on grounding through the environment or your senses.

5-4-3-2-1 Grounding: Focus on the environment, rather than your body or thoughts: Think of five things you can see right now, 4 things you can feel/ touch, three things you can hear, two things you can smell, and one thing you can taste.

Grounding through smell: Smells have direct access to our emotions and memories. Try using smells you find comforting in order to feel more calm or grounded. For example, some calming essential oils, dried flowers, a piece of fabric from someone you love, etc.

Coloring: Coloring is a good repetitive, calming activity. Try carrying a coloring book around with you for when you need a distraction or something to help you feel more calm.

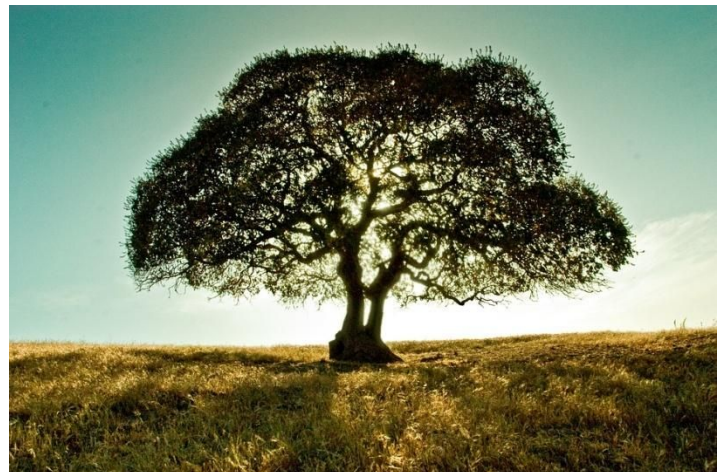
Object grounding: hold an object such as a smooth stone or a soft piece of material. Focus on how the object feels in your hand.

Rub your arms and legs: If you have lost a sense of your body, rub your arms and legs so you can feel where your body starts and ends, the boundary of you. Wrap yourself in a blanket and feel it around you.

Counting: Count objects in the environment- how many people are in the room? How many tiles are on the ceiling? How many windows? Etc.

Walk, and really think about walking - mindfully. Notice the way your body moves, how your feet move and feel as you walk, notice your leg muscles and the way your arms feel as they swing. Notice the movement in your hair, and the sensation of moving air on your skin. Notice the sensations of breathing as you walk.

The mind-body connection: Throughout the day when an emotion arises, pay attention to where in your body you feel that emotion. For example, if you feel stressed, do you feel it in your chest? Or do you feel tension in your shoulders? If you feel sad do you feel it in your stomach? Or in your face? You can take this a step further by focusing more closely on this physical sensation- what does this sensation look like? Does it have a color? A shape? Does it move?



Body Scan: Try completing a daily body scan- scan down your body slowly from head to toe and focus on what your body feels like. Note where your body feels tense or relaxed, heavy or light, hot or cold, etc.

Tapping: With your fingers or a bean bag tap repeatedly on the palm of your left hand, focusing on the sensation- does it feel tingly? Warm? Then tap the back of your hand doing the same thing, focusing on the sensation, then your lower arm... eventually moving throughout your whole body. You can also do a similar technique with a massager or a massaging shower head. This brings awareness to your bodily boundaries, to your skin- the container for your emotions and sensations.

Muscle squeeze: Take your right hand and gently but firmly squeeze the muscles of your lower left arm. Notice how they feel. Notice any tension, warmth, or softness. Then squeeze the muscles of your upper left arm, noticing the same things. Take your left hand and squeeze your right lower arm gently but firmly... move throughout your body, squeezing and noticing your muscles. This brings awareness to your deeper body boundaries, the deeper container for your emotions and sensations.

Animal grounding: If you have a pet, such as a cat or a dog, watch your animal closely. See how it breathes, how it connects with the ground or a surface, how it moves. Place your hand or head on the animal, or hold it close, and feel it's heartbeat. Feel it breathe. Breathe with the animal.

Chair exercise: Sit straight in a chair. Notice how your body feels in the chair- how the chair supports your weight, how it holds your back straight. Feel your feet on the ground. Focus on the soles of your feet connected to the ground and imagine the energy coming up from the ground into your body.

Centre of gravity: Stand with your feet shoulder width apart. Gently shift your weight from one foot to the next, and shift your weight forward and backwards. Notice your weight through the ground and the movement of your body. Keep doing this to get a sense of your centre of gravity.

On the Ground: Literally ground yourself. Lay on the floor. Do a quick body scan and notice each part of your body where the floor touches you, and focus on that sensation, the pressure, the texture, the temperature. Notice any vibrations in the house or building. You can also listen to music with the speaker on the floor, and feel the vibrations of the sounds.

Belly Breathing: Do belly breathing--place one hand on your stomach, and the other on your chest. Breathe slowly and deeply into your belly, trying to raise your hand like you are filling up a balloon or beach ball with air. Try to keep the hand on your chest still, breathing only into your stomach. Slowly breathe out, feeling the hand on your stomach lower like the balloon or ball is deflating.

