

Grounding can help to pull away from flashbacks, unwanted memories, and negative emotions. These techniques might help to distract you from what you're experiencing, and to refocus on what's happening in the present moment.

Physical Techniques

Put your hands in water. Focus on the temperature and how it feels on your fingertips, palms, and the backs of your hands. Does it feel the same in each part of your hand? Use warm water first, then cold. How does the change in temperature feel? Does it feel different if you use cold water first, and then warm?

Pick up or touch items near to you. Are they soft or hard? Heavy or light? Warm or cool? Focus on the texture, colour, and weight of the item. Try to think of specific colours (eg: crimson, burgundy, turquoise, or navy, instead of red or blue).

Take small bites/sips of a food/drink that you enjoy. Let yourself fully taste each bite, and think about the taste, texture, smell, and how it feels on your tongue.

Try the 5-4-3-2-1 method. List 5 things you can hear, 4 things you can see, 3 things you can touch from where you're sitting, 2 things you can smell, and 1 thing you can

Mental Techniques

Play a memory game. Look at a photograph of a cityscape, or other "busy" scene for 5-10 seconds. Then turn the photograph face-down and mentally list all the things you can remember from the picture. Or, recreate the photo in your mind in as much detail as possible.

Categories. Choose one or two categories (for example: musical instruments, mammals, cars, football teams). Mentally list as many things from each category as you can.

Use numbers. Try running through a times table in your head, counting backwards from 100, or choosing a number and thinking of five ways you could make the number (eg: $9 + 10 = 19$, $8 \times 2 + 3 = 19$, $40 / 2 - 1 = 19$)

Use an anchoring phrase. This might be something like: "I'm *full name*. I'm X years old. I live in *city*. Today is 17th June. It's 09:23 in the evening. I'm sitting in bed." You can expand on the phrase by adding details until you feel calm, such as "The sun is setting. It's raining a little bit. I'm thirsty so I'm going to get a glass of water."

Soothing Techniques

Sit with your pet. If you have a pet, sit with them. Pet them, focusing on how their fur feels. Focus on any markings or unique characteristics. If you have a smaller pet you can hold, concentrate on how they feel in your hand. **Not at home?** Think of your favourite things about your pet, or how they would comfort you if they were there.

List three favourites in several different categories, such as foods, trees, songs, films, books, places, etc.

Visualise your favourite place. Use all your senses to create a mental image. Think of the colours you see, sounds you hear, and sensations you feel. When were you last there? Who were you with, if anyone? What did you do there? How did you feel?

Touch something comforting. This could be a blanket, a favourite t-shirt or jumper, a smooth stone... anything that feels good to touch. Think about how it feels under your fingers or in your hand. If you have a favourite item of clothing, put it on and think about the sensation of the fabric on your skin.

Grounding isn't always easy. It might take some time before the techniques work well for you, but don't give up on them. Here are some tips that might help you to get the most out of these techniques:

- **Practice** even when you aren't dissociating or experiencing distress. If you get used to an exercise before you need to use it, it may take less effort when you want to use it to cope in the moment.
- **Start early.** Don't wait for distress to reach a level that's harder to handle.
- **Check in with yourself.** Before and after a grounding exercise, rate your distress as a number between 1-10. What level of distress are you feeling when you start? How much did it decrease afterwards? This might help you to get a better idea of whether a particular technique is working for you.
- **Keep your eyes open.** It's often easier to remain connected to the present if you're looking at your current environment.
- **Try multiple techniques.** Everyone is different, so not all of these techniques might work for you. If one isn't working, it's okay to stop and try another one.