

OCTOBER IS NATIONAL DEPRESSION & MENTAL HEALTH SCREENING MONTH

Grab and ground activity

When life feels unsteady, staying present, calm or in control can be difficult. Grounding techniques help gently guide your attention back to the here and now. Whether through physical awareness, mental focus or emotional support, grounding creates space to pause and reconnect with yourself. There are many ways to ground yourself. Try a few and notice what feels best for you.

Instructions:

1. Cut out the grounding activities below and place them in a jar, envelope or small bag.
2. When you're feeling overwhelmed or disconnected, pull out an activity and try it.
3. After completing the activity, take a moment to reflect:
 - What did I notice in my body or thoughts?
 - Did this technique help me feel more present?
 - Would I try this again in a similar situation?

PHYSICAL GROUNDING



Use your senses: Name 5 things you can see, 4 things you can touch, 3 things you can hear, 2 things you can smell and 1 thing you can taste.



Scan your body: Slowly notice sensations in each part of your body from head to toe, without judgment.



Breathe deeply: Use the 4-7-8 breathing method. Inhale for 4 seconds, hold for 7 and exhale for 8.



Roll your shoulders: Do 10 forward and 10 backward shoulder rolls. Notice how your body feels before and after.



Tune in to sound: Close your eyes and listen for one minute. What sounds did you notice that you didn't before?



Ground your body: Focus on sensing your feet on the floor, the weight of your body or the temperature of your skin.



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MENTAL GROUNDING



Hunt for color: Pick a color. Set a one-minute timer and count how many things you notice in that color.



List it out: Name as many animals, cities or foods as you can in 30 seconds.



Challenge your memory: Say the alphabet backward.



Recall a memory: Think of a positive memory and name three details about it.



Sort and organize: Set a timer for two minutes and sort items on your desk or nearby by color, size, type, etc.



Describe a meal: Close your eyes and describe the smell, taste and texture of your favorite meal.

EMOTIONAL GROUNDING



Encourage yourself: Think of someone who believes in you—what would they say right now?



Visualize calm: Picture your happy place. What does it look, feel and sound like?



Offer permission: Say, "It's OK to feel what I'm feeling, and it's OK to ask for help."



Name your strengths: Name your top three strengths aloud.



Press play: Listen to your favorite song or playlist.



Look ahead: Write or say one thing you're looking forward to