

GROUNDING TECHNIQUES

Grounding techniques are exercises that may help you refocus on the present moment to distract yourself from anxious thoughts and feelings. To help manage your physical symptoms, change the focus of your attention from thinking about your body to thinking about the outside world. To help manage your anxious thoughts, you can use grounding techniques to help you bring yourself back to the here and now and refocus.

Here are some examples, can you think of any more?



COLOURS

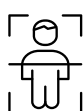
Find 5 items in the room which are a certain colour (e.g. 5 items which are blue).



CALM KIT

Fill a box, bag or area with things which make you feel calm for you to go to when you are overwhelmed. It is useful to cover all 5 senses. Use our separate handout for more details on how to create this.

BODY SCAN



Take a moment to notice what each individual part of your body feels like. Work from the top all the way down.

MUSCLE RELAXATION



Use this exercise to relax different muscles in your body by tensing them for 5 seconds and then relaxing. When tensing each muscle, study the tension and notice how different it feels when the muscle becomes relaxed.



SHAPES

Find 5 items in the room which are a certain shape (e.g. 5 items which are square).



OBJECT DESCRIPTION

Pick an object you can see. Describe it in as much detail as you can: colour, size, texture, shape, light and shadows, weight etc.

CONNECT WITH NATURE



This could be as simple as stepping outside to feel the breeze on your skin, listening to birds chirping, or walking barefoot on grass.

BREATHING

Follow instructions or videos for controlled breathing. If you are able to control and focus on your breathing, this will ease the physical symptoms of anxiety and make you feel calmer and more in control.



5, 4, 3, 2, 1



5 things you can see,
4 things you can touch,
3 things you can hear,
2 things you can smell,
1 thing you can taste.

TAKE NOTICE



Find something in the place you are in that you have never seen or noticed before e.g. a mark on the wall or ceiling, a poster, an object, what someone is wearing etc.



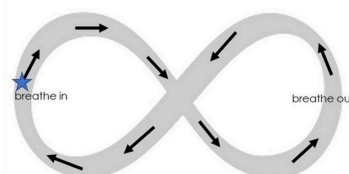
LOOK OUT!

Pick something to be on the look out for and count how many times you see/hear it. E.g. look for birds, red cars, velcro shoes or listen for certain phrases, animal noises or cars passing.

Star breathing



Lazy 8 breathing



DISTRACTION TECHNIQUES

Distraction techniques are exercises that may help you distract yourself from anxious thoughts and feelings. Distraction helps to change the focus or topic of your thoughts by replacing them with other thoughts and giving you something else to focus on.

Here are some examples, can you think of any more?

FLOW ACTIVITIES

Flow activities take our full attention, we "lose ourselves" in them and don't notice the time passing. Some examples: drawing, colouring, reading, watching TV, playing music, puzzles.



ABCD...

Think of a subject and name something to do with that subject for each letter of the alphabet (eg. name animals: ape, bear, cat...).

MEMORY

Test your memory by collecting items and having one removed - can you tell which one? Look at a picture and hide it. Now describe it. Card matching games.

RECITE

Recite something like your favourite poem, song lyrics or section of a book or film. Repeat it to yourself.



QUIZ

Pick a topic and create a quiz to test others' or your own knowledge.

GAMES

Play your favourite board game, card game etc.



TOPICS

Think of a subject and name as many things to do with that as you can in a time limit. E.g. name as many Harry Potter characters or as many footballers who wear a blue kit as you can.



IMAGINATION

Use your imagination to describe a place you know well e.g. your bedroom, classroom or even walk yourself through a journey you know e.g. the walk from home to the park.

CREATE

Create something! Whether it be a drawing, sculpture, lego figure, den, baking or cooking or writing a story/script/comic strip.



COUNTING

Pick a times table and count backwards or forwards. Challenge yourself!

PICTURES

Choose a busy scene or picture to look at and describe what you see, tell a story using the pictures or ask questions.



SAFE SPACE IMAGERY

Close your eyes and picture a place you feel calm and safe. Imagine you are there. It can be a real place, fictional place or a mixture of the two. What can you see, hear, smell, taste and feel?

COMMUNICATE

Talk to a friend or loved one. Maybe spend some time with them playing a game, going for a walk, running an errand etc.

SHOPPING LIST

"I went to the shops and bought..."
Use this sentence starter to take it in turns to list an item whilst remembering the previous items.
"I bought an umbrella"
"I bought an umbrella and a cat"
"I bought an umbrella, a cat and a fan"