

Grounding skills

Grounding skills can help keep us connected to the present and help us cope with difficult feelings or intrusive thoughts by redirecting our attention to the senses. This can prevent us from getting caught up in negative spirals of painful thoughts and emotions. Using these skills with soothing statements can allow us to experience self-compassion, or self-kindness, which has been also been shown to help people cope more effectively with difficult situations.

Belly breathing

While sitting or lying down, place one hand on your belly and one hand on your chest.

Breathe in deeply and slowly into your nose. Notice your chest rising and your belly filling with air.

When your belly is full of air, hold your breath for a couple of seconds, then slowly let the air out through your mouth, noticing the feeling of your belly emptying. Do this 3 times in a row. It can be helpful to imagine that your belly is a balloon that you are filling and releasing with air!

It can be useful to use a self-soothing phrase with this.



5 senses

Name 5 things you can see (clock, people)

Name 4 things you can feel (wind blowing, feel of jumper on skin)

Name 3 things you can hear (Birds chirping, traffic, talking)

Name 2 things you can smell (perfume, food, coffee)

Name 1 thing you can taste (toothpaste, food, drink)



Feet grounding

While sitting on a chair, place your feet firmly on the ground. It can be helpful to close your eyes or lower your gaze. Take a deep belly breath and focus your attention on your feet and how it feels against your shoes, the sock or the ground. Rock slightly forward and feel the weight of your feet against the ground and the feeling of support.

Wiggle your toes and notice how this feels. It can be helpful to use a self-soothing phrase with this exercise.



Self-soothing phrases

These are phrases that you can say out loud or in your mind to help you cope and feel safe during difficult times. Here are some phrases we discussed, but please add other ones that you find soothing.

'It's okay to feel sad/angry/scared'

'This will pass'

'Everyone feels sad/angry/scared sometimes'
