15 Grounding Techniques

A trauma-informed educational wellness worksheet for reflection, choice, self-care, and support.

Use this at your own pace. Skip, adapt, pause, or stop. You are allowed to choose what fits your body, culture, privacy, energy, safety, access needs, and real-life limits today.

This is a reflection tool, not a test. One honest sentence, one checked box, or one small next step can be enough.

A printable reflection and practice resource Created by Michelle D. Elder, MSW, LMHC. This worksheet is a free educational wellness resource from My Reflective Collective.

- Use what supports you. Skip, pause, adapt, or connect with a licensed therapist, healthcare provider, advocate, or trusted support if reflection brings something up.
- Choose what is appropriate for you

  _____ _____ Participation is voluntary. You may skip a prompt, keep your eyes open, change an exercise, pause, or stop. Some material may bring up discomfort, strong emotions, memories, dizziness, or physical sensations. The resource may use clinical or wellness terms to explain general concepts; those terms are not a personalized assessment or recommendation.

No promised outcome No particular physical, emotional, legal, relationship, or other result is promised. Information can become outdated, and experiences differ. Consult an appropriately qualified professional about your individual needs, medications, health conditions, safety, legal matter, or treatment decisions.

Emergency and crisis needs call or text 988 for suicide or crisis support. Call 911 for an immediate emergency when that is safe and appropriate. Outside the United States, use your local emergency or crisis resources.

By continuing, you acknowledge that you have read this page and understand the resource's educational scope.

Last reviewed for web publication: June 27, 2026. immediate danger or medical emergency. Call or text 988 in the U.S. or Canada for suicide or mental health crisis support. Copyright Michelle 15GroundingTechniques Here'salist of 15groundingtechniquestohelpyouget out of your head, reduceanxiety, andreconnect withthepresent moment. Groundinghelpsyoushift your focusawayfromoverwhelmingthoughtsandphysical sensationsandreorient yourself tothehereandnow. Thisiscrucial for managingstress, anxiety, andintrusivethoughts.

1. 5-4-3-2-1GroundingExerciseHowit works: Identify5thingsyoucansee,

4thingsyoucantouch, 3thingsyoucanhear, 2thingsyoucansmell, and1thingyoucantaste.Whyit helps: Thisexercisehelpsbringyour focustoyour immediatesurroundings,reducingtheimpact of racingor intrusivethoughts.2.

DeepBreathingHowit works:

Inhaleslowlyfor acount of 4, holdfor 4, exhalefor 4, andpausefor 4.Repeat for several rounds.Whyit helps:

Deepbreathingactivatesyour parasympatheticnervoussystem, helpingtocalmyour body'sstressresponseandimproveemotional regulation.3. Physical

SensoryStimulationHowit works:

Holdacoldobject, likeanicecube, or splashcoldwater onyour face.Whyit helps:

Theshockfromthecoldsensationquicklyshiftsyour focusfrommentaldistresstophysical sensation.4.

BodyScanHowit works: Startingfromyour toes, mentallycheckinwitheachpart of your body,noticingareasof tensionor discomfort andreleasingthem.Whyit helps: Thispracticeconnectsyour mindwithyour body, helpingyoubecomeawareof physical sensationsandreleaseanybuilt-uptension.5. Self-TalkAffirmationsHowit

works:

Saycalmingaffirmationstoyourself like"I amsafe," "I amhereright now,"or "Thismoment istemporary."Whyit

helps:

Positiveaffirmationscaninterrupt negativethinkingpatternsandprovidereassurance, bringingyoubacktothepresent.6.

VisualizationHowit works: Closeyour eyesandimagineasafe, peaceful place. Picturethecolors,smells, andsoundsof that space.Whyit helps: Visualizationcantransport youtoacalmmental spaceandpromoterelaxationbydistractingyoufromoverwhelmingemotions.7. EngageinPhysical MovementHowit

works: Takeawalk, stretch, or dosomeyoga. Movement

helpsreleasephysicalandmental tension.Whyit helps:

Physical activitygetsyouout of your headbyengagingyour body, whichincreasesbloodflowtothebrainandreducesfeelingsof stress.8. FocusonYour FeetHowit works: Focusyour attentiononthesensationof your feet ontheground. Wiggle your toesor stompgently.Whyit helps: Thisfocusesyour awarenessonyour physical bodyandthestabilityof thegroundbeneathyou, bringingyoubacktothepresent moment.9. ProgressiveMuscleRelaxation(PMR)Howit works: Tenseeachmusclegroupinyour bodyfor 5seconds, thenrelease. Startfromyour toesandmoveuptoyour head.Whyit helps: Thispracticereducesphysical tension, whichcanhelpquiet themindandalleviatefeelingsof anxiety.10. Mindful ListeningHowit works: Closeyour eyesandlistencarefullytothesoundsaroundyou, focusingonwhat youcanhear withtotal attention.Whyit helps: Activelisteningtoexternal soundspullsyour focusawayfromyourthoughts, groundingyouinthepresent.11. CountingHowit works: Count to100slowlyor count backwardfrom10.Whyit helps: Countingfocusesyour attentionandhelpscalmyour mindbyprovidingastructuredactivitythat iseasytofollow.12. Useof Textureor Fidget ObjectsHowit works: Holdor manipulateatexturedobject likeastressball, fidget spinner, orpieceof fabric.Whyit

helps:

Thetactilesensationhelpsredirect attentionfromyour mental spacetophysical sensations, promotingcalmandfocus.13. Eat or DrinkSomethingMindfullyHowit works: Slowlyandmindfullyeat or drinksomething, payingfull attentiontoitstexture, taste, andsmell.Whyit helps: Mindful eatingengagesyour sensesandbringsyour focustothemoment,slowingdownracingthoughts.14.

Stretchingor YogaHowit works:

Performaseriesof stretchesor agentleyogapractice, focusingonthemovementsandthesensationsinyour body.Whyit helps: Stretchingrelievesphysical tensionandhelpsyouconnect your mindandbody, groundingyouinthepresent.15.

HoldontoSomethingwithTextureHowit works: Holdontoanobject withadistinct texture, suchasasoft blanket, roughstone, or smoothpieceof wood.Whyit helps: Engagingyour senseof touchcanredirect your focusandcalmyournervoussystembyfocusingonsomethingtangible.

Importanceof UsingGroundingTechniques

1. InterruptsOverthinkingandAnxietyWhenyou'refeelingoverwhelmed, your

mindcanspiral intonegativethinking, worries, or past memories. Groundingtechniqueshelpbreakthiscyclebybringingyour attentiontothepresent moment.2.

ReducestheImpact of StressGroundinghelpscalmthebody'sphysical stressresponses(likearacingheart orshallowbreathing). This, inturn, reducesthepsychological stress, makingit easier toprocessyour emotionsandstaycomposed.3. PromotesEmotional RegulationByreconnectingwithyour bodyandtheenvironment aroundyou, groundingtechniqueshelpyouregulateyour emotions.

Youcanavoidbeingconsumedbythemandlearntorespondcalmlyrather thanreact impulsively.4. ImprovesMental ClarityGroundingreducesmental clutter, givingyouthespacetothinkclearlyandmakedecisionsfromamorecenteredplace. Thisisespeciallyhelpful whenyou'refeelingoverwhelmedor uncertain.5. FostersMind-BodyConnectionTechniqueslikedeepbreathing, physical movement, or mindful listeninghelpyoureconnect withyour body. Often, whenwe'reanxious, welosethat connection, andgroundinghelpsrestoreit.6. SupportsSelf-CompassionandPresenceGroundingisaformof self-carethat encouragesyoutobegentlewithyourself. Ratherthanbattlingagainst your feelings, you'reacknowledgingandacceptingthemwhilealsobringingyour focustothepresent.7.

BuildsResilienceBypracticinggroundingtechniquesregularly, youbecomemoreadept at managingstressandanxietyinthefuture. Thisbuildsyour emotional resilience, makingit easier tohandletoughsituations.

Incorporatinggroundingtechniquesintoyour

dailylifecanhelpyoustaycenteredandcalm,especiallywhendealingwithstress, anxiety, or overwhelmingthoughts.

Themoreyoupracticethesetechniques, theeasier it will becometoreturntoabalancedmental statewhenneeded. danger or medical emergency. Call or text 988 in the U.S. or Canada for suicide or mental health crisis support. Copyright Michelle D. Elder, MSW, LMHC. My Reflective Collective.

More free My Reflective Collective tools Printable links below. The worksheet wording itself is unchanged.

Scan the QR code or use the first link to open this worksheet online.

The online reader can support read-aloud tools and browser translation.

Read/listen to this worksheet online https://myreflectivecollective.com/worksheet-reader.html?file=15-grounding-techniques.pdf Positive affirmations and short mantras Scan to read/listen https://myreflectivecollective.com/affirmations.html Soundscapes and grounding audio tools https://myreflectivecollective.com/soundscapes.html More free worksheets and PDFs https://myreflectivecollective.com/resource-center.html Crisis and safety resources https://myreflectivecollective.com/crisis-resources.html Website disclaimer

https://myreflectivecollective.com/disclaimer.html

Educational wellness notice This worksheet and website offer educational wellness and self-reflection tools only.

They are not therapy, diagnosis, medical care, legal advice, crisis care, or individualized safety planning.

Pause or stop any activity that feels wrong, unsafe, inaccessible, or too much.

For immediate danger or a medical emergency, call 911. In the U.S., call or text 988 for crisis support.

Michelle D. Elder, MSW, LMHC | My Reflective Collective

Safety, Privacy & Educational Use

My Reflective Collective - Michelle D. Elder, Msw, Lmhc

If there is immediate danger or a medical emergency: Call 911 in the United States or use your local emergency number. For U.S. suicide or mental-health crisis support, call or text 988. For relationship-safety support, contact the National Domestic Violence Hotline at 800-799-7233, text START to 88788, or visit TheHotline.org from a safer device when possible.

_____
_____ Privacy and safer searching If someone may monitor your device, accounts, internet connection, location, downloads, or browser activity, consider using a safer device and a trusted network. Private browsing may reduce locally saved history but does not make activity invisible. Clearing history can also be noticed. A website Quick Exit button changes the page; it cannot erase browser, download, router, account, employer, school, carrier, or device records. Choose only steps that feel safer in your situation.

Do not store identifying or safety-sensitive answers where another person may find them.

Educational scope and professional limits This resource provides general psychoeducation, reflection, and wellness support. It is not therapy, counseling, diagnosis, assessment, treatment, medical advice, legal advice, crisis response, forensic evaluation, or an individualized safety plan.

It does not replace care from a licensed clinician, healthcare professional, attorney, trained advocate, emergency service, or other qualified professional. Laws, court procedures, services, and risks vary by location and circumstance.

Choice, pacing, and inclusion You may skip, change, discuss, dictate, draw, pause, or stop any activity. No exercise can determine what you experienced, diagnose a condition, prove a legal claim, guarantee safety, or tell you whether to stay, leave, report, reconcile, forgive, or pursue court action. Adapt language and activities for culture, identity, disability, neurotype, age, literacy, sensory needs, and personal preference. Automatic translation can make mistakes; confirm legal, medical, emergency, and safety-critical wording with a qualified person.

Copyright and sharing Created by Michelle D. Elder, MSW, LMHC for My Reflective Collective. Free for personal educational use and supportive discussion. Keep the creator credit and this safety page with the resource when sharing. Do not sell, misrepresent, or present it as individualized clinical or legal advice.

MyReflectiveCollective.com - Pause - Reflect - Learn - Practice