

5-4-3-2-1 Grounding Exercise

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The 5-4-3-2-1 Grounding Exercise helps bring your attention back to the present moment. It can calm your mind and body when you feel anxious, overwhelmed, or disconnected. Use it anytime you need to re-center yourself.

How It Works

This technique uses your five senses to gently refocus your attention. Take slow breaths as you move through each step.

5 Things You Can See

Look around and name five things you can see. Notice colors, shapes, and textures.

Example: The light on the wall, a book, your hands, a cup, the sky.

4 Things You Can Touch

Pay attention to your sense of touch. Notice four things you can physically feel.

Example: The chair under you, your clothing, the floor beneath your feet, the air on your skin.

3 Things You Can Hear

Listen carefully and name three sounds you can hear right now.

Example: Traffic outside, typing sounds, a humming noise, birds, or your own breathing.

2 Things You Can Smell

Notice two smells in your environment. If you can't identify any, think of two scents you enjoy.

Example: Coffee, soap, fresh air, or your favorite candle.

1 Thing You Can Taste

Focus on one thing you can taste. Maybe it's toothpaste, gum, or a lingering flavor in your mouth. If you can't taste anything, take a sip of water or imagine your favorite flavor.

Reflection

Take a moment to notice how you feel after completing the exercise. Do you feel calmer, more focused, or more aware of your surroundings? Grounding can be used anywhere, anytime — especially when emotions feel overwhelming.