

## Coping Techniques & Resources

### Grounding Exercises

*Grounding exercises can help restore a sense of safety during panic attacks, flashbacks, or dissociation. By engaging your senses, grounding exercises help to bring your attention back to the present moment.*

#### **5. 4. 3. 2. 1 Exercise**

This exercise helps you focus on your present surroundings. It may get harder to think of examples as you go down the list—this forces you to pay closer attention to your senses.

Try to name:

<b>5</b> things you see	<b>4</b> things you feel	<b>3</b> things you hear	<b>2</b> things you smell	<b>1</b> thing you taste
-------------------------	--------------------------	--------------------------	---------------------------	--------------------------

**Counting** Try to count backwards from 100 by 7's (you can also try 6's, 4's, 3's- anything you will really need to focus on)

**Listing** Pick one of your senses to focus on, and count how many items you can identify. For example, how many green objects can you see?

### **Sensory Coping Techniques**

Adapted from <https://www.verywellmind.com/grounding-techniques-for-ptsd-2797300>

<b>Sound</b>	<b>Touch</b>	<b>Smell</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Turn up the radio or blast your favorite song.</li> <li>•Talk out loud about what you see, hear, or what you're thinking or doing.</li> <li>•Call a loved one.</li> <li>•Put on some nature sounds such as birds chirping or waves crashing.</li> <li>•Read out loud, whether it's a favorite children's book, a blog article, or the latest novel.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Hold an ice cube and let it melt in your hand.</li> <li>•Put your hands under running water.</li> <li>•Take a hot or cool shower.</li> <li>•Grab an article of clothing, a blanket, or a towel and knead it in your hands or hold it to your cheek. Concentrate on what it feels like.</li> <li>•Rub your hand lightly over the carpet or a piece of furniture, noting the texture.</li> <li>•Pop some bubble wrap.</li> <li>•Massage your temples.</li> <li>•If you have a dog or cat, cuddle and pet him or her.</li> <li>•Drink a hot or cold beverage.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Sniff strong peppermint, which also has the benefit of having a soothing effect.</li> <li>•Light a scented candle or melt scented wax.</li> <li>•Get some essential oils that remind you of good times (freshly cut grass, rain, clean laundry, or sugar cookies, for example) and smell one.</li> <li>•Use your favorite soap or shampoo in the shower or bath.</li> </ul>

Taste	Sight	Other
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Bite into a lemon or lime.</li> <li>•Suck on a mint or chew peppermint or cinnamon gum.</li> <li>•Take a bite of a pepper or some hot salsa.</li> <li>•Let a piece of chocolate melt in your mouth, noticing how it tastes and feels as you roll it around with your tongue.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Take a mental inventory of everything around you, such as all the colors and patterns you see, the sounds you hear, and the scents you smell. Saying this out loud is helpful too.</li> <li>•Count all the pieces of furniture around you.</li> <li>•Put on your favorite movie or TV show.</li> <li>•Play a distracting game on your tablet, computer, or smartphone.</li> <li>•Complete a crossword puzzle, sudoku, word search, or other puzzles.</li> <li>•Read a book or magazine.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Write in a journal about how you're feeling or keep a list of prompts handy that you can use to decide what to write about.</li> <li>•Write a letter or card to someone you care about.</li> <li>•Dance.</li> <li>•Stretch your arms, neck, and legs.</li> <li>•Go for a walk or run.</li> <li>•Take 10 slow, deep breaths.</li> <li>•Go to another room or area for a change of scenery.</li> </ul>

### Mindfulness Practice

*Mindfulness is the practice of focusing on the present moment while calmly acknowledging feelings, thoughts, and bodily sensations.*

### How to Practice Mindfulness

- Breathing Exercises
  - Sit comfortable with both feet on the floor. Close your eyes and take deep breaths. Count to four while you inhale and count down from four while you exhale. Do this until you feel calm.
    - Search “Triangle Breathing” on YouTube for tools to help.
- Body Scan
  - Sit somewhere quiet and without distractions. Take a deep breath and, starting at your feet, consciously relax every muscle in your body. Try to focus only on your breath and how it feels when your muscles start to relax.
- Visualization Exercises
  - Stairway Exercise
    - Imagine you’re standing at the top of a staircase with ten steps. With each breath, visualize yourself walking down the stairs, becoming more relaxed with each step.
  - Empty Room Exercise
    - Imagine that you’re in an empty room. Notice how you feel. Now imagine adding people, objects, decorations until you have filled it to your satisfaction. Pay attention to how satisfied, happy, and safe you feel.

### Mindfulness Apps

- Headspace
- Insight Timer
- Smiling Mind
- Breathr
- Stop, Breathe, and Think
- Calm

### Mindfulness Videos

- <http://www.mindfulteachers.org/2019/04/silent-videos.html>
- <http://mindfulnessforteens.com/guided-meditations/>
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aXItOY0sLRY>