

Grounding Tools

- Describe your environment in detail, using all your senses—for example, “The ...floor is wood, and dark brown, there are 6 windows, the curtains are white, there is a brown table, there is a grey sofa...” Describe objects, sounds, textures, colors, smells, shapes, numbers, and temperature. You can do this anywhere.
- Play a “categories” game with yourself. Try to think of “types of dogs,” “types of cars,” “countries that start with U,” “TV shows,” “writers,” “sports,” “songs,” or “movies.”
- Describe an everyday activity in great detail. For example, describe a meal that you cook (e.g., “First I pull out the pan and add water to boil, then I pull out the potatoes and rinse them, then I peel them...”).
- Say a safety statement. “My name is _____; I am safe right now. I am in the present, not the past. I am located in _____; the date is _____.”
- Read something, saying each word to yourself. Or read each letter backward so that you focus on the letters and not on the meaning of words.
- Use humor. Think of something funny to jolt yourself out of your mood.
- Count to 10 or say the alphabet, very s ... l ... o ... w ... l ... y.
- Physical Grounding
 - Run cool or warm water over your hands.
- Grab tightly onto your chair as hard as you can.
- Dig your heels into the floor—literally “grounding” them! Notice the tension centered in your heels as you do this. Remind yourself that you are connected to the ground.
- Carry a grounding object in your pocket—a small object (a small rock, clay, a ring, a piece of cloth) that you can touch whenever you feel triggered.
- Notice your body: the weight of your body in the chair; wiggling your toes in your socks; the feel of your back against the chair. You are connected to the world.
- Stretch. Extend your fingers, arms, or legs as far as you can; roll your head around.

- Clench your fists for 5 seconds and release your fists.
- Eat something, describing the flavors in detail to yourself.
- Focus on your breathing, noticing each inhale and exhale slowly.
- Soothing Grounding
Say kind statements, as if you were talking to a small child-for example, "You are a good person going through a hard time. You'll get through this."
- Think of favorites. Think of your favorite color, animal, season, food, time of day, TV show.
- Picture people you care about (e.g., your children), and look at photographs of them.
- Remember the words to an inspiring song, quotation, or poem that makes you feel better (e.g., the AA Serenity Prayer).
- Remember a safe place. Describe a place that you find very soothing (perhaps the beach or mountains, or a favorite room); focus on everything about that place-the sounds, colors, shapes, objects, textures.

Most examples referenced from Seeking Safety by Lisa M. Najavitis (2002)