



Grounding Exercises

Sometimes, when we become overwhelmed, our mind becomes foggy, we lose focus, and our body responds with things like a racing heart, shallow breathing, shakiness, and other reactions. When this happens, grounding exercises can be helpful in calming your body and mind.

Here are a few to try. Take notes as you try them until you find the types of exercises that work best for you by using the following guide:

This exercise:

- Worked
- Worked, but took too long
- Didn't work

What I specifically liked or didn't like about this exercise is:

When I tried this exercise, it took this long to feel grounded again:

- Less than 5 minutes
- Between 5 and 10 minutes
- More than 10 minutes
- It did not help me feel grounded

I would like to try this exercise again:

- Yes
- No
- I'm not sure

Other thoughts about this exercise:

Breath Regulation:

Close your eyes focus completely on your breath. As you breathe in, say, "in." As you breathe out, say, "out." When your mind wanders, gently bring your thoughts back to your breathing. Take long, deep breaths through you belly, rather than from your chest. Do this at least five times until your breathing is steady again.

Heartrate Regulation Meditation:

Get into a comfortable position, and close your eyes. Place one hand on your belly, and take several deep breaths, feeling your belly expand on the inhale and contract on the exhale.

Place the other hand on your heart. Bring your awareness to the feel of your heartbeat, and notice the rate at which it's beating. As you continue to breathe, imagine each breath bringing relaxation to your body and heart. Picture your heartrate beating normally and steadily. Continue this exercise until your heartrate has slowed down to a normal pace for you. **Note, if you have any heart conditions, be sure to talk with your physician before trying this exercise.*

Temperature Regulation:

Notice whether you feel warmer or cooler than usual as your body responds to stress. If warm, get a cool drink, such as a glass of water or iced tea. If cold, get a warm beverage, such as coffee, tea, or warm lemon water. Hold the cup in your hands for a few seconds. Take several deep breaths in and out as you focus on the feeling of the temperature on your hands. If your drink has a smell, take a few inhales in through your nose to notice the scent. Slowly bring the cup to your mouth and take small sips of your beverage, noticing as it enters your mouth and following it down until it reaches your stomach. Try to keep your thoughts on the immediate moment and the act of taking slow, intentional sips, bringing your attention back to the immediate moment when it drifts off elsewhere.

Grounding through Mindfulness:

If you notice your thoughts starting to race, bring them to the present moment by noticing your surroundings. Choose a color and name everything you see around you in that color. In between each object you name, take a deep breath in and out. Once you've identified all items of one color, choose another color and continue as long as needed. You can also do this with naming things you smell, things you hear, or things you can feel. Doing this exercise engages your senses and brings you out of your thoughts and into your surrounding environment.

Movement:

Sometimes, it helps to get out of the immediate environment you're in. Try going for a mindful walk out in nature if possible. As you walk, keep your attention on the present. Notice the colors and objects around you. List the things you hear. Count how many different scents you can detect. You could also pay attention to each step, saying, "left, right" each time you take a step or focus on each breath as you move. Any time you notice your mind shifting, bring it back to the present moment and the ground beneath your feet. Remind yourself that you are grounded.