

5-4-3-2-1 Grounding Technique

Using your 5 senses is a fast way to bring you out of your thoughts or intense emotions into the present moment. This is a simple grounding technique you can do in the moment.

- Name 5 things you can see.
- Name 4 things you can hear.
- Name 3 things you can touch within your immediate reach.
- Name 2 things you can smell.
- Name 1 thing you can taste.

Self-Soothing Techniques for Emotional Regulation

- Think of your favorites: favorite movie, color, place, animal, person, season, music.
- Get yourself some hot cocoa, coffee, soda, juice or water. Drink your beverage slowly focusing on the sensations of taste, smell and temperature.
- Give yourself a regulating hug: place your right hand across your heart and put your palm against your body with your hand under your armpit. Take your left arm across the body towards the right and hold your own deltoid or upper arm close to your shoulder for a calming self-hug.

- Wrap in a blanket and rock in a rocking chair.
- Wrap up in a heated blanket or put your clothes/blanket in the dryer to warm up then put them up and relax.
- Take a warm shower or bubble bath.
- Light scented candles or oil.
- Play soothing music.
- Burn essential oils in a diffuser.
- Go out into the warm sun for 15-30 minutes
- Apply a cool washcloth to your face – add lavender essential oil for a calming boost.
- Practice deep breathing or try some of these yoga breathing exercises
- Listen to calming and soothing music for 10 minutes.
- Play, pet (and walk) a pet for 10 minutes or more.
- Engage in rhythmic activities (knitting, crocheting, biking, swimming, dancing).
- Chew gum.
- Read an inspirational quote or verse.
- Think of the things you look forward to in the next week (the person you will connect with, activity, etc).
- Picture people you care about and look at pictures of them.
- Say a coping statement – “I can handle this”, “The feeling will pass”.

Use a Weighted Blanket

People that suffer from **PTSD**, borderline personality disorder, anxiety disorders such as **panic disorder**, or have experienced trauma may have trouble “calming” their nervous system. This results in *raised cortisol levels at*

bedtime, increased tension, [difficulty sleeping](#), and difficulty relaxing in general.

Weighted blankets have been shown to be helpful in calming the nervous system and allowing your body to relax. This can improve sleep, reduce irritability, and ultimately improve your mood.

There are several types of weighted blankets on the market. Do your research and try one out to see if it has a self-soothing effect on you. Here is a [review of weighted blankets](#) to start with.

Practice Talking to Yourself in a Soothing Way

[When stressed](#), our [inner critic](#) is usually the loudest. Unfortunately, a negative critic is not motivating. It just makes you feel worse – more defeated and less confident.

What is needed rather, is a kinder, compassionate, and soothing voice. The voice of someone who loves and cares about you. *When we feel safe and connected, we can regulate difficult emotions, increase confidence and have the motivation to try again.*

Supportive language helps us cope and get through the hard times.

Soothing words of comfort to say to yourself:

- I'm sorry you're going through this.
- I'm here for you.
- I love you.
- I know this is a difficult time for you.

- You are not alone.
- I believe in you.
- It's okay to feel this way, it makes sense to me.
- I can understand ...
- You can count on me.

Progressive Muscle Relaxation

Progressive muscle relaxation is a grounding technique in which you intentionally focus on relaxing the muscles in your body.

- Tense and relax each muscle group, head to toes (or toes to head), one muscle group at a time.
- Tense (5 seconds), then let go; relax the muscle all the way. *Notice* the tension; *notice* the difference when relaxed.
- As you relax each muscle, say to yourself, "Relax."