



GROUNDING

Grounding is the conscious act of placing our attention away from our thoughts and onto something neutral. The purpose is to reduce our current level of tension. Grounding is most effective when our tension level is high.

How does Grounding work?

When our mind identifies a threat, the Amygdala (located in the temporal lobe of our brains) kicks into action and releases hormones which contribute to tension in our bodies. This tension is often experienced in the form of increased heart and breathing rate, muscle tension, sweating, etc. The Amygdala then receives this feedback from our bodies and often interprets this as evidence that the threat is real and our tension continues to rise/ remain elevated. Grounding gives us the opportunity to take a step back and evaluate more accurately what is actually occurring and how we may best respond rather than react. The more AWARE we are of what is occurring, the more productively we can attend.

Rating Tension:

1-10 rating scale when identifying our current level of tension.

1 = Most Calm

5 = Average Tension level – fully functional and peacefully productive

10 = Highest Tension level - Overwhelmed

Rate your current tension level...

Physical Grounding:

Engaging with our bodies and the world around us in a physical way to create space between us and the tension we are experiencing.

- Describe your surroundings with your senses: What do you – See? Hear? Feel? Smell? Taste?
- Change position: Sit down or stand up
- Stretch
- Use Essential Oils
- Go outside – touch the Earth – Turn your face toward the Sun
- Water – Run your hands under cool / warm water. Shower or bathe. Swim.
- Hold an object in your hand – describe EVERYTHING about it.
- Pet / snuggle with an animal
- Exhaust yourself – stairs, running in place, cleaning frenzy, jumping jax

Mental Grounding:

Focusing our thoughts on neutral topics and / or playing mental games to reduce our tension level and redirect our thoughts.

- **Categories:**
 - Create a category and spend 30 sec – 1 min coming up with as many items as possible. Ex: characters in your favorite show, states / cities / countries, favorite songs, colors, sports teams, mammals, ice cream flavors, etc
- **Numbers Games:**
 - Count backwards from 100 by 6's, 7's, 2's, 4's. Pick a number and figure out different equations to achieve that number. Counting.
- **Use an Anchoring Statement or Mantra:**
 - An anchoring phrase is often a description of your current reality that supports a feeling of safety.
 - Ex: I am ___ years old. Right now I am ____ and it is ____time of day.
My feet at _____ and my hands are ____.
 - A mantra is a phrase that is often pre-determined and supports tension reduction.
 - Ex: I am at home in my body. I am powerful and capable of handling whatever comes my way. I am love and my heart beats to its rhythm.
 - Make your own! What do you most want to hear in your most tense moments?
- **Verbal Connection:**
 - Recite something or read something out loud with your full attention
- **Laugh:**
 - Watch funny videos. Read something funny. Remember something that made you laugh.
- **Gratitude Practice:**
 - Think of something you are thankful for. Then think of all the reasons you are thankful.
**This practice can sometimes increase tension level if starting tension is an 8 or greater.*
- **Describe the steps in a common task.**
 - Choose a task you don't mind completing and break it down. Think writing a step-by-step guide for someone who's never done it before.