



Los Angeles County DMH, Continuum of Care Reform Division

Trauma/Resilience Tip of the Week: Grounding Techniques

Dissociation (disconnect from what is happening) is a response to cope with what is happening to the body during a traumatic event. It is a normal response to trauma, however it can become maladaptive when it becomes the only and primary method of coping.

Grounding is a type of coping strategy that is designed to immediately connect a person with the here and now, using the five senses. This reduces the likelihood of re-experiencing a flashback or dissociation. Using grounding as a coping technique can be done in any environment.



Try out these **5 Grounding Techniques**:

Acknowledge **FIVE things you see** around you. Maybe it is a bird, maybe it is a pencil.

Acknowledge **FOUR things you can touch** around you. Maybe this is your hair, hands, ground, grass, pillow.

Acknowledge **THREE things you hear**. This needs to be external, do not focus on your thoughts; maybe you can hear a clock, a car, a dog park. or maybe you hear your stomach rumbling, internal noises that make external sounds can count.

Acknowledge **TWO things you can smell**: This one might be hard if you are not in a stimulating environment, if you cannot automatically sniff something out, walk nearby to find a scent. Maybe you walk to your bathroom to smell soap or outside to smell anything in nature, or even could be as simple as leaning over and smelling a pillow on the couch, or a pencil.

Acknowledge **ONE thing you can taste**. What does the inside of your mouth taste like, gum, coffee, or the sandwich from lunch?