



GROUNDING YOUR BODY AND MIND

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Coping Skills

- As kids grow older, they face new stressors and challenges. By helping your child develop healthy coping skills (tools to help them manage their feelings and reduce stress), you're helping them become more resilient (better able to handle life's ups and downs).
- Coping strategies, like grounding, are also helpful for adults. Practicing coping strategies is a great way to take care of yourself, be more present and model healthy ways to manage stress.

Why practice grounding?

- Grounding is a relaxation exercise that can be used at any time to focus on the present moment rather than our worries, which helps calm our bodies and minds. Grounding exercises can improve concentration, decrease anxiety, and enhance decision-making and problem-solving skills.
- It is difficult to learn something new when we are anxious, angry or distracted.
- Teaching and practicing coping skills when everyone is calm gives us a variety of tools we can use to manage our feelings and reduce stress.

How to practice grounding

1. Find a comfortable place to sit or lie down and, if you feel comfortable, close your eyes.
2. Take several slow, deep breaths in through your nose and out through your mouth.
3. Use your five senses to notice the following:
 - 5 things you can see around you. Maybe it's a book, a painting or a chair.
 - 4 things you can touch around you. Maybe it's a dog, your desk or your leg.
 - 3 things you can hear around you. Maybe it's a ticking clock, a car alarm or a dog barking.
 - 2 things you can smell. Maybe it's the scent of soap or lotion on your hands, air freshener or freshly cut grass.
 - 1 thing you can taste. Maybe it's the drink or the snack you just had.
4. Notice how your body feels. Are you relaxed? Is your mind calmer?

Make grounding work for you

- This strategy can be modified to meet your child's needs or based on how much time is available.
 - ❑ Focus on fewer things or fewer senses. Instead of using all five senses, ask your child to name only three things they see or three things they can touch and two things they hear.
 - ❑ Focus on a specific color. Ask your child to name five or ten green objects they see around them.
 - ❑ Focus on specific details. For kids who need more specific instructions, ask them to look around and name three objects that are round, two things that are soft, one thing that makes noise, etc.
- Did you know that many athletes and performers use coping strategies like these before big games and performances to help them relax and focus?