

Grounding

When we re-experience a trauma memory, we often experience it with all five of our senses; we see, hear, feel, taste and smell things associated with the event. This can make us feel as though we are back in that situation, and this often provokes fear and anxiety. Grounding is a technique that uses those five senses to reconnect us with the present moment and to reassure us that we are safe.

1- Look around you, what can you see? Remind yourself where you are, that you are in the present and safe.

2 - What can you hear? Focus on each of the noises and use them to remind you of where you are.

3 - What can you feel? If you are sitting or lying down how does the chair or bed feel against your back? What is the air temperature like? How does the fabric of the clothes you're wearing feel? Some people also find it helpful to carry an object that reminds them they are safe e.g. a pebble or stress ball.

4- What can you smell right now? Try to detect different smells in the air and name what they might be. If you are at home things like plants, incense, and candles can be useful to bring us back into the present moment. If you find smell particularly

helpful when trying to soothe yourself, it may be useful to consider a small bottle of or piece of cloth dipped in essential oils that you can carry with you.

5 - Can you taste anything right now? Some people find it useful to chew gum or eat strongly flavoured sweets. Alternatively, if you experience strong “taste memories” focusing on the lack of taste in the present moment can be helpful.