

Grounding and returning to the present

Grounding can help orient attention to the current environment when distress, activation or disconnection rises. Different methods suit different people.

ORIENT

Use simple facts to remind the nervous system where and when you are.

- Say your name, the date, where you are and what you are doing.
- Look around slowly and name several neutral objects.
- Notice what is different between the present and the feared situation.

USE THE SENSES

Choose concrete sensory information rather than forcing calm.

- Feel your feet, the chair, fabric or a cool object.
- Name things you can see, hear and physically feel.
- Use a familiar scent, taste or textured object if helpful.

USE MOVEMENT AND BREATH

Small physical actions can support orientation.

- Press your feet into the floor or your hands together.
- Stretch, walk slowly or change posture deliberately.
- Let the out-breath lengthen gently without forcing deep breaths.

REVIEW WHAT WORKS

Grounding is a menu, not a test.

- Rate distress before and after without expecting it to reach zero.
- Stop a technique that increases panic or disconnection.
- Keep two or three options that are discreet and easy to remember.

Keep the resource in context

Grounding is not a substitute for emergency support or a personalised safety plan. If there is immediate danger, call 000. Discuss repeated dissociation or escalating risk with a clinician.