

Try the 5-4-3-2-1 method

Working backward from 5, use your senses to list things you notice around you. For example, you might start by listing five things you hear, then four things you see, then three things you can touch from where you're sitting, two things you can smell, and one thing you can taste.

Make an effort to notice the little things you might not always pay attention to, such as the colour of the flecks in the carpet or the hum of your computer.

Think in categories

Choose one or two broad categories, such as "musical instruments," "ice cream flavours," "mammals," or "places." Take a minute or two to mentally list as many things from each category as you can.

Use maths and numbers

Even if you aren't a maths person, numbers can help centre you.

Try:

running through a times table in your head.
counting backward from 100

choosing a number and thinking of five ways you could make the number ($6 + 11 = 17$, $20 - 3 = 17$, $8 \times 2 + 1 = 17$, etc.)



Use an anchoring phrase

This might be something like, "I'm Full Name. I'm X years old. I live in Town, County. Today is Friday, June 3. It's 10:04 in the morning. I'm sitting at my desk in English. My friends are here and my teacher."

You can expand on the phrase by adding details until you feel calm, such as, "It's raining lightly, but I can still see the sun. It's my break time. I'm thirsty, so I'll have some water."

Describe a common task

Think of an activity you do often or can do very well. Go through the process step-by-step, as if you're giving someone else instructions on how to do it. This can even be something like brushing your teeth.

Practice self-kindness

Repeat kind, compassionate phrases to yourself:

"You're having a rough time, but you'll make it through."

"You're strong, and you can move through this pain."

"You're trying hard, and you're doing your best." Say it, either aloud or in your head, as many times as you need.

List favourites

List three favourite things in several different categories, such as foods, animals, songs, movies, books, places, and so on.

Listen to music

Put on your favourite song, but pretend you're listening to it for the first time. Focus on the melody and lyrics (if there are any). Does the song give you chills or create any other physical sensations? Pay attention to the parts that stand out most to you.

Recite something

Think of a poem, song, or book passage you know by heart. Recite it quietly to yourself or in your head. If you say the words aloud, focus on the shape of each word on your lips and in your mouth. If you say the words in your head, visualize each word as you'd see it on a page.

Imagine yourself leaving the painful feelings behind

Picture yourself:
-gathering the emotions, balling them up, and putting them into a box
-walking, swimming, biking, or jogging away from painful feelings
-imagining your thoughts as a song or TV show you dislike, changing the channel or turning down the volume — they're still there, but you don't have to listen to them.



WHY GROUNDING?

When we start to dissociate, or have intrusive thoughts, or flashbacks, it is important to try grounding techniques to bring us back to the present. These work by focusing on the here and now.

You can try these when you feel yourself drifting or do them regularly to keep yourself grounded during the day.

Put your hands in water

Focus on the water's temperature and how it feels on your fingertips, palms, and the backs of your hands. Does it feel the same in each part of your hand?

Use warm water first, then cold. Next, try cold water first, then warm. Does it feel different to switch from cold to warm water versus warm to cold?

Touch something comforting

This could be your favourite blanket, a much-loved T-shirt, a smooth stone, a soft carpet, or anything that feels good to touch. Think about how it feels under your fingers or in your hand.

Pick up or touch items near you
Are the things you touch soft or hard? Heavy or light? Warm or cool? Focus on the texture and colour of each item. Challenge yourself to think of specific colours, such as crimson, burgundy, indigo, or turquoise, instead of simply red or blue.

Breathe deeply

Slowly inhale, then exhale. If it helps, you can say or think "in" and "out" with each breath. Feel each breath filling your lungs and note how it feels to push it back out.

Move your body

Do a few exercises or stretches. You could try jumping jacks, jumping up and down, jumping rope, jogging in place, or stretching different muscle groups one by one.

Savour a food or drink

Take small bites or sips of a food or beverage you enjoy, letting yourself fully taste each bite. Think about how it tastes and smells and the flavours that linger on your tongue.



Take a short walk

Concentrate on your steps — you can even count them. Notice the rhythm of your footsteps and how it feels to put your foot on the ground and then lift it again.

Hold a piece of ice

What does it feel like at first? How long does it take to start melting? How does the sensation change when the ice begins to melt?

Savour a scent

Is there a fragrance that appeals to you? This might be a cup of tea, an herb or spice, a favourite soap, or a scented candle. Inhale the fragrance slowly and deeply and try to note its qualities (sweet, spicy, sharp, citrusy, and so on).

Listen to your surroundings

Take a few moments to listen to the noises around you. Do you hear birds? Dogs barking? Machinery or traffic? If you hear people talking, what are they saying? Do you recognize the language? Let the sounds wash over you and remind you where you are.

Play a memory game

Look at a detailed photograph or picture (like a cityscape or other "busy" scene) for 5 to 10 seconds. Then, turn the photograph face-down and recreate the photograph in your mind, in as much detail as possible. Or, you can mentally list all the things you remember from the picture.

Emotional Regulation Resources

1 - How do you feel today Thermometer <https://www.therapistaid.com/worksheets/emotion-thermometers>

2 - Big Feelings Come and go
https://content.c3p.ca/pdfs/C3P_BigFeelingsComeAndGo_storybook_en.pdf

3 - Sesame Street Feelings have Names video
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wyKg6oMLSvc>

4 - My Emotions Booklet
<https://www.elsa-support.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/My-Emotions-Booklet-1.pdf>

5 - Fight / Flight / Freeze – Teaching the Anxiety Response for Kids
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=APvzoJtbGz4>

6– Managing Emotions
<https://fit.sanfordhealth.org/-/media/fit/printables/managing-emotions/managing-emotions.pdf>

7- Bubble Breathing Video
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rRuqxR5oXJM>

8 - 5,4,3,2,1 Grounding Technique
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-MTU8PPTRSc>

9 - Coping Skills for Kids
<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1YC2z6lmuzAV3FitaekKjo4wi83ALKss1/view>

10 - My coping Toolbox
<https://www.educators-barnardos.org.uk/media/s4xfmntj/my-coping-toolbox-booklet.pdf>

11 - Emotional regulation leaflet for parents
<https://camhs.rdash.nhs.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/NL-Emotion-regulation-e-leaflet-02.21.pdf>

Link to new Solihull webpage for parents/YP to access online courses:
<https://inourplace.co.uk/durham/>

inourplace | Solihull Approach – Durham | inourplace
Emotional health, child development and parent wellbeing Durham | inourplace Online learning: free courses and resources for all families. Plus, specialist emotional and mental health learning for ...

Link to page with short videos of teenagers talking about the teenage courses:
<https://inourplace.co.uk/teenagers/>

inourplace | Solihull Approach – Understanding your adolescence
Understanding your adolescence In adolescence, your brain undergoes major 'rewiring' as part of its natural growth and development. This can mean some surprising changes in how you feel, behave and...

New access code for parents/YP to use to register for the free online courses: DCCHDFT

Direct link to moving up in school videos/articles: <https://inourplace.co.uk/moving-up/>
inourplace | Solihull Approach – Moving up

Support for Families across County Durham



Mental Health & Emotional Support

for **children, young people & families** in County Durham

This is a **great starting point** to help you **access support**



Local Support



Help for families - your virtual Family Hub - Durham County Council

Children and Young People's Rainbow Guide

Adults Rainbow Guide

