

# GROUNDING EXERCISES

(adapted from [http://www.peirsac.org/peirsacui/er/educational\\_resources10.pdf](http://www.peirsac.org/peirsacui/er/educational_resources10.pdf) )

## What Is It?

**Grounding** is a technique that **helps keep someone in the present**. Grounding exercises help **reorient a person to the here-and-now and in reality**. Grounding skills can be helpful in managing overwhelming feelings or intense anxiety. They help someone to **regain their mental focus** from an often intensely emotional state.

## 2 Methods for Grounding

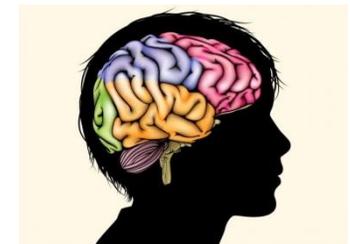
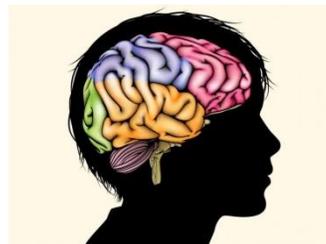
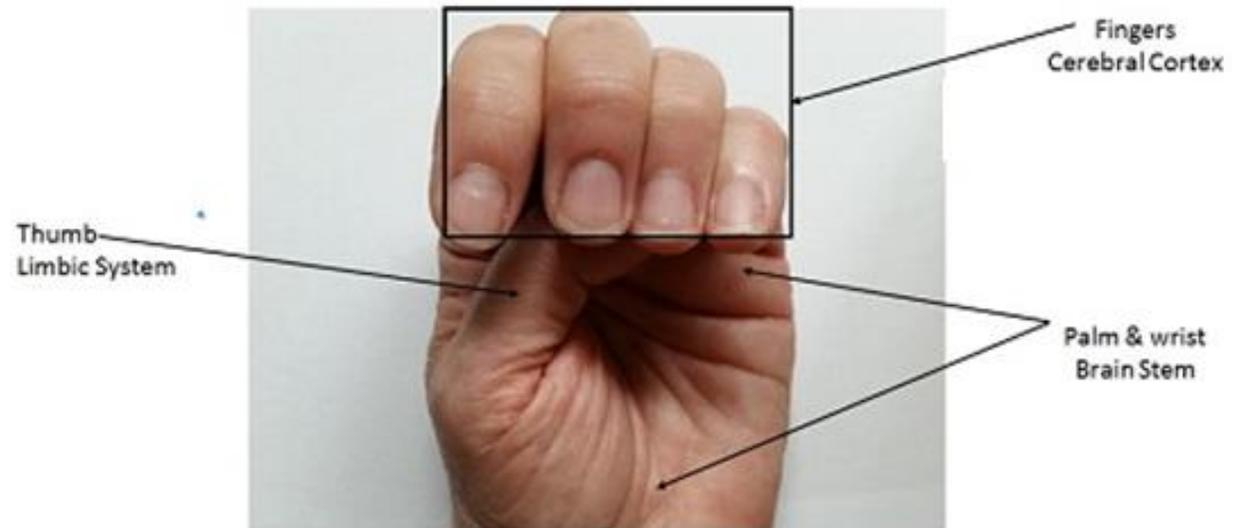
**1 - Turn On Your SENSES**

(SENSORY AWARENESS)

**2 - Turn On Your THINKING**

## Why Does It Work?

**Grounding** uses simple senses or information to get our **THINKING CAP** (or **CEREBRAL CORTEX**) turned back on, and tuned back in. This relaxes the **'LIZARD BRAIN'** (or **LIMBIC SYSTEM/AMYGDALA**) and helps to turn off feelings of **ANXIOUS FEELINGS** (or **FIGHT/FLIGHT/FREEZE**).



## SENSORY AWARENESS STRATEGIES

### 5-4-3-2-1 Grounding

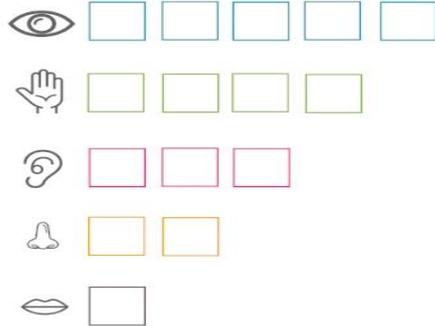
See 5 Things

Touch 4 Things

Hear 3 Things

Smell 2 Things

Taste 1 Thing



## COGNITIVE AWARENESS STRATEGIES

Focus your brain on the **PRESENT** with these questions:

- Where am I?
- What is today?
- Is it warm or cold out?
- What is the date?
- What is the month?
- What is the year?
- How old am I?
- What season is it?
- What am I wearing?

**Anxiety likes to occupy our upper body, so focus on how your lower body feels to shift balance your awareness!**

- How do your middle toes feel? How do your knees feel?
- Press your feet into the ground. Wiggle your toes.
- Visualize anxious energy as a colour and picture it moving down your body and out your toes

### How about ...

- Look around your surroundings, notice details.
- Hold a pillow, stuffed animal or a ball.
- Place a cool cloth on your face, or hold something cool such as a water bottle.
- Listen to soothing music
- Focus on someone's voice or a neutral conversation.

Get your **CEREBRAL CORTEX** working with these tricks:

- Count backwards from 20 slowly
- Sing Happy Birthday slowly
- Do some simple math questions or practice your multiplication tables
- Spell your full first, middle and last names slowly
- Think through the lyrics of your favourite song – Can you remember all the words? Can you do it backwards?
- Go through the names of all your family members – grandparents, aunts, uncles, cousins