

Toolkit

Grounding Techniques

5-4-3-2-1 Technique


🕒 Time: 10 Minutes

📊 Difficulty: Moderate

This grounding technique is an effective way to help you stay present in the moment and break free from overthinking. By focusing on your five senses, this technique helps distract you from negative, anxiety-inducing thoughts that often come with the "what ifs" and "if onlys". It provides instant relief by giving you a positive distraction, taking your mind away from endless rumination and over-analysis. This grounding technique can be especially helpful during moments of stress or anxiety, helping you to stay centered and present.

HERE'S HOW IT WORKS:

Start by taking a few deep breaths and consciously releasing any tension in your body. Then notice five things you can see, four things you can touch, three things you can hear, two things you can smell and one thing you can taste:

SIGHT	5		Identify five things that you can see around you, and describe them in detail to yourself. For example, you might notice the colour of the walls, the texture of the floor, or the shape of a piece of furniture.
TOUCH	4		Identify four things that you can touch, and touch them mindfully. Pay attention to the sensations you feel, such as the texture or temperature of the object.
HEARING	3		Identify three things that you can hear, and listen to them mindfully. This might include the sound of traffic outside, the hum of your computer, or the ticking of a clock.
SMELLS	2		Identify two things that you can smell, and breathe them in mindfully. This might include the scent of a candle or essential oil, or the aroma of freshly brewed coffee.
TASTE	1		Identify one thing that you can taste, and savour it mindfully. This might include a piece of fruit, a sip of tea, or a mint.

PS! Use the prompts on the next page to truly focus on each of the senses!







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USE THE FOLLOWING PROMPTS TO GET STARTED:

SIGHT	5 	<p>What colours do you see surrounding you?</p> <p>What kind of shapes do you see?</p> <p>How do they interact with the light?</p> <p>What textures do these objects have? How large are these objects?</p>
TOUCH	4 	<p>Pick up any object or touch them with your hands/feet.</p> <p>How hot or cold do these objects feel?</p> <p>How heavy do these objects feel?</p> <p>What are these objects made of?</p> <p>Describe the sensation of touch on your skin (e.g. soft, rough, ticklish).</p>
HEARING	3 	<p>What sounds do you notice?</p> <p>Are there any mechanical sounds you can hear?</p> <p>Notice how the sounds change or come and go in intervals.</p> <p>Can you hear some voices? What are they saying?</p> <p>Do you hear some ambient sounds if you really focus? (wind, leaves etc)</p>
SMELLS	2 	<p>What can you smell in the air? Is there any smell at all?</p> <p>What can you smell on your hands?</p> <p>If you open the window or walk to another room, how do the smells change?</p> <p>How do the objects in front of you smell?</p>
TASTE	1 	<p>If you have some food (candy, mints, chewing gum, etc.) put some of it in your mouth. Try to describe what you taste.</p> <p>How would you describe the taste in your mouth?</p>

S.O.B.E.R Technique

 Time: 5 Minutes

 Difficulty: Easy

The SOBER stress interruption technique is an approach grounded in mindfulness that helps manage stress, anxiety, and overwhelming emotions. It provides a structured way to respond to challenging situations with greater awareness and resilience. The acronym "SOBER" represents the following steps:



01. STOP

Pause whatever you are doing, and take a moment to acknowledge the emotions or stress you are experiencing. This step is crucial for breaking the cycle of stress and bringing awareness to the present moment.



02. OBSERVE

Pay attention to your thoughts, feelings, and bodily sensations. Observe them without judgment or trying to change them. Simply notice what is happening in your body and mind, and recognize any patterns or triggers.



03. BREATHE

Take a few slow, deep breaths to help ground yourself and calm your nervous system. Focus on your breath as it moves in and out of your body, using it as an anchor to the present moment.



04. EXPAND

Take a few slow, deep breaths to help ground yourself and calm your nervous system. Focus on your breath as it moves in and out of your body, using it as an anchor to the present moment.



04. RESPOND

Take a few slow, deep breaths to help ground yourself and calm your nervous system. Focus on your breath as it moves in and out of your body, using it as an anchor to the present moment.



S.O.B.E.R Technique

🕒 Time: 5 Minutes

📊 Difficulty: Easy

Visual diagram of how it works:

WHEN YOU FEEL STRESS OR ANXIETY



NOTE THAT...

The underlying skill this technique helps to practice is mindfulness. It's completely normal when you get caught up in a heat of a situation and forget to go through the SOBER process. As with any skill, it will take some time and practice before it comes automatic.

4-7-8 Breathing Exercise

🕒 Time: 5 Minutes

📊 Difficulty: Easy

HERE'S HOW THE 4-7-8 TECHNIQUE HELPS

01. Encourages relaxation by stimulating the body's relaxation response.
02. Shifts focus away from anxious thoughts by concentrating on breath and counting.
03. Improves oxygen supply, promoting clearer thinking.
04. Regulates the nervous system, balancing stress and relaxation responses.
05. Builds a sense of control over thoughts and emotions through regular practice.

HERE'S HOW IT WORKS

01. Find a comfortable position: Sit or lie down in a relaxed position, ensuring your back is straight, and your body is free from tension. Close your eyes or focus on a single point in the room.

02. Inhale: Breathe in slowly and deeply through your nose, while mentally counting to four. Fill your lungs and diaphragm with air.

03. Hold your breath: After inhaling, hold your breath and mentally count to seven. This pause allows the oxygen to circulate through your bloodstream.

04. Exhale: Slowly exhale through your mouth, pursing your lips slightly, and mentally count to eight. As you exhale, try to release all the tension and stress from your body.

05. Repeat: Perform this cycle of 4-7-8 breathing for at least four times, or until you start feeling calmer and more relaxed.

01



02



03



4-7-8 Breathing Exercise

JOURNAL

🕒 Time: 5 Minutes

📊 Difficulty: Easy

Date & Time	Anxiety Before the Exercise (on a scale of 1 to 10)	Time Practiced Deep Breathing	Anxiety After the Exercise (on a scale of 1 to 10)

Notes

A grid of small orange dots arranged in 20 rows and 14 columns, providing a guide for writing notes.