|  |
| --- |
| **GROUNDING**  Grounding Techniques helps keep someone in the present  (The material below is adapted from Najavits, L. (2002). *Seeking Safety: A Treatment Manual for PTSD and Substance Abuse*. New York: Guildford Press. Handout: ‘Using grounding to detach from emotional pain’:133–5).  Grounding involves detaching yourself from emotional pain by focusing on the outside world rather than what’s going on inside you. It is useful for extreme emotional pain.  **Examples of mental grounding**   * Describe your surroundings in detail, using all your senses—vision, hearing, smell, taste, and feeling * Describe what you are doing, such as eating, walking, or driving, in detail * Think of categories; for example, categories shoes, hair, cars, or books * Use imagery; for example, hop on a cloud and float away from your pain; put your pain in a bubble and let it float away * Use a grounding statement, such as: ‘I am Jo’; ‘I am 23 years old’;   ‘this is the present, and not the past’; ‘I am safe here’; ‘today is …’   * Say the alphabet slowly * Think of something funny.   **Examples of physical grounding**   * Rub your hands together—hard * Press your heels into the floor, and notice how it feels * Touch objects around you as you say their name, and explore them using all your senses * Stamp your feet * Change your posture to a more upright one * Put your hands under running water * Carry something small with you that grounds you, such as a rock or a piece of fabric.   **Examples of soothing grounding**   * Make encouraging statements to yourself, such as: ‘you can do this’; ‘just hang in there’ * Think of a place where you have felt calm and peaceful: remember everything about it, using all your senses * Go to a safe place you have already created in your imagination:   notice all the details in terms of environment, air temperature, shelter, other people there, animals, and so on   * Plan something nice for yourself, such as a bath or a good meal * Think of people you care about; carry a photo or some other reminder of them with you * Think of good things coming up in the next week or so * As you breathe, on the exhale say something calming, such as ‘relax’ or ‘it’s OK’.   **Suggestions to make grounding work well**   * Practice the strategies * Have a list of best grounding strategies somewhere handy (such as a note in a diary, or a note stuck in the car or on the fridge) to remind you to use them * Start doing grounding exercises early in a distress cycle * Rate your distress levels before and after grounding, so you can tell which strategies work best. |