

## Grounding Exercises: Self-Regulating After a Stressful Incident

Experiencing or witnessing racism can be extremely stressful. Grounding exercises can help us navigate these stressful situations by encouraging our bodies to regulate and allowing our minds to remain in the present.

| For Your Body                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           | For Your Brain                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
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| <b>Take a short walk.</b><br>Count your steps. Listen to your breathing. What rhythm are you making as you're walking?                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | <b>Make lists.</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Choose a category (animals, books, movies...) and list out as many items from that category as you can think of.</li></ul>                                                                                      |
| <b>Do some stretches.</b><br>Interlock your fingers, raise your arms above your head and lower them down to shake them out. How does the stretch feel in your muscles?                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | <b>Describe an object in detail.</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>What is its shape, color, and texture? What sound does it make? What is it used for?</li></ul>                                                                                                |
| <b>Focus on taking small bites or sips of food or drink.</b><br>What does it taste like? How would you describe the texture? How would you describe the smell?                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | <b>Name the people you love.</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Write down one fact about each of them.</li></ul>                                                                                                                                                 |
| <b>Try the 5-4-3-2-1 exercise.</b><br>Try to name: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>5 things you can see</li><li>4 things you can feel</li><li>3 things you can hear</li><li>2 things you can smell</li><li>1 thing you can taste</li></ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        | <b>Try saying the alphabet backwards.</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| <b>Try five-finger breathing.</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Hold one hand out in front of you with your fingers spread apart.</li><li>Place your index finger from your other hand at the base of your thumb and close your eyes.</li><li>Start to slowly trace up your thumb with your index finger, inhaling as you do.</li><li>When you reach the top, exhale and trace down the other side of your thumb.</li><li>Repeat this process with each finger. Reverse the whole action when you reach the base of your last finger.</li></ul> | <b>Describe a book, TV show, or movie in detail.</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Who are the main characters?</li><li>What are they like?</li><li>What are their strengths?</li><li>Where do they fall short?</li><li>What adventures do they go on?</li></ul> |

Please note: This resource has been prepared to offer suggested ways to ground one's self during or after a stressful experience and is not intended to for use in a clinical way.

If you have experienced or witnessed racism in action, please know you are not alone. The ***Racism Incident Helpline 1 833 457-5463 (1 833 HLP-LINE)*** is here to support in more than 240 languages. The helpline is not intended to replace emergency services, if you are in need of immediate assistance, please call 911.