

## Mindfulness Techniques

Help manage worry & anxiety with these 'grounding' exercises.

Many of us are struggling with anxious thoughts or worries at this time. A really good way of interrupting those thoughts is to try some 'grounding' exercises. With practise these exercises can help connect us to the here and now and help us to feel safe and calm. Give it a try!

### 5-4-3-2-1 Senses

This grounding exercise is a great, nice and easy one to do. All you need for this exercise is your senses!

Can you practice identifying:

5 things you see (what's around you?)

4 things you hear (outside or inside)

3 things you can feel (your clothes, hair, the breeze)

2 things you can smell (or two smells that you like)

Say 1 good thing about yourself (I am kind/strong/caring etc.)

### 5-4-3-2-1 Sights

If noticing each sense is too hard right now, try an exercise just with sights. You could create your own categories and name what you can see.

Here's an example:

5 colours I see

4 shapes I see

3 soft things I see

2 people I see

1 book I see

## **Count to 4 Breathing**

Focusing on our breathing really helps us to be calm and relaxed and is a really powerful tool. It is important to practice this, even when we are already feeling calm, so that it becomes easy to do. All you need to do is slowly and steadily, breathe in whilst counting to four, hold your breath for four and breathe out steadily for four. Remember to breathe in through your nose, hold, and breathe out through your mouth making a slow whooshing sound. If you do this a few times, you will begin to feel your body relaxing and a sense of calm.

## **Be a Tree**

There's nothing more grounded than a tree! Try connecting with the ground by imagining yourself as a tree. This sounds like, "I am firmly planted. I feel my feet rooted to the ground. My back is a strong trunk helping me feel stable in the moment. I feel my toes connecting with the ground. My arms are my branches. I feel them reach out into the world." Simply noticing your body and feeling your connection with the room helps you feel grounded!

## **Object Focus**

Find a selection of some unique items with different textures and colours. These could be sensory items, colourful rocks, shells, snow globes or something else. You could choose an item to hold in your hands and tune in all of your focus to the item. Notice the colours. Notice the textures. How does it feel in my hand? How does it feel when I squeeze it? What colours do I see? Does it smell of anything? Just notice everything there is to notice about the item!

## **Five finger breathing**

Try running a finger very slowly up and down the fingers of the other open hand and at the same time breathe in through your nose as you go up a finger, and out through your mouth as you go down a finger. Try doing this very slowly.