

Strategy #13: 5-4-3-2-1 Sensory Grounding Exercise

When you are feeling stress, your thoughts may be rapid and scattered. Perhaps your mind is jumping from one thing to another or replaying an event/conversation over and over again. The 5-4-3-2-1 sensory grounding strategy will bring your focus to the present moment as you engage all of your senses.

Practice the strategy for one round. If you find your mind jumping back to the stressful thoughts, repeat the practice as needed.

The 5-4-3-2-1 Sensory Grounding Exercise

- Name five things you can see in this room.
- Without moving, name four things you can feel (such as the floor under your feet).
- Name three things you can hear.
- Name two things you can smell or like the smell of.
- Name one thing you can taste or like the taste of.

Repeat as necessary until your stressful thoughts have passed. Once your body has calmed down, you can return to the problem and engage in proactive problem solving.

Begin this practice as soon as you notice your stress warning signs.