

When day to day functioning gets tough

Suggestions for Trauma survivors

1. Remember that you have a right to your emotions, but also remember that emotions are not facts – they are emotions

- Emotions are often difficult for survivors of trauma, survivors were often not permitted to experience emotions or had emotions dismissed. Giving yourself permission to experience emotions is important, but this can take practice.
- Emotions are a reflection of our experience to something – we can feel an emotion even if it is not based on facts: we can feel unsafe in a store around other people, but this feeling does not represent our actual safety

2. Create a schedule

- Having a schedule is very important – especially when life does not seem normal. Even if you cannot follow all the time on your schedule – keep to it as much as possible. Schedules allow us to participate in 'normal' activities, helps us feel more confident and capable, as well as providing a structure to our day. When we do not have structure, it is easier for one's mind to 'go down a rabbit hole' – get lost in worries, thoughts or difficult emotions that are difficult to escape.
- It may help to enlist others into your schedule – having a scheduled phone call or meeting time. It may also help to use a timer to help with moving from one task to another.

3. Practice Grounding activities

- Grounding activities are those activities that help to feel calm, safe, or sometimes just in the room. There are numerous different activities – try several to find the activities that are most helpful to you. You may need more than one – and create a list. It is difficult to remember what to do when you don't feel okay.
- Breathing – sounds simple, but can be a great grounding activity. Try 3-5 (count to 3 on your inhale and count to 5 on your exhale) – repeat 4 times or as needed.
- Any rhythmic or repetitive activity can be helpful with grounding (walking, music, knitting,)
- Somatic activities – these are activities where we pay attention to how our bodies feel – holding ice in your hand, or trauma sensitive yoga
- Search the internet for more – there are countless ideas!

These are just a few ideas – Keep searching for those that are helpful to you!