

COPING SKILLS & EXERCISES

EMOTIONAL AWARENESS & RELEASE



Tools to identify and express your feelings: journal about your thoughts & feelings, let yourself laugh/cry/yell, listen to music, dance, read or write poetry

DISTRACTION



Engaging in a healthy activity to take your mind off the negative: puzzles, games, podcasts, arts & crafts, tv, listen to music, clean & organize

GROUNDING & MINDFULNESS



Centering yourself in the present: meditate, do yoga, deep breathing, exercise, take a walk, bathe/shower engage the 5 senses

CONNECTION



Connecting with people or things to remind yourself that you belong: Talk to a friend or trusted adult, cuddle your pet, practice positive affirmations, talk to a therapist, reach out to a crisis line/center

TRY THESE EXERCISES:

5 SENSES GROUNDING- Name five things you see, four things you can touch, three things you hear, two things you can smell, and one thing you taste. This exercise can take you to the present, help you feel grounded, and interrupt those thoughts.

EXERCISE 2: 5-2-8 BREATHING -Tell yourself (or reassure yourself,) there is no danger.

- 1) Focus your eyes on one spot or close them and close your mouth.
- 2) Feel your feet on the ground or back in a chair.
- 3) Now inhale through your nose for five counts
- 4) Hold the inhale at the top for two counts
- 5) Exhale through your nose for eight counts,
- 6) Slightly constrict the back of your throat, making a sound like the ocean.
- 7) Repeat for three to four minutes and feel the rhythm of your breath. I like to visualize the waves in the ocean while breathing. The exhale is key in calming the body. Don't forget to count.

TAP YOUR FEET OR DO BUTTERFLY HUGS

Or try some bilateral movement, alternately tapping each foot or butterfly hugs (using alternate hands to tap alternate shoulders.) Even running or walking works because it stimulates movement from both sides of the brain and body. Any movement is always helpful in calming the mind and body. And make sure you're doing 5-2-8 breathing while practicing bilateral stimulation.