

Grounding Skills for Coping with Depression and Loss

These practices are designed to reduce anxiety, calm intrusive thoughts, and reconnect you with a sense of safety.

1. 5-4-3-2-1 Grounding Technique

Identify: • 5 things you can see

- 4 things you can touch
- 3 things you can hear
- 2 things you can smell
- 1 thing you can taste

This technique helps anchor your mind to the present moment, reducing spiraling thoughts.

2. Deep Belly Breathing

Place one hand on your chest and the other on your stomach. Inhale slowly through your nose for 4 seconds, hold for 2 seconds, and exhale slowly through your mouth for 6 seconds. Repeat several times to calm the nervous system.

3. Self-Soothing with the Senses

Use comforting sensory experiences such as holding a warm mug of tea, wrapping in a soft blanket, lighting a soothing candle, or playing calming music. These help create a sense of safety.

4. Affirmations & Reality Checks

Gently remind yourself:

- “I am safe in this moment.”
- “This feeling will pass.”
- “I am allowed to grieve and heal.”

Affirmations can interrupt negative thought loops and offer emotional stability.

5. Physical Grounding

Engage your body to return to the present. Try:

- Placing your feet firmly on the ground

- Stretching or walking
- Holding an ice cube to focus your mind

These actions cue your body to release tension and reset. Grounding practices can support you as you process grief, sadness, and identity changes. Use these tools daily, especially when emotions feel heavy. You are not alone—healing takes time, patience, and self-compassion.