

Grounding Toolkit



A TRAUMA INFORMED RESOURCE TO CHECK IN WITH YOURSELF & YOUR COMMUNITY

USING THIS RESOURCE CARD

We don't always have tools accessible to us when we're triggered and struggling to cope with stress, low mood, disconnection or otherwise. Keep this card with you or in an easily accessible place. Feel free to return to it to when you need a strategy, skill or support during times of overwhelm, disconnection, irritability and moodiness.

Overwhelmed and unsure of what you need? Try starting with R.E.S.T.

DO I NEED....

REGULATION OR RECONNECTION?

EMOTIONAL SUPPORT?

STIMULATION + DISTRACTION?

TIME AWAY?

Quick Regulation Exercise:

Find a window, step outside or sit quietly in your chair. Let your eyes drift upwards towards the sky or ceiling. Take a deep, slow belly breath to the count of 4. Hold to the count of 4. Exhale through your nose to the count of 4. Hold to the count of 4. Repeat 3 times or until you feel calmer.

Let's Check In.

A body scan can be a powerful way to link your emotions to your body sensations, and develop awareness about what you may need during times of crisis and stress.

Pay special attention to the muscles in your face, neck, scalp, ears and jaw, slowly shifting attention to notice your shoulders, chest, stomach, and hands, before focusing on your seat, thighs, calves and toes. What do you notice? As you breathe, imagine breathing in compassion to any areas of discomfort or tension, while breathing out self-judgment and stress.

Asking for emotional support can sound like:

"I'm feeling a bit stressed and tense right now. Would you be up for going for a walk together? I would love your company."

"I've been overthinking a lot and having a hard time getting unstuck on my own. Do you have capacity to talk through what's been on my mind?"

Reminder:

You're allowed to be in a bad mood. Consider leaning into curiosity about your feelings instead of immediately trying to get rid of them.

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Quick Connection Tip:

Remember, to check with your community around their capacity to listen and validate your experiences before you start sharing.

This helps us find the right audience and level of support available/needed without adding additional harm.

Stimulation + Supportive Distraction

When we are triggered to freeze + fawn states, we need stimulation and energy vs. calming and soothing.

What energizes you? What might bring movement or activation to your mind and body? Start with your senses. What scents energize you? Is there a gentle stretch that feels good? What sounds, music or images bring you joy + energy?

Are my distractions supportive?

One way to tell if a chosen skill or activity is supportive is to imagine how you might feel after you've completed it. If future you feels more grounded, capable and secure as a result of the activity, then give it a try. You can always check in with yourself again to see how you feel later.

Systems support values, seasonal rhythms & beliefs.

Routines help habits, goals, & responsibilities.

Rituals keep us grounded, resourced & safe.

After engaging in R.E.S.T, what area(s) of your life need your focus? Do you need to re-evaluate a system, routine or ritual? What would make a difference to feel grounded and safe in the long term?

Quick Tip:

A conversation or issue doesn't have to be fully resolved before you take mental or physical space away from it. Intentional breaks allow time to tend to nervous system dysregulation, personal discomfort, feelings, and triggers to emotional experiences and reactions.

Time Away

Give yourself space and/or walk away from your immediate environment for a moment. Invite rest and ritual where you might usually push yourself to keep going. Whether you take a break for one minute or multiple days, notice and track any changes to your mood and energy as a result.

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