

Grounding Techniques

Have you suffered from a panic attack or bad anxiety?

Did you feel lost in the moment not knowing what to do to feel better?

Check out these Grounding Techniques that we have listed below. Grounding is a technique that helps manage stress, intense anxiety, or overwhelming feelings.

These techniques help pull you away from your feelings or intrusive thoughts and have you focus on the present moment. This can help you calm yourself and seek further help if needed.

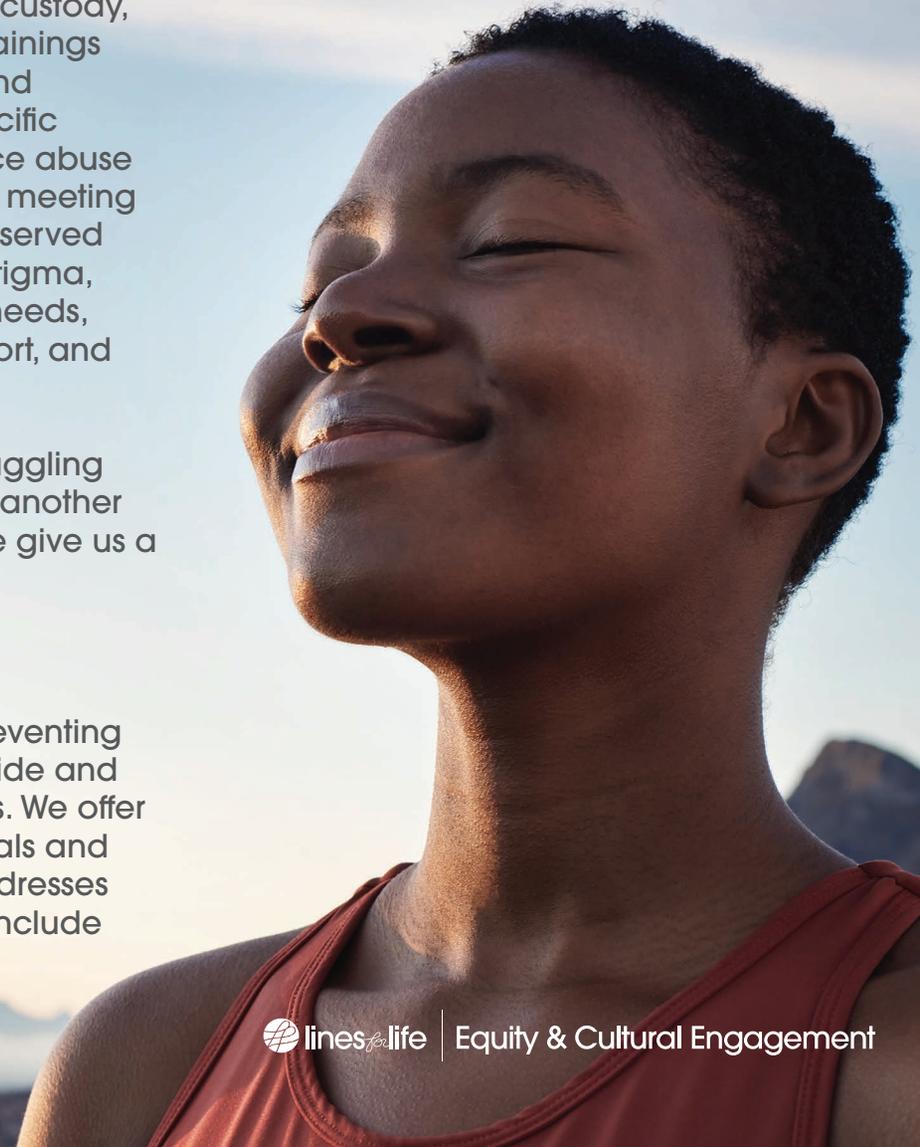
Check out the techniques we have listed inside.

The Equity and Cultural Engagement team at Lines for Life is committed to developing and advocating culturally specific mental health care. Our programs are guided by leadership, insights, and lived experiences of communities of color. Some of our programs are training Mental Health First Aid to adults in custody, providing mental health trainings that is culturally specific, and working with culturally specific communities with substance abuse prevention. Together, we're meeting the unique needs of underserved populations by reducing stigma, identifying mental health needs, increasing access to support, and intervening in crisis.

If you or a loved one is struggling with thoughts of suicide or another mental health crisis, please give us a call. **988** (Call or Text)

About Lines for Life

Lines for Life is a regional non-profit dedicated to preventing substance abuse and suicide and promoting mental wellness. We offer help and hope to individuals and communities. Our work addresses a spectrum of needs that include intervention, prevention and advocacy.



- **5-4-3-2-1 Technique:** Using the 5-4-3-2-1 technique, you will purposefully take in the details of your surroundings using each of your senses. Strive to notice small details that your mind would usually tune out, such as distant sounds, or the texture of an ordinary object.
 - **What are 5 things you can see?**
 - Look for small details such as a pattern on the ceiling, the way light reflects off a surface, or an object you never noticed.
 - **What are 4 things you can feel?**
 - Notice the sensation of clothing on your body, the sun on your skin, or the feeling of the chair you are sitting in. Pick up an object and examine its weight, texture, and other physical qualities.
 - **What are 3 things you can hear?**
 - Pay special attention to the sounds your mind has tuned out, such as a ticking clock, distant traffic, or trees blowing in the wind.
 - **What are 2 things you can smell?**
 - Try to notice smells in the air around you, like an air freshener or freshly mowed grass. You may also look around for something that has a scent, such as a flower or an unlit candle.
 - **What is 1 thing you can taste?**
 - Carry gum, candy, or small snacks for this step. Pop one in your mouth and focus your attention closely on the flavors.
- **Deep Breathing**
 - It's one of the most effective tools. Slow, mindful breaths can bring you back to being present with your body and help calm your nervous system.
- **Box Breathing (4 Square Breathing)**
 - Box breathing is easy and quick to learn. Anyone can practice this technique and it's useful in stressful situations when you want to re-center yourself or improve concentration.
 - **Four Steps to Master Box Breathing**
 - **Step 1:** Breathe in, counting to four slowly. Feel the air enter your lungs.

- **Step 2:** Hold your breath for 4 seconds. Try to avoid inhaling or exhaling for 4 seconds.
- **Step 3:** Slowly exhale through your mouth for 4 seconds.
- **Step 4:** Wait for another 4 seconds before you breathe in again.
- Repeat this exercise until you feel re-centered. Thirty seconds of deep breathing will help you feel more relaxed and in control.

- **Move your Body**

- Panic attacks trigger a stress response in our nervous systems, making us feel like we want to run ("flight"), become angry or agitated ("fight") or we might feel like our body has shut down – also known as "freeze."
- Moving your body can help your system to process the stress chemicals racing around and to discharge them in other ways. This can halt a panic attack in some sufferers.
- Ideas for moving your body in this way include running on the spot, going for a walk, or doing some jumping jacks. Other ideas include playing music and dancing along, which can be very effective for many panic attack sufferers. Try making a playlist of songs you find comforting so you have it on hand for future attacks.
- If you are feeling 'frozen', start to reconnect with your body slowly and gently. Wiggle your toes, place your feet flat on the floor, or rise and lower on your tiptoes for several rounds. Another helpful movement is to stand with both feet firmly on the floor. Keep the lower half of your body still while you swing your arms from side to side through the waist.
- If you find yourself feeling panicked or frozen in a situation that requires you to stay in the room or in your seat, rubbing or massaging your earlobes is proven to be a very helpful way to ground yourself.

- **Body Scan**

- A body scan is a type of mindful meditation with lots of evidence(4) to show it can be helpful in managing panic attacks. A simple body scan practice requires you to sit or lie somewhere comfortable and supportive. You could even lie on the floor.
 - Close your eyes and begin to deepen your breath (slow it down and start taking deeper belly breaths).
 - Begin at the top of your head, observing how it is feeling and whether you can relax your muscles and soften into any sensations you notice.
 - Continue down the body, spending a minute or so on each area, taking note of any feelings of discomfort or pain.
 - Keep breathing deeply. If any pain arises, use your exhale to release it from your body. If it's helpful, you could imagine your inhale filling your body with golden light.
 - Some distracting thoughts are likely to arise, but don't worry about this. Just notice them and let them go.
 - When you've finished scanning your whole body, sit for a minute or two and notice how your body now feels compared with the beginning of your body scan.
 - Take a moment before opening your eyes.

For more techniques and to view videos visit: www.linesforlife.org/grounding-techniques **or scan the code below.**

