Pause and Ground in 5-4-3-2-1 Activity

Sit or recline in a space where you are comfortable. Close or focus your eyes. If you are seated, it may help to sit with your back up against a wall or a partner’s spine.

Inhale and exhale 10 or more times. Notice where you feel your breath in your body. Notice how you feel. Notice your thoughts. Don’t judge anything as “right” or “wrong.” Simply observe. If you need to make adjustments to get more comfortable, do so.

Once you are comfortable and have found your breath, follow this 5-4-3-2-1 technique for grounding:

5 - LOOK: Acknowledge FIVE things you see around you and say them out loud. For example I see a spot on the ceiling. I see a pen. I see a bird.

4 – FEEL: Acknowledge FOUR things you can feel and say them out loud. For example I feel the hair on the back of my neck, I feel the cushion I am sitting on or I feel the breeze across my face.

3 – LISTEN: Acknowledge THREE things you hear. This could be any external sound. If you can hear you’re belly rumbling that counts! Focus on things you can hear outside of your body and say them out loud.

2 – SMELL: Acknowledge TWO things you can smell and say them out loud. Maybe you are outside and can smell the grass, or maybe you are in your house and smell a candle. If you need to take a brief walk to find a scent you could smell soap in your bathroom, or nature outside.

1 – TASTE: Acknowledge ONE thing you can taste. What does the inside of your mouth taste like—gum, coffee, or the sandwich from lunch?

Take one last big belly breath to end.