

GROUNDING WITH TEXTURE & TOUCH

A hands-on grounding activity for moments when anxiety or overwhelm takes over

Touch can give your attention something immediate and concrete to work with. This exercise is not about forcing yourself to calm down. It is about noticing real information - texture, temperature, weight, shape and pressure - so your attention has somewhere to return.

1 - FIND FIVE TEXTURES

Choose five safe everyday objects. They might be fabric, paper, a key, a cushion, clothing, a cool surface or something else you are comfortable touching.

2 - NOTICE THE DETAILS

Is each object smooth, rough, soft, firm, bumpy, ridged, cool, warm, light or heavy?

3 - PUT IT INTO WORDS

Describe what your fingers notice. There is no correct description.

4 - CHOOSE ONE

Stay with one comfortable texture and explore its edges, surface, weight and temperature.

5 - COME BACK TO NOW

If your attention wanders, gently return to one physical detail you can actually feel.

Sensory choice matters: If a texture feels unpleasant, irritating or overwhelming, put it down. Grounding should be adapted to your sensory needs.

THE FIVE-TEXTURE HUNT

Turn your surroundings into a simple search activity.

TEXTURE 1

Object: _____ It feels: _____

TEXTURE 2

Object: _____ It feels: _____

TEXTURE 3

Object: _____ It feels: _____

TEXTURE 4

Object: _____ It feels: _____

TEXTURE 5

Object: _____ It feels: _____

Challenge: Can you find one texture that is softer, one firmer, one cooler, one more patterned and one completely different from the others?

TEXTURE DETECTIVE

Pick one object and investigate it slowly, as though you have never touched it before.

SURFACE

Smooth, rough, furry, woven, ridged, slippery, grainy, rubbery, fluffy, or something else?

TEMPERATURE

Cool, warm, neutral, or changing as you hold it?

WEIGHT & PRESSURE

Light or heavy? What happens when you hold it more loosely or more firmly?

SHAPE & EDGES

Rounded, straight, curved, flexible, firm, sharp-edged, soft-edged?

The smallest detail I noticed was:

MATCH THE WORD TO THE FEELING

You can circle, underline or add your own words.

SOFT fluffy - smooth - padded - velvety - gentle	FIRM solid - hard - dense - rigid - supportive
TEXTURED bumpy - ridged - woven - grainy - patterned	TEMPERATURE cool - warm - neutral - changing
MOVEMENT stretchy - bendy - springy - squishy - still	WEIGHT light - heavy - balanced - uneven

Three words that describe the texture I am holding:

ONE-MINUTE TOUCH FOCUS

This is not a challenge to empty your mind. Your mind can wander - the activity is returning.

0-15 SECONDS

Notice where the object touches your hand. Which fingers are making contact?

15-30 SECONDS

Notice one texture detail: smoothness, bumps, fibres, edges or pressure.

30-45 SECONDS

Notice weight and temperature. Has either changed since you began?

45-60 SECONDS

Notice one final detail. If your thoughts have wandered, simply return to what your fingers can feel.

What kept bringing my attention back?

MAKE A POCKET GROUNDING KIT

Choose small, safe objects with textures that work for you.

SOMETHING SOFT

My choice: _____

SOMETHING FIRM OR SOLID

My choice: _____

SOMETHING WITH A PATTERN OR TEXTURE

My choice: _____

SOMETHING COOL OR SMOOTH

My choice: _____

ONE OBJECT THAT FEELS FAMILIAR

My choice: _____

Where could I keep my grounding kit? bag / desk / bedside / car / work / another place:

Avoid objects that are sharp, breakable, unsafe, strongly scented or likely to create sensory distress.

TEXTURE WHEN I AM OUT & ABOUT

You do not need a special grounding object. Ordinary surroundings can provide neutral touch points.

CLOTHING

Notice a sleeve, cuff, pocket, zip, fabric seam or the material of your shoes.

OBJECTS YOU ALREADY HAVE

Keys, a phone case, bag strap, pen, tissue or another safe item can become a grounding object.

SURFACES

A table, chair arm, wall or other safe surface may give you a stable texture and temperature to notice.

PRESSURE

Instead of rubbing or touching repeatedly, try simply resting your hand against something and noticing steady pressure.

Three easy-to-find grounding textures in places I regularly go:

MY TEXTURE & TOUCH PLAN

Build a grounding approach around your own sensory preferences.

TEXTURES I LIKE

TEXTURES I DISLIKE OR AVOID

OBJECTS THAT FEEL FAMILIAR

WHEN TOUCH GROUNDING HELPS ME MOST

WHEN I WOULD RATHER USE ANOTHER TECHNIQUE

My quickest touch-grounding instruction to myself:

HOW DO I FEEL NOW?

The goal is not necessarily 'calm'. Look for any shift in attention, steadiness or connection to the present.

Before the exercise: 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Now: 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

THE TEXTURE THAT WORKED BEST

A TEXTURE I WOULD NOT CHOOSE AGAIN

WHAT I NOTICED ABOUT MY ATTENTION

Grounding is one coping tool. You can stop, adapt or switch techniques at any time. If anxiety or panic is severe, persistent or significantly affecting daily life, additional professional support may be helpful.