



Grounding and Self-Regulation Exercises

5-4-3-2-1 Grounding Exercise:

- 5: Acknowledge **FIVE** things you see around you
- 4: Acknowledge **FOUR** things you can touch around you
- 3: Acknowledge **THREE** things you hear
- 2: Acknowledge **TWO** things you can smell
- 1: Acknowledge **ONE** thing you can taste

Containment Exercise:

1. Imagine a container that is big enough and the right shape to hold a problem that you are having. This container should close tightly when you want it to close. What size is the container? What shape? What color? Does it have a lock?
2. Imagine that you are putting your problem into this container. Make sure it all goes in there. When you are ready, close the container tightly. Lock it if you need to. You may have to do this several times before you feel that the problem is put away, and then you can move on to something else.
3. Remember that you can open the container when you need to work on the problem, and you can use a real container if you need to...with objects, writings, photos, and so on inside.

Deep Breathing Exercise:

Preface: diaphragmatic breathing (slow abdominal breathing) stimulates your Vagus nerve which can reduce stress, anxiety, and anger by activating the relaxation response of your parasympathetic nervous system.

Practice deep, slow breathing and visualize filling up the lower part of your lungs just above your belly button, then exhale slowly (this is key) to stimulate your Vagus nerve. The more deep breaths, the better.