

# List of Activities

Activities which may help you:

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Disclaimer: Activities provided to you courtesy of I.T.Matters (Aus) network of supportive health professionals. They may or may not help you. Consider carefully. In doubt consult your therapist.

## *Relaxation Exercise*

### **Mountain Posture for Befriending Your Body**

**Informing your guests to close their eyes  
and that they will be doing this exercise 3 times**

1. **Feet:** "Place your feet flat on the floor. And as best you can, feel your feet making contact with the floor"

Pause – Take 1-3 breaths

2. **Center** – "Bring your attention to the centre of your body, just below your navel and around to your lower back. As you are ready, gently bring one hand to the belly, just below your navel. Feel your hand making contact with the core of your body".

Pause – Take 1-3 breaths

3. **Top of the Head** – "Lengthen up through the top of your head. Feel your body lengthening"

**Take 3 breaths before staring again**

#### **Ending:**

**"Gently opening your eyes, if they are closed,  
and make yourself comfortable in your chair"**

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## *Breathing Exercise*

### **Breath Practice 1:**

(Assuming Seated Mountain Pose)

- Take a moment to notice that you are in fact breathing (pause 1-3 breaths)
- Notice that breathing is very natural and is not something that you have to "make" happen (pause 1-3 breaths)
- Your breathing will come to you (pause 1-3 breaths)
- You may be breathing in and out through your nose or mouth, either way is fine (pause 1-3 breaths)
- Take a moment to notice the natural rhythm, the steady flow of your breath just as it is right now (pause 1-3 breaths)

### **Breath Practice 2:**

(Assuming Seated Mountain)

use the text from the Breath Practice 1, then:

- Now, if you like, as another way of noticing your breath, you may place one hand around and just below your navel and your other hand just below your collar bone, over your heart (pause 1-3 breaths)
- See if you can feel some movement around each hand as you breath (pause 1-3 breaths)
- We do not have to control the breath here
- Simply allowing the breath and noticing, being curious about the movement around each hand with each inhale and each exhale (pause 1-3 breaths)
- Take a moment to simply notice any movement around each hand as you breath (pause 1-3 breaths)

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## ***Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing (EMDR)***

A psychologist who attended one of the organised ASCA workshops mentioned EMDR as a technique to help our brain to integrate emotions and logic (ie the two hemispheres of the brain) when in crisis.

Place one finger in front of your eyes and move the finger from side to side. Force your eyes to follow the finger. This eye movement supposedly forces the brain to move from one side of the brain to the other – so if you are stuck in high emotions, it will bring back some logic and reason; and if you are stuck in the analytical mode, it will bring some emotional component. Try it, it might work for you.

## ***Personal boundary exercise***

This exercise is to be done in pairs.

1. The person who is trying to get to know his/her own personal boundaries (ie the distance which is a safe distance with another person before one becomes uncomfortable) and
2. The person who starts at a fair distance and will move forward a step at a time until the first person asks the 2<sup>nd</sup> person to stop moving.

After each step await the 1<sup>st</sup> person to give the go ahead to move forward another step.

Once the 1<sup>st</sup> person feels uncomfortable and no longer allows any step forward, the distance between the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> person defines the personal boundary of the 1<sup>st</sup> person.

This exercise was practised by the group and found very useful to visualise our personal boundary and to recognise some of the feelings when the boundary is trespassed and the space gets too small.

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## Grounding strategies

(Source: <https://www.blueknot.org.au/Feb-2021-newsletter>)

We can all benefit from different strategies for us to use when we're upset or distressed, or when we've been triggered by a situation reminiscent of past trauma. Grounding techniques can help bring us back into the present, to help us feel safe, and out of danger.

There are many strategies to choose from so it is important to see what works for you. Some work with the body and others with the mind but either way the goal is to return to the here and now, as much as possible. These are all ideas – you can choose what suits you.

If you are able, tell yourself that you have been triggered or are having a panic attack or flashback (whatever the circumstance). That this is normal and that you are okay. This can be difficult but do what you can to reassure yourself that the bad things happened in the past and you survived.

Try and focus on the present. Open your eyes and look around you. Notice what is around you – colours, objects, people. Listen to the sounds – birds, traffic, voices

Notice your body – your feet on the ground, the chair under you or your clothes against your skin.

Stand up, if you can and put your feet firmly on the ground. Try and walk mindfully – noticing your feet on the ground and the way your legs move, your arms swing, your breath as you walk, the air on your face.

Think about 5 things you can see, 4 things you can hear, 3 things you can touch, 2 things you can smell and take 1 deep slow breath – a mindful breath.

If possible, move around – try and jump up and down or run on the spot. Clap your hands together or rub your arms and legs. Remind yourself of where you are and what is actually happening.

You might find it helpful to carry a grounding object with you – something which is soft and comforting or which has a special meaning for you.

Reach out for support if you can and want to – a trusted friend, a neighbour or a safe family member – someone who you can speak with and who can help you feel safe and nurtured. For help and support you can call the **Blue Knot Helpline and Redress Support Service on 1300 657 380 Monday-Sunday 9-5 AEDT**

And remember to be gentle with yourself, when the flashback or panic attack is over. Do what helps you feel calm – for some it's a warm bath or music, for others it's a gentle walk in nature. As always you choose.

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