

Grounding script (4 minutes)

The work of Child Death Review is an important way to honor children gone too soon as well as their families. We continue to work toward preventing tragedies like these in our community. I want to also acknowledge that reading and discussing these cases is very difficult. Our minds may be swirling with our many responsibilities, demands and other daily stressors.

Before we begin our case reviews, I'd like to take us through a simple grounding exercise to help us get in the right frame of mind for the task ahead. This basic type of grounding uses the senses in a 5-4-3-2-1 method of anxiety reduction to focus our intentions and calm us.

Let's begin:

Get comfortable in your chair, with your feet flat on the floor and your arms and hands relaxed.

Breathe slowly in and out from your diaphragm, noticing your stomach moving in and out with each breathe as you deeply inhale, hold for a few seconds, and then slowly exhale.

Feel your body relax as you do these deep breaths.

Now let's work on grounding ourselves:

5: Acknowledge **five** things you see around you. These could be anything: a pen, a window, a notebook, etc. Name them to yourself in your head.

4: Acknowledge **four** things you can touch around you. Your bottom in your chair, the table or desk you are sitting at, your clothing, etc.

3: Acknowledge **three** things you can hear around you. These could be any sounds: a fan, the hum of an appliance, a pet breathing or a bird outside. Focus on sounds outside of your body.

2: Acknowledge **two** things you can smell. Maybe your coffee or tea. Perhaps an air freshener or the smell of your laundry detergent on your shirt.

1: Acknowledge **one** thing you can taste. What flavor do you notice in your mouth: gum, coffee, maybe the almonds you were snacking on?

End with a few more deep breaths, really expelling all of your breath out on each exhale.

In Conclusion

Taking a minute to do an exercise like this one should have helped to calm and refocus our minds that may be racing through much of the day. Now we can focus on the difficult conversation ahead with more intention and clarity. Use this technique anytime you need to ground yourself and refocus your busy mind.