



Overwhelm, Threat Responses and Grounding

One of the most helpful and important ways in beginning to develop new ways of responding to distress is to support yourself to become more grounded.

Threat responses and feeling trapped or stuck with no sense of a way out leads to overwhelm and being flooded with feelings and thoughts.

These threat responses involve hormonal responses that cause cortisol and adrenalin that flood the body.



Grounding and Restoring Regulation

Attending to your breathing is the most helpful place to start to ground yourself

Start by getting to a safe space then slow things down and breathe

The goal here is to start to regulate your responses more so you can start to feel less overwhelmed and scared. **Start by breathing in through your mouth for 4 seconds, hold for 3 seconds and breathe out for 6 seconds.**

This process will enable you to move back into being in the here and now and feeling safer and more able to stay with what is happening for you and with others even if just now you aren't always sure of what has caused the triggered response.

Embodied Safety

It helps to reconnect with feeling safe in your body and feeling the ground beneath your feet. To do this try these simple actions, some will feel better for you than others so don't worry if they don't feel right for you:

- Push your feet into the floor as you sit in your chair
- Stand and push against the wall and breath in and out slowly
- Push your hands together
- Hold or stroke your arms and legs and head
- Try changing the sensory input so lie down in a quiet darkened room if this feels Ok
- Go outside and lean against a tree or spend time with a pet if these are options
- Have a warm bath and light some candles [if this feels good for you]
- Have someone you trust give you a long firm hug or sit with you and hold you without having to talk