

Coping with Distress

Save this to your phone for when you need it most

1 Diaphragmatic breathing

With a hand on your tummy, breathe in through your nose steadily and slowly and then exhale through your mouth, aiming for a longer exhale. Repeat. If your mind is wandering you could also count your breaths or the number of seconds that you inhale and exhale for.

2 Dropping Anchor (Remember the steps as ACE)

Acknowledge Notice and label your thoughts, feelings or memories. E.g. I'm having a flashback and feeling anxiety in my chest.

Connect with your body. E.g Breathe, stretch, move, push your fingertips together.

Engage in the world around you. Look around at where you are and carry on your day.

3 Calm Place Visualisation

Close your eyes. Bring to mind your calm place. Use all your senses to make it vivid. Notice what you can see, what you can hear, how it feels to be there and what you want to do in your calm place today. Take steady breaths,

Feeling numb or shut down, rather than anxious?

If you're feeling foggy, frozen or far away, your system needs gentle waking, not calming, so try these ideas instead. They will all help you come back into your body.

Look around slowly. Turn your head, name what you see. Or look and name 5 green things.

Stand up or move your body. E.g. Press your feet into the floor, push your palms together. Stretch, go for a walk or do some exercise.

Make yourself a drink or snack. Ideally something with a strong taste or a crunch.