

Techniques for the Management of Symptoms of PTSD SESSION # T101079
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No Conflict of Interest to Declare

I. Dissociation symptoms:

Grounding

1. Take a deep breath and assess your level of tension.
2. Look around you and name (say out loud if possible)
 - a. 5 things you see
 - b. 5 things you hear
 - c. 5 things you are touching

(If you can't name five different things, you can repeat, as long as you take a moment to really see/hear/feel each thing)

3. Then name 4 of each, 3 of each, 2 of each, 1 of each.
4. Take another deep breath and assess your tension. Repeat if necessary.

Shortened Versions of Grounding

1. Start at three things instead of five.
2. Focus on weight of body on your feet, and focus on what you can hear.
3. Look around the office and name as many things as you can that are red/yellow/square/round.(any characteristic you choose)

II. Flashbacks:

Four Step Method (from Yvonne Dolan):

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| 1. Name what's happening. | "This is a flashback" |
| 2. What is similar to something from the past? | "What is the trigger?" |
| 3. What is different? | "Grounding to the present." |
| 4. What do I need to do to take care of myself? | "Self care." |

III. Anxiety:

1. Box breathing.

- a. Picture a square or box in your mind. The four stages of your breathing are equal, like the sides of the square. Breathe in for a count of 3, hold it in for a count of 3, breathe out for a count of 3, hold it out for a count of 3.

2. Leg movements

- a. Note if one or both legs are moving, sometimes shaking, sometimes kicking. (either you or the patient can observe this)
- b. Put both feet on the ground and simulate walking or running while sitting down, or even keep heels on the ground and raise forefoot as if walking.
- c. Or stand up and briefly run or walk on the spot.

3. Self containment strategies (from Peter Levine)

- a. Arm crossing – put your right hand across your chest, above your heart, then put your left hand across your body to hold on to your upper arm. Breathe slowly
- b. Put your right hand over your heart and your left hand on your forehead. Breathe slowly. When you feel some shift in your energy, or more calm, move your left hand to your belly. Sit for a few moments breathing in and out, noticing the movement of your belly.