



# Wellbeing Pack

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Registered Charity 1174754

**PoetsIN**  
The Creative  
Mental Health Charity



If you are struggling with intense emotions, dark thoughts, thoughts of self-harm or suicide, and feel you are in crisis or unable to keep yourself safe, please call the **first responder service on 111 option 2 (UK)**.

#### Other useful numbers:

##### UK

**999** Emergency services

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**116 123** The Samaritans

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**0300 304 7000** Saneline

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**0808 808 4994** The Mix (under 25's only)

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**0300 330 0630** Switchboard (LGBTQ+)

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**Text YM to 85258** - Young Minds

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#### How to use this pack:

This pack comes with three different techniques that are instrumental to reducing emotional intensity. Depending on how you are feeling, you may need to use one area, or all three. PoetsIN also offer another form of mental health help using creative writing techniques as a way to reduce the symptoms of mental illness. If this is something you are open to, please get in touch with us. The contact details are provided at the bottom of this pack.

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**Distraction ideas** - Should you find yourself too overwhelmed to do more focused techniques, distraction is a good way to focus your attention on something else. We have provided a ton of ideas, collated by the PoetsIN Team. The list is full of things we all use to distract ourselves when we are too overwhelmed to confront our mood.

**Grounding ideas** - Grounding is a superb way to bring your focus to the here and now, the present moment. People with intense emotion, flashbacks, detachment, or dissociation will find these techniques useful. We've included some longer techniques alongside some quick ones that can be performed anywhere.

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**Soothing ideas** - Self-soothing techniques are something that can be practiced daily to help regulate and relax. We've compiled a list of suggestions that we, as a team, have all used from time-to-time.

Not all ideas will be suitable for everyone, nor will every idea work for everyone. However, a number of these ideas and techniques will work for everyone. Try as many as you can and highlight the ones that work so you can use them when the need arises.



# Distraction

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- Read a book
- Read a magazine
- Watch a film
- Binge watch a series on netflix
- Journal (art or words)
- Do something creative
- Go for a walk
- Call a friend or loved one
- Colouring
- Do some house chores
- Reorganise your work area or your living space
- Make lists
- Draw or sketch
- Play video games
- Play board/card games (solitaire / mahjong)
- Play a mobile game
- Watch some comedy
- Take a nap
- Go out and socialise
- Sit in the sun (if possible)
- Message a friend
- Start a new hobby
- Learn something new
- Learn to cook a new recipe
- Use putty or stress balls
- Hold a worry stone
- Fidget toys
- Play sports
- Blow bubbles
- Popping bubble wrap
- Sing
- Puzzles
- Do some simple maths equations
- Take a piece of paper and fold it in half and in half again and repeat.
- Create a music playlist and listen to it.



# Soothing

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- Massage some lotion into your hands.
- Give yourself a massage
- Apply some moisturising lip balm
- Light scented candles / incense sticks
- Listen to your favourite 'happy/relaxing' music
- Try some breathing exercises
- Try meditation
- Mindfulness
- Do some journaling - writing or art journaling
- Hug someone
- Take a relaxing bath with your favourite bath bomb, bath melt, salts, or bubble bath.
- Lay underneath a soft blanket
- Write or say out loud some positive self affirmations.  
Eg: "i am good enough," "i am worthy."
- Facemasks
- Make your favourite comfort food
- Stroke your animals
- Drink water
- Make your favourite hot drink
- State the emotions you are feelings as words
- Get really comfortable and have a nap
- Take a hot shower
- Hold a worry stone
- Run one or two fingers over your lips lightly  
(this releases feel good chemicals)
- Use some aromatherapy balm on your pulse points
- Foot spa
- Give yourself a manicure
- Paint your nails
- Have a pamper evening
- Give yourself some alone time in a quiet environment
- Use dim lighting
- Take a social media break
- Switch off your phone
- Asmr
- Repeat mantras eg: "this will pass"





# Grounding Techniques

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## What is 'grounding?'

Grounding is a way to bring yourself back into the present, the here and now. It aligns your body and your mind in the moment. Those who struggle with mental ill health often find themselves 'stuck' in their own mind; whether that be due to flashbacks, due to intense emotions, panic and anxiety, or due to disconnect and dissociation. Grounding helps to reduce those episodes and 'grounds' you firmly in the present moment.

There are different types of grounding. It could be as simple as some deep breaths, quick techniques, or more formal techniques. Generally, grounding will take into account your five senses, and ask you to pay attention to physical sensations caused by the grounding activity.

Not all grounding techniques will work for everyone, so it's recommended that you try as many as you can to find the ones that work for you. Make note of the ones that do work so you have them in your mental health toolkit.

This sheet will provide some longer, more formal techniques, and some quick ones you can do wherever you are.



## 5-4-3-2-1 Method

When you are stuck in your own emotions and they're causing discomfort, using the 5-4-3-2-1 method will ground you into the present, reducing your emotional intensity. This method helps you take in the details of your surroundings. Noticing those small details and focusing on each of the five senses really does draw you back into the present.



What are 5 things you can see? Look for small details, patterns on objects, something you've never noticed before, or the way that light reflects off your favourite object.

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What are 4 things you can feel? Take your time to notice the feel of things around you. Your clothes against a certain part of your body, put your hands in some water and notice how the temperature feels against your skin, pick up a smooth stone, or a rough rock and notice how it feels.

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What are 3 things you can hear? Take a moment to hear sounds you usually pay no attention to. Clocks ticking, the fizz of your drink, dripping taps, singing birds, traffic, wind, leaves.

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What are 2 things you can smell? What can you smell in the air around you? Fresh cut grass? Rain? Air freshener? Take a moment to find things around you that may have a distinctive smell, like a bunch of flowers, a scented candle, or your favourite body lotion.

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What is 1 thing you can taste? Carry chewing gum, sour sweets, strong mints. Pop one in your mouth and focus on its taste and how it feels in your mouth.

## Categorising

Choose three categories and list as many things as you can within each category.

- Films

- TV programmes

- Cars

- Animals

- Fruits

- Vegetables

- Colours

- Countries

- Cities

- Books

- Famous People

- Sports teams / different types of sports

For an extra challenge, try listing the things within your chosen categories alphabetically.

## Body Awareness

This technique will ground you into the here and now by focusing your attention to the sensations within your body. Pay close attention to the physical sensations created by each of the steps below.

1. Take 5 deep breaths through your nose and exhale them through puckered lips.
2. Take off your shoes and socks and place both feet on the floor. Wiggle your toes. Curl and uncurl them a handful of times. Take a few moments to notice the sensations within your feet.
3. Stomp your feet on the ground several times and pay close attention to the sensations in your feet and legs as your feet come into contact with the ground.
4. Clench your hands into fists and release the tension. Repeat ten times.
5. Press your palms together and increase the pressure between them. Pay attention to the sensation of tension in your hands and arms.
6. Rub together your palms quickly. Notice the sound it creates and focus your attention on the warmth it generates.
7. Reach your hands up above your head, as if you're trying to touch the sky. Hold this stretch for 5 seconds. Bring your arms down and repeat 3 times. Finally, let your arms relax by your side.
8. Take 5 more deep breaths and notice the feeling of calmness in your body.

## Short Mental Exercises

These grounding exercises are perfect when you are short on time or are struggling to perform longer tasks.

- List all of the objects you can see in the room.
- Describe the steps needed to perform an activity you know well. For example: Driving a car, riding a bike, making a cup of tea, cooking your favourite meal.
- Count backwards from 100 in 7's.
- Pick up an object and describe it in detail: what colour is it? What texture does it have? What size and weight is it? Does it smell of anything? Are there any more details you can list?
- Spell your full name and the names of three other people backwards
- Name all of your family members, their ages (brownie points for their date of birth!), and one of their favourite activities.
- Read something backwards, word by word (or for a challenge, letter by letter). Do this for at least 3 minutes.
- Think of an object and draw it in your mind. If you find this hard, draw it in the air with your finger. Start simple with your home, your car, or an animal - once you get the hang of it, try more complex and detailed objects.

## Other Ad-hoc grounding techniques

Whilst trying all of the following, be aware of the sensations caused by each activity. Describe it to yourself, or out loud if it helps to stay focused. This will help to ground you in the present moment.

- Try smelling strong smells. Aromatherapy diffusers are great for this!
- Walk outside on the grass without shoes on.
- Splash cold water in your face.
- Take a cold (ish) shower.
- Hold an ice cube in your hand.
- Snap an elastic band against your wrist (caution to be taken with this task).
- Call a loved one.
- Put some nature sounds on.
- Read out loud.
- Listen to music and sing along loudly.
- Put your hands under running water.
- Grab an article of clothing, a blanket, towel, and knead it in your hands and brush it against your cheek.
- Rub your hands over a textured surface. (Eg: a piece of furniture or carpet.)
- Pop some bubble wrap.
- Squeeze a stress ball or putty.
- Massage your temples.
- Stroke your animal.
- Drink a hot or cold drink.
- Light a scented candle or incense stick.
- Bite into a lemon or lime.
- Suck a mint or chew gum.
- Take a bite of a pepper or something spicy.
- Eat chocolate - let it melt in your mouth.
- Colouring.
- Do a puzzle, word search, or sudoku.
- Stretch your body.
- Dance.
- Count the number of items in a room, or the number of tiles on the wall/floor.
- Take 10 slow deep breaths. In through your nose and out through your mouth.





For more information and support,  
email us at **[info@poetsin.com](mailto:info@poetsin.com)**

or join our private Facebook Community  
**[facebook.com/groups/poetsin](https://facebook.com/groups/poetsin)**.



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The Eco Innovation Centre, Peterscourt, City Road  
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*Or contact us to send us a bank transfer.*

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