

Ideas to Facilitate Grounding

1. Visualize internal safe place.
2. Visualize setting aside overwhelming memory/emotion/experience
3. Change sensory experience/input:
 - Sight: Allow yourself to see through your eyes, look at a picture, read a book
 - Touch: Allow yourself to feel the chair you are sitting on, touch ice, hold a smooth stone
 - Sound: Talk to someone, listen to music, TV
 - Taste: Eat something
 - Smell: Perfume, favorite scent
4. Concentrate, become absorbed in an activity
5. Express something verbally-go to the expressive room and yell, if necessary
6. Write in your journal
7. Do safe anger work with a staff member
8. Breathing exercises
9. Relaxation exercises
10. Self-hypnosis
11. Connect with internal support/resource
12. Visualize a "STOP" sign
13. Use positive affirmations
14. Connect with the here and now
15. Look into a mirror and talk to yourself
16. Transfer your feeling/memory into a safe "container"
17. Monitor self-talk, change negative to positive
18. Identify cognitive distortions and replace with counter-statements
19. Dance
20. Repeat a grounding phrase: "I'm here right now."
21. Give yourself permission to address one problem at a time ("Rome wasn't built in a day.")
22. Identify(in writing) all problem's you're facing. Then divide them into two groups:
 - 1) Those you have control over,
 - 2) Those you cannot control. Concentrate on only those that can be controlled.
23. Decide what is important and what is not
24. Keep it simple (KIS)
25. Hold a safe object (smooth stone, watch, cup or ring, etc.)
26. Pray (e.g. Serenity Prayer)
27. Exercise
28. Draw
29. Find a safe person
30. Listen to a tape of your therapist
31. Listen to a tape of self-affirmations
32. IDENTIFY YOUR TRIGGER

1. **AFFIRMATIONS:** List 10-15 individualized affirmations that you know would be important for you to believe. You do not have to believe them at this time, but should be willing to "consider them." You will use affirmations throughout your stay on a daily basis. Three affirmations will be expected of you during the morning and evening reflections group. It is highly recommended and considered almost imperative that you read your list 3 TIMES A DAY. An easy way to get these in, is to make a routine of doing so before or after meal times or around medication schedules so that it becomes part of your 'necessary daily activities.' We also suggest you post a few where you will see them everyday either in passing, or in using a journal, etc.

Should one have trouble writing affirmations a list can be found in the reflections group notebook to help start the process. Again, remember the affirmations do not have to be completely true for you at the time they are being written and even spoken.

2. **SAFE SCENE:** Before doing any type of work in any of the programs, you should have an effective and functional safe place to use. Write a detailed description of a scene or setting that would feel safe and soothing to you., be as specific in detail as possible. Make a drawing representing the safe scene. Again, it is highly recommended and considered almost imperative, that you PRACTICE YOUR SCENE THREE TIMES A DAY. Again, it is suggested that you make this part of your daily routine so that it isn't forgotten.

Like other techniques for containment and grounding, "safe scene" visualization enables an individual to nurture and soothe him or herself and to practice effective control over their feelings and thoughts. Safe scene work utilizes an individual's natural talent for dissociation. When doing safe scene work and individual chooses to experience internal stimuli which is safe, soothing and nurturing. With practice an individual can soothe him or herself at will and exercise control over the spontaneous dissociation and flashbacks that survivors of trauma often experience.

For this to be effective, it is important to incorporate all of the senses, visual, hearing, smell, touch, and kinesthetic (standing, walking sitting, lying down). The more senses involved, the more functional the scene will be. There are no limits to creativity or imagination an individual may employ in their safe scene work. It can be an actual place, an imaginary place or a combination of the two. They may include items within that can contribute to an even greater feeling of safety and security, such as walls, moats, containment images and safe animals. NOTE: It is best not to include other real people in an individual's safe scene image because the security and soothing derived from the safe scene should not be dependent on other and should not reinforce a dependency for safety and soothing on others. Rather, safe scene work reinforces and individual's ability to take responsibility for their own soothing.

3. **SAFETY CONTRACT:** Everyone on NTC must contract for safety upon admission. The expectation is you will be honest and open regarding your ability to keep yourself safe. A safety contract guide is provided for you should you need to add any special words or phrases to the one signed at the time of your admission. COPY IN YOUR OWN HANDWRITING. If you feel you are unable to contract for any level of safety (the minimum is the ability to approach staff before acting on urges) please state this. There is no punishment for being unable to contract, at the same time please keep in mind that there are NO LOOPHOLES in the contract you signed at the time of your admission.

CONTAINMENT IMAGERY: Containment imagery can be invaluable for anyone dealing with overwhelming emotions, thoughts, memories, or urges. Containment provides temporary storage of these things until you are better able to deal with or address them. It is recommended you develop some sort of containment imagery for yourself. If you prefer to make something more tangible feel free to make a container to place a word, picture or journal entry in. This can help you practice and enforce your visualization of containing your work and any anxiety surrounding it.

GROUNDING TECHNIQUES: Effective grounding techniques that you put into practice are imperative. For your treatment here to be worthwhile, you will need to be able to ground yourself when necessary and maintain a "here and now" focus while in groups. You have been provided with a list of suggested grounding techniques. GROUNDING TECHNIQUES NEED TO BE READY AT ALL TIMES. In order for the unit staff to help you in times of difficulty in grounding, you will need to write a 911 card. Hanging this card on your door will make it easy for staff to locate and make use of at all times.

Example "911" Card

Grounding	"911"	Affirmation
Breath Visualize Safe Scene Look at a Picture Hold Safe Object Feel Chair Get Safe Person Walk Music Journal Talk with Someone		"I am safe" "This will pass" "Feeling can't hurt me" "I'm O.K." "This is 2004" "I'm at Del Amo Hospital"