

## **Grounding Techniques and Coping Skills**

Most of my clients inquire about grounding tools and coping skills. I wanted to list some of these techniques to help clients be able to manage their symptoms more effectively. I also wanted to share about the differences between grounding tools and coping skills. I have my clients be aware, on any feeling chart, where they are at on a 0-10 scale ( 0 being no emotional disturbance or neutral and 10 being the highest level of intensity of that feeling). So let's say a client was experiencing anxiety: a "0" would be calm and a "10" would be a full blown panic attack. If you assess that you are at a 8, 9, or 10 on any scale then you are in survival mode and you need a grounding skill to help lower your level on that scale. I find that clients have more success self regulating when they use a grounding skill if they are in survival mode. If you assess that you are a 5, 6, or 7 on a scale then you are in emotional brain and you can use either a coping skill or a grounding skill. Anything lower than a 5 on a scale you can choose to utilize either a coping skill or a grounding skill. Like any other skill, it is important to practice either grounding or coping skills. It will be more useful if you have tried these skills and know which ones work for you and which ones do not and if you have practiced then when you find yourself needing to use it, you already know how. All grounding skills are coping skills, however, not all coping skills are grounding skills.

### **Here are a list of grounding tools**

Deep Breaths

Holding Ice

Dunking your head in cold water

Taking a cold shower

Making a snow angel

Taking a walk and counting your steps (possibly barefoot)

Taking off your shoes and rubbing them on the carpet and noticing that sensation

Putting pressure for 10 seconds on your forehead with palm of your hand and counting to 10.

Putting pressure for 10 seconds on the top of your head with your hand and counting to 10.

Tracing the lines in the palm of one hand and noticing how the sensation is different switching hands.

Notice 5 things you can see and name those objects in detail, acknowledge 4 things around you that you can touch and paying attention to those sensations, acknowledge 3 things around you that you can hear, 2 things that you can smell, and acknowledge 1 positive thing around you that you can taste.

Pet a pet.

Chewing a healthy food that is crunchy

Using essential oils

### **Coping Tools**

Listening to music (either positive or relaxing)

Read a book

Watch favorite TV show/movie

Call a friend/supportive family member

Any kind of positive distraction

Positive meditation

Journal

Enjoy a hobby

Think positively: "I can get through this." "I can handle this." "It's going to be okay."