PRACTICE THE ART OF DOING NOTHING

BEATING BURNOUT

212° Careers
Leadership and Career Coaching
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A R T I C L E

Grounding is a technique to help you relieve stress and anxiety. When something is grounded in a very literal sense, it is connected to the ground. It's stationary. As an anxiety treatment, grounding means you connect to the present moment. All your energy is focused on your physical environment and how you sense it right now.

This treats anxiety because it takes thoughts away from a place of worry. That's what anxiety is. It's worrying, stressing out, and obsessing over a situation, perceived or real. Grounding brings you back to how you are sensing your "right now" moment.

Here are a few sensory grounding techniques you can use in many situations for instant anxiety relief.

Give Your Hands a Bath

You can calm your mind and refocus your attention by placing your hands under running water. If you have control of the water temperature, you want to move between warm and cold sensations every 30 seconds or so.

Feel the water on your hands and engage in what's happening. Rub your hands together. What does the sensation feel like? Go from cold to warm and back to cold. Imagine your anxiety washing away as the water passes over your hands and skin.

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SENSORY GROUNDING TECHNIQUES FOR RELIEF FROM ANXIETY

Consciously Listen

The modern world we live in is busy, hectic ... and noisy. Without consciously doing it, your mind and nervous system team up to block out most of what's going on around you. When you subconsciously realize what you're hearing isn't important or can be a distraction, it's ignored.

This grounding technique for treating anxiety has you consciously listening. Close your eyes and listen. What do you hear? Listen deeply and intensely. What are the different sounds you're hearing? Identify each and every one of them and totally experience them.

What Do You See?

Your visual environment can be very crowded. The idea here is to focus on one very specific object. It should be close to you if at all possible. What does it look like? What are its colors? Is it moving or stationary? Describe to your mind exactly every detail of what it is you see.

These are three simple but effective ways of treating anxiety. You can use them as soon as you start feeling anxious. They move your focus from what's causing your anxiety to what you consciously engage with your senses. Do this with any of your five senses when you feel your anxiety level is threatening to get out of control.