

Grounding Myself

Katrina Fish

BEFORE YOU READ: What do you think it means to be “grounded”?

Everyone Is Different

Mental and emotional health is different for everyone. Some people feel stress, and can still go about their daily life. Others find that stress leads to anxiety or depression. Everyone is different! No one’s mental health or their strategies for coping are 100 percent perfect.

There are different factors that can overwhelm our emotional health. Sometimes we may not even realize it. It doesn’t always have to be a noticeable issue, like a death in the family or losing a job. Sometimes it can be very subtle, like managing normal, everyday challenges in your family, school, or community. You might have a difficult boss or a huge quiz coming up at school. Maybe you’re not sure what to do next in life or where you will get the money to pay the rent.

I deal with daily anxiety and depression daily as a result of my stress. Where does my stress come from? For me, it comes from working a full-time job and trying to balance that with school.

What Can I Try Right Now?

Try this “5-4-3-2-1” grounding technique developed by Dr. Sarah Allen. If you feel yourself getting anxious, name:

- 5 things you can see
- 4 things you can touch
- 3 things you can hear
- 2 things you can smell
- 1 thing you can taste

Source: <https://drsarahallen.com/7-ways-to-calm/>

There Is Hope

A common misconception about anxiety and depression is that you can just turn them off like a light switch.

While it’s not possible to switch off my depression, I have found healthy ways to cope with it and make it easier to manage.

The best coping mechanism for me is a technique called “grounding.” Sarah Allen, a psychologist, defines grounding as focus on “what is happening to you physically, instead of being trapped by the thoughts in your mind that are causing you to feel anxious.” When I start to feel anxious, I work on grounding myself. My grounding technique is to name five things around me that I can see, taste, hear, smell, or touch. Focusing my attention on this task overrides the feeling of anxiety because I am working hard to use my five senses. Therefore, I’m grounding myself.

I want others like myself who suffer from anxiety and depression to know that they are not alone. Never hesitate to reach out for help! There are coping strategies that might work for you!

AFTER YOU READ:

1. What type of factors might cause anxiety and depression?
2. What is the author’s strategy for dealing with her anxiety and depression? How does it work?

Katrina Fish is a student at Norwich Regional Adult Education in Norwich, CT. She enjoys using her artistic ideas during her free time to make things. She is also looking forward to creating her own small business while working on finishing school and graduating with her High School Diploma.

