

HeadFIT

Grounding Techniques

Lt Cdr Hugo Mitchell-Heggs, SO2 Human Performance, Royal Navy Submarine Service

Sometimes thoughts and feelings can be overwhelming. It can feel like your head is somewhere else and you're not present in the room. In order to feel calm and rational so that you can perform at your best, you can use grounding techniques. These will bring you back to your body and the physical here and now.

Sit on the floor against the wall. Put both your feet and the palms of your hands, flat on the floor. Notice how this feels, the sensation of all the points where you're anchored to the floor. Try drinking a glass of very cold water and notice how this feels. Or hold your hands under cold running tap to let the sensation jolt you out of your head and back into your body.

You could use the 5-4-3-2-1 technique. It's this in your head name five things you can see. Four things that you can hear. Three things that you can touch. Two things that you can smell. And then take one slow, deep breath. Try turning some sort of grounding object over in your hand. How does it feel when you move it around? It really doesn't matter what it is. You just need to enjoy the sensation of moving it around and really focus on it. Move your body in a way that feels comfortable for you. Stretch slowly.

Do this to disrupt your thoughts and remind yourself what it feels like to be in your body. Experiment, notice and focus on these physical sensations and find what works for you.