

## **Grounding Exercise for Someone in Acute Stress**

1. Mention you notice they are very upset. Ask if they would be interested in a calming exercise so you can better help them.
2. If they agree, ask them to get into a position that will be comfortable for a few minutes. Encourage them to sit.
3. Ask them to list 5 things they see RIGHT NOW. They can repeat items to come up with 5.
4. Ask them to name 5 things they hear RIGHT NOW.
5. Ask them to name 5 things they can feel in their body RIGHT NOW.

The idea is use this exercise to bring someone from a flashback or panic state to the basics of this moment. For this reason it is helpful to do this exercise without the sense of smell, which is directly linked with memory. You can repeat this exercise as many times as needed. One variation is to ask them to count their fingers and/or toes. If they lose count, it is fine, simply start again. When they are ready, move on to the issues they called to speak to you about. If they are interested, offer this exercise as a self-calming tool.

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