



FROM TRIGGER TO TRANQUILITY:



Breathing and Grounding Techniques for PTSD and CPTSD

MOON MAIDEN MEDITATION

Living with PTSD or CPTSD can make everyday situations feel overwhelming.

Symptoms like anxiety, flashbacks, and dissociation can take you out of the present moment and make it hard to feel grounded.

But the good news is that **breathing and grounding techniques** can help you find calm, stay present, and regain control when triggers arise.

This guide is designed to give you practical tools to help manage these symptoms—whether you're feeling hypervigilant, anxious, or disconnected.

Trauma often keeps the body in a state of fight-or-flight, making it difficult to stay present.

Grounding and **breathing techniques** work by calming the nervous system, helping you reconnect with your body and regain control when triggers arise.

These simple yet powerful techniques can be used anytime, anywhere, to bring you back to the present moment and help you feel more at ease.

This practice ***calms the mind and body***, giving you a moment to pause and find your center before responding to a trigger.

Take Five Breathing

A SIMPLE YET EFFECTIVE METHOD TO CENTER YOURSELF IS TAKE FIVE BREATHING.

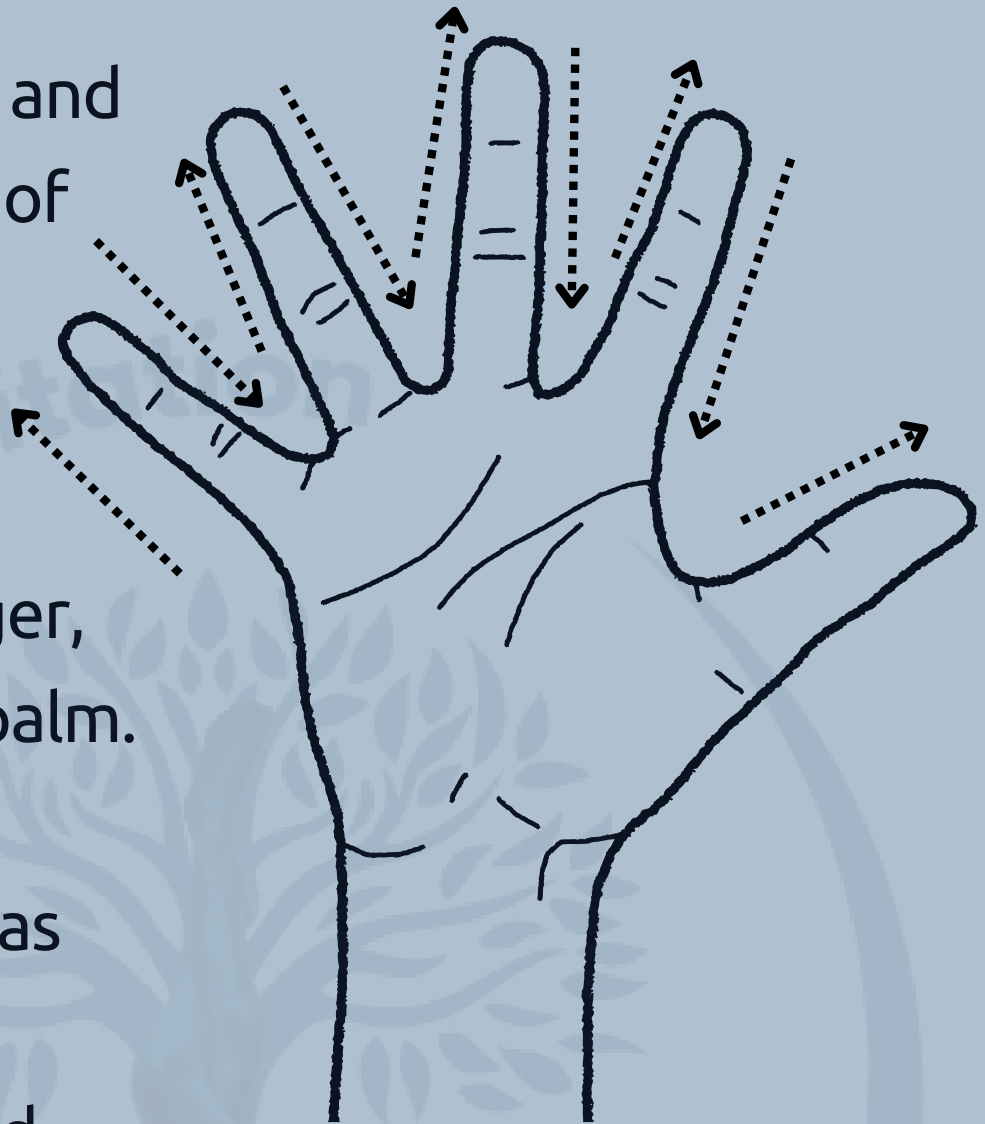
When PTSD/CPTSD symptoms arise, especially feelings of anxiety or panic, **Take Five Breathing** can help regulate your nervous system by slowing down your breath.

This practice ***calms the mind and body***, giving you a moment to pause and find your center before responding to a trigger.

Take Five Breathing

Open one palm and place it in front of you.

- Using your pointer finger, trace your palm.
- **Breathe in** as you trace upwards and **breathe out** as you trace downwards.



Repeat this for each of your fingers.

It's a wonderful way to engage both your mind and body in a calming activity.

SHAPE BREATHING FOR CALM AND FOCUS

This section introduces three types of **Shape Breathing** techniques that use visual patterns to guide breathing.

These exercises help regulate breath in a controlled and rhythmic manner, making them especially useful for individuals dealing with PTSD or CPTSD, where **hypervigilance** or **anxiety** can disrupt focus.

INFINITY BREATHING

just
BREATHE

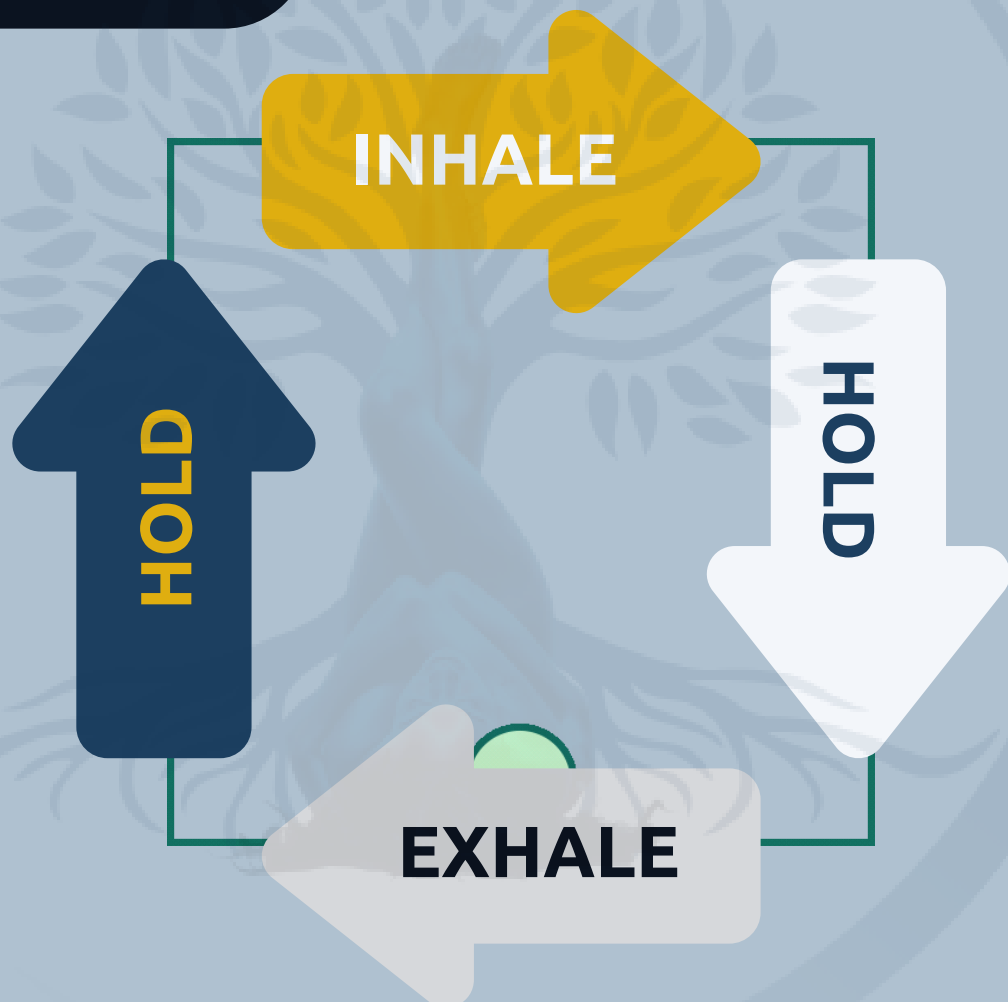
Trace the Infinity Symbol, **INHALING** along the gold arrows and **EXHALING** along the blue arrows.



SQUARE BREATHING

inhale
exhale

- **INHALE** for 4 counts
- **HOLD** for 4 counts
- **EXHALE** for 4 counts, and
- **HOLD** for 4 counts. Repeat.



Shape Breathing - Triangle Breathing

TRIANGLE BREATHING

Just
Breathe

- **INHALE** for 3 counts
- **HOLD** for 3 counts, and
- **EXHALE** for 3 counts.

- **REPEAT**



EXHALE

Benefit of Shape Breathing:

Shape Breathing helps to create calm and focus, particularly when experiencing heightened stress or anxiety.

For those with PTSD or CPTSD, the structured breathing rhythm can reduce ***hypervigilance and bring attention back to the present moment.***

These techniques are also excellent for co-regulation with children, offering a simple and visual way to practice together during times of stress or overwhelm.

Now that you've practiced **Shape Breathing**, let's move on to techniques that are more engaging and playful, like **Bee Breathing** and **Bubble Breathing**, which are great for co-regulation with children.

FUN BREATHING TECHNIQUES FOR CALM AND CONNECTION

This section introduces playful breathing techniques that are not only calming but also engaging—making them ideal for use with children.

These practices offer a lighthearted way to practice breath control while promoting shared relaxation and connection, which is key for individuals with PTSD or CPTSD who may experience disconnection or dissociation.

Bee Breathing: *Vibrating hums help soothe the nervous system and quiet the mind.*



Bee Breathing:

Take a deep breath and exhale through your nose while humming like a bee.

Candle Breathing: *Visualization of blowing out candles helps with controlled, mindful exhalation.*



Candle Breathing:

Imagine blowing out a candle on a cupcake. Take a deep breath and gently blow out.

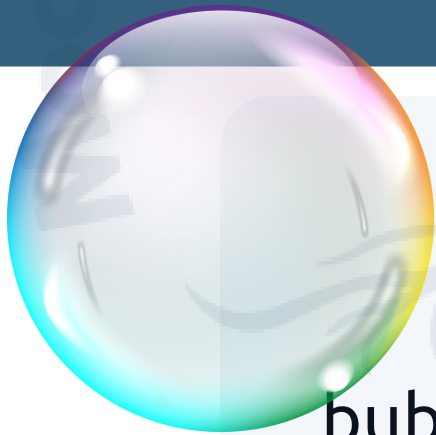
Dragon Breathing: *A powerful exhale that mimics a dragon's breath, releasing built-up tension.*



Dragon Breathing:

Channel your inner dragon! Take a deep breath and roar as you breathe out.

Bubble Breathing: *Encourages deep, slow breaths by imagining blowing bubbles, which can be both calming and playful.*



Bubble Breathing:

Pretend you're blowing a bubble. Inhale deeply and exhale slowly to create a big, beautiful bubble.

Benefit of Fun Breathing for Calm and Connection:

These techniques can help both adults and children manage feelings of anxiety or overwhelm in a playful yet effective way.

For individuals with PTSD or CPTSD, these breathing practices are gentle enough to help **regulate the nervous system**, while also promoting **co-regulation** between parent and child.

By practicing together, caregivers can create a shared sense of calm, which can be particularly beneficial in moments of heightened emotion or disconnection.

GROUNDING TECHNIQUES TO STAY PRESENT AND CENTERED

This section focuses on **grounding techniques** that help individuals reconnect with their physical surroundings, which is especially important for those with PTSD or CPTSD who may experience dissociation or flashbacks.

These techniques use sensory experiences to anchor you in the present moment and help bring you back to a state of calm.

5-4-3-2-1 GROUNDING TECHNIQUE (FIVE SENSES TECHNIQUE)

The **5-4-3-2-1 Grounding Technique** is a simple and effective way to bring yourself back to the present moment by focusing on your five senses.

This technique can be especially helpful when you feel anxious, overwhelmed, or disconnected from your surroundings.

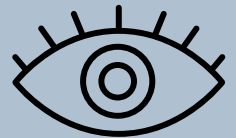
By engaging your senses, you can redirect your attention to the physical world and re-establish a sense of calm and control.

5 - 4 - 3 - 2 - 1

GROUNDING TECHNIQUE: FIVE SENSES

5

Look around you and name five things you can see



4

Focus on four things you can touch. Feel the texture of your clothes, the chair you're sitting on, or an object in your hand.



3

Listen for three sounds. It could be the sound of your own breath, the hum of an appliance, or noises outside.



2

Identify two things you can smell. Take a moment to breathe deeply and notice any subtle smells around you.



1

Notice one thing you can taste. It could be a lingering taste in your mouth or the taste of something nearby, like a sip of water.



BY ENGAGING YOUR SENSES, YOU ANCHOR YOURSELF IN THE PRESENT, REDUCING ANXIETY AND PROMOTING MINDFULNESS.

Benefit of 5-4-3-2-1 Grounding Technique (Five Senses Technique)

This technique is particularly helpful for individuals with PTSD or CPTSD who may experience dissociation or flashbacks.

By focusing on the five senses, the technique helps bring you back to the present moment, reducing feelings of disconnection or anxiety.

The simplicity of the exercise makes it easy to use anytime, anywhere, and it's also great for parents or caregivers to practice with children during stressful moments.

GROUNDING THROUGH SOUND

This technique involves focusing on the sounds around you as a way to reconnect with your environment.

Whether indoors or outdoors, **Grounding Through Sound** uses auditory input to help shift attention away from anxiety or dissociation, making it particularly effective for those dealing with PTSD or CPTSD.

Grounding Through Sound

Instructions:

- Find a quiet space, or simply focus on the sounds in your current environment.
- **Close your eyes** and take a few slow breaths.
- Start by identifying one sound at a time. Is it loud or soft? Continuous or occasional?
- Continue to notice different sounds, **bringing your attention back to your breath** if your mind starts to wander.

Benefit of Grounding Through Sound

Grounding through sound helps those with PTSD or CPTSD by **drawing attention away from overwhelming emotions** and placing it back on the physical environment.

This technique can also be practiced with children, encouraging them to focus on their surroundings to calm anxious thoughts. It helps re-establish presence and promotes a sense of peace.

GROUNDING THROUGH TEMPERATURE

This technique uses temperature changes—such as holding something warm or cold—to help individuals reconnect with their body and the physical world.

Grounding Through Temperature is particularly effective for those with PTSD or CPTSD who may experience dissociation or find themselves lost in overwhelming thoughts.

Grounding Through Temperature

Instructions:

- Hold something with a noticeable temperature difference, like an ice cube or a warm cup of tea.
- Focus on how it feels against your skin. Is it hot, cold, or warm? How does the sensation change over time?
- Breathe slowly and continue focusing on the temperature sensation until you feel more present.

Benefit of Grounding Through Temperature

Focusing on temperature is a tactile way to bring attention back to the body and away from intrusive thoughts or feelings of detachment.

For individuals with PTSD or CPTSD, this can be a highly effective method for re-establishing a connection to the present moment.

It can also help co-regulate with children, allowing both the child and caregiver to share in the grounding process through touch and temperature awareness.

TACTILE GROUNDING WITH TEXTURES

Tactile Grounding uses the sense of touch to help individuals reconnect with their surroundings.

This technique involves holding or touching textured objects to bring focus away from anxiety and back to the physical world, making it especially useful for those with PTSD or CPTSD who may experience dissociation.

Tactile Grounding with Textures

Instructions:

- Choose an object with an interesting texture—like a smooth stone, a soft piece of fabric, or a bumpy surface.
- Hold the object in your hand and focus on its texture. Is it smooth, rough, soft, or hard?
- Move your fingers over the surface of the object, paying attention to how it feels.
- Breathe slowly and stay focused on the sensation until you feel grounded and connected.

Benefit of Grounding Through Tactile Grounding

Tactile grounding helps individuals with PTSD or CPTSD reconnect with their sense of touch, bringing attention back to physical sensations.

This technique is highly effective during moments of dissociation or emotional overwhelm.

It's also an excellent tool for parents and caregivers to use with children, helping them feel more secure and calm by focusing on tangible, sensory experiences.

WALKING MEDITATION FOR GROUNDING

Walking Meditation is a gentle, mindful movement practice that helps individuals stay grounded and connected to the present.

By focusing on each step and the sensations in your body, walking meditation is particularly useful for those with PTSD or CPTSD who may feel disconnected or overwhelmed by anxiety.

Walking Meditation for Grounding

- Find a quiet space to walk, whether indoors or outdoors.
- Begin by taking slow, deliberate steps. Focus on the sensation of your feet touching the ground.
- Pay attention to the movement of your legs, the weight shifting from heel to toe, and the rhythm of your breath as you walk.
- Continue walking at a comfortable pace, keeping your attention on the movement and the sensations in your body.

Benefit of Grounding Through Temperature

Walking Meditation is a grounding technique that combines gentle movement with mindfulness, making it an effective way to manage feelings of anxiety or disconnection.

For individuals with PTSD or CPTSD, it helps re-establish a sense of control and connection between the mind and body.

This technique is also helpful for children, offering a calming activity that encourages mindfulness through movement.

Benefit of Grounding Techniques to Stay Present and Centred:

Grounding techniques are particularly effective for individuals dealing with dissociation or anxiety, as they help re-establish a connection to the present moment.

These practices encourage a renewed sense of awareness, helping those with PTSD or CPTSD reconnect with their surroundings and their bodies.

Grounding exercises can also be used as co-regulation tools, offering parents and caregivers a way to help children feel more secure and present during moments of emotional distress.

CONCLUSION: A PATH TO PRESENCE AND HEALING

Grounding and breathing techniques may seem simple, but their impact can be profound—especially for those living with PTSD or CPTSD.

By practicing these tools regularly, you're not only calming your nervous system but also creating space for healing and resilience.

Whether you're facing moments of stress, anxiety, or feeling disconnected, these techniques are here to help you reconnect with the present moment and regain a sense of control.

Healing is not linear, and it's important to give yourself grace as you move through this journey.

There will be days when it feels easier and days when it feels hard, but the key is to keep practicing.

Over time, these small moments of calm can build up to create lasting change in how you respond to challenges and triggers.

As you continue your journey, remember that you don't have to do it alone. Reach out to your community, seek support from loved ones, or connect with trauma-informed professionals when you need it.

The tools in this resource are here for you whenever you need to pause, breathe, and ground yourself.

We hope that these practices bring you peace, presence, and healing.

Start small, integrate them into your daily routine, and watch as they become part of your toolkit for navigating life's ups and downs.

Thank you for taking the time to explore these techniques.

We're with you on this journey, and we believe in your strength and resilience.



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