



Community Connections

## GROUNDING TECHNIQUES

***GROUNDING: A therapeutic technique to reconnect an individual to the present when they are experiencing dissociation or flashbacks.***

### THREE METHODS OF GROUNDING

#### 1) The Four “W’s”

A way to gently guide the individual back to the present by slowly and calmly explaining to the survivor:

- Who they are; who else is in the room
- Where they are now
- When it is (date, day of the week, time of day)
- What is happening now; what is the context of the group/individual session

#### 2) Directed Awareness

The use of the senses to guide the individual away from their internal (past) focus to aspects of the external (present) situation.

- Visual- a suggestion to open their eyes and focus on a specific object in the room
- Auditory- the use of slow, gentle and patient words to return them to the present
- Touch- an instruction to feel the fabric of the chair; its roughness or smoothness

#### 3) Focusing Exercises

- Ask the individual to recite information about themselves now: name, address, age, phone #
- Do a simple guided stretching or relaxation exercise

### SUMMARY

Different techniques work for different people:

- experiment
- have multiple techniques in your repertoire

Ask each individual what helps them to feel calm and centered at times of stress.

Based on information from [Risking Connection: A Training Curriculum for Working with Survivors of Childhood Abuse](#). By Karen W. Saakvitne, Sarah J. Gamble, Laurie Anne Pearlman, and Beth Tabor Lev. Published by The Sidran Foundation and Press.