CLINICA
family health

5-4-3-2-1 Game

The 5-4-3-2-1 game is based on the senses.
Use relaxation skills. (aka = **5-4-3-2-1 game**)

Do use all your senses to ground you in the present. Thus,

Visually, focus on the color of objects in your immediate environment ("it's green," "long and sharp" etc.) Keep your eyes open, and take note of where you are. Look for 5 colors in your immediate environment.

Auditory, do focus on identifying the various sounds you're hearing at the present time.

Tactilely, do touch objects close to you and describe the experience in detail. Touch something cold, warm, or hot and describe the sensory experience.

Olfactory, do become aware of the various smells in your immediate environment.

Gustatory, do think back at something you recently tasted, or select something to eat and describe the taste.

Do use self-soothing approaches:

Talk to your self in a reassuring language, reminding your self of who you are, where you are, and where you're going.

Say compassionate things to your self.

Think of the last time someone said something that you found inspiring and repeat it to yourself, now.

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"5-4-3-2-1" RELAXATION TECHNIQUE

Sit or lie in a comfortable position, and begin to notice what you can see, hear and feel.

■ Say to yourself gently:

"I can see… *name any object in your field of vision+"

and repeat for 5 different objects, for example:

"I can see a picture" "I can see a wall"

"I can see a lamp" "I can see a book"

"I can see a radiator"

*Please note that if you do this exercise in complete darkness and you can't see anything, you can use

imaginary pictures of everyday objects – just visualize them in your mind's eye, ideally choosing neutral

images that don't have strong emotions associated with them, whether positive or negative+

■ Then say to yourself:

"I can hear… [name any sound you can hear]"

and repeat for 5 different sounds, for example:

"I can hear the ticking of the clock" "I can hear traffic outside"

"I can hear my breathing" "I can hear a door creaking"

"I can hear the wind"

■ Then say to yourself:

"I can feel… [name any feeling or sensation you experience+"

and repeat for 5 different sensations, for example:

"I can feel tension in my shoulders" "I can feel the pillow under my head"

"I can feel the tongue in my mouth" "I can feel my hair on my neck"

“I can feel my hand on my lap”

■ Repeat the sequence, this time naming only 4 things you can SEE, 4 things you can HEAR, 4 things you can

FEEL (the pictures/sounds/sensations can be the same as last time, or different – it doesn’t matter)

■ Repeat, naming 3 things you can SEE, 3 things you can HEAR, 3 things you can FEEL

■ Repeat, naming 2 things you can SEE, 2 things you can HEAR, 2 things you can FEEL

■ Repeat, naming 1 thing you can SEE, 1 thing you can HEAR, 1 thing you can FEEL

By now, if you are not asleep yet, you should feel more relaxed and with much less “chatter” in your mind. If needed, you can repeat the procedure more than once.

Please note that this technique can be used for insomnia as well as general relaxation in stressful situations, e.g. in a waiting room before an interview, during an exam or before difficult meetings.