

The 5-4-3-2-1 Method

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A combination of internal hyperactivity and rumination often causes Autistic people and ADHD'ers to get stuck in their heads, worrying or dwelling on upsetting thoughts. The following technique can help break this cycle by grounding you in the present moment.

- 5 things you can see
- 4 things you can touch
- 3 things you can hear
- 2 things you can smell
- 1 thing you can taste

Here is an example

5 Things You Can See:

- A colorful painting on the wall - Notice the details, colors, and textures
- A plant in the corner of the room - Observe its green leaves, any new buds forming, and the pattern of its growth
- A bookshelf with various books and items - Look at the titles, the arrangement, and the different sizes of books
- A window with a view of the street - Watch any trees swaying, people walking by, or cars passing
- Your own hands - Examine the lines on your palms, your fingernails, and the way your skin stretches as you move your fingers

4 Things You Can Touch:

- The fabric of your clothing - Feel the texture, temperature, and how it lays against your skin
- A smooth, cool surface like a tabletop - Notice its solidness under your fingertips and the smoothness
- A pen or pencil - Feel its shape, the materials it's made from, and any engravings or texture it might have
- A pillow or cushion - Press your hands into it and feel its softness and the way it yields to pressure



3 Things You Can Hear

- Background music or ambient noise - Identify any rhythms, beats, or the general mood it sets
- Typing sounds or nearby conversations - Notice the pace, intensity, and flow of these sounds
- Birds chirping outside or other natural sounds - Recognize the variety and intermittence of these natural noises

2 Things You Can Smell

- Coffee brewing or a meal being cooked - Identify the specific scents and notice how they change over time
- A scented candle or fresh air coming through a window - Discern any floral, woody, or crisp notes in the air

1 Thing You Can Taste

- A piece of mint gum or a sip of a drink - Focus on the flavor, the texture in your mouth, and how the taste evolves