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altogether better with habit health

Staying grounded in difficult times

Imagine that you're in a boat out at sea when wild stormy weather arises. The first thing you would likely do is drop your anchor so that you and your boat remain steady, and the storm does not sweep you away.

This exercise, called Dropping Anchor, is a way for you to hold steady during an emotional storm. An emotional storm is when you are in the midst of one or more strong, challenging emotions, such as anger, panic, or sadness.

Drop anchor with ACE

Acknowledge your thoughts and feelings
Come back into your body
Engage in what you are doing

Step 1: Acknowledge your thoughts and feelings:

Gently acknowledge whatever is happening inside you, the thoughts, feelings, memories, sensations or urges. **Pause for 10 seconds.**

Step 2: Come back into your body:

Now come back and connect with your physical body. Push your feet firmly into the ground, and **pause for 10 seconds.** Press your hands into your thighs. Stretch your fingers out as wide as they can go and grip your thighs firmly. Feel this sense of contact between your hands and your legs, and **pause for 10 seconds.** Slowly stretch your arms out wide. Roll your shoulders backward and then forward. Repeat this as many times as feels good **remembering to pause for 10 seconds.** Take three deep, slow, intentional breaths, and **pause for 10 seconds.**

Now, acknowledge again those painful thoughts and feelings that are present and **pause for 10 seconds.** As you do this, notice that there is a body around these thoughts and feelings... a body that you can move and control. Notice your whole body - press your feet into the ground, grip your thighs with your hands, roll your shoulders backward and forward.

Step 3: Engage in what you are doing: Now, get a sense of where you are and refocus your attention on what you are doing. Look around and notice five things that you can see and **pause for 10 seconds.** Notice 4 things that you can hear and **pause for 10 seconds.** Notice 3 things that you can touch or feel and **pause for 10 seconds.** Notice any painful thoughts, memories, and feelings here along with your body in the chair, which you can move and control. A body that is bigger than these thoughts and feelings is happy and healthy.



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Six tips for beating the winter blues



Get regular exercise

Exercise can help you maintain a positive outlook and boost your energy levels. Even if it's just a short walk outside or a quick yoga session, regular exercise can help you beat the winter blues.



Get enough sunlight

Sunlight is important for regulating our body's natural rhythms and mood. Try to spend some time outside during the daylight hours.



Stay social

Staying connected with friends and family can help you feel less isolated during the winter months. Plan regular social outings or virtual gatherings to keep your spirits up.



Practice self-care

Taking care of yourself can help boost your mood and prevent feelings of sadness or depression. This can include things like taking a relaxing bath, getting a massage, or practicing meditation.



Plan fun activities

Having something to look forward to can help you stay positive during the winter months. Plan a winter getaway, start a new hobby, or schedule regular movie nights with friends.



Eat a balanced diet

Eating a balanced diet can help boost your energy levels and improve your mood. Make sure to eat plenty of fruits and vegetables, lean protein, and whole grains. Avoid sugary and processed foods, which can cause mood swings and energy crashes.

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