Grounding Techniques

Grounding is the most useful strategy for dealing with any form of dissociation or flashback. Grounding skills are interventions that help keep a person in the present.

The goal of any grounding technique is to help:

- Reconnect to the present
- Orient to the here and now
- Connect to his/her body
- Regain personal control

Grounding techniques usually occur within 2 specific areas:

- Sensory awareness
- Cognitive awareness

Ideas for Grounding Techniques using Sensory Awareness:

- **Tastes** (gum, mouthwash strips etc)
- **Smells** (dryer sheet, hand cream, scented oil)
- **Touch** (splash face with water, snapping elastic, wrap in a blanket, touch an object in your pocket, stroke a pet)
- **Sounds** (use MP3 to listen to music or relaxation recording, sing, focus on the sounds in the room or outside)
- **Sight** (cue cards with images, looking around the room and focusing on one thing, looking at a supportive person)
- **Vestibular** (spinning, bouncing, running, dancing)
- **Proprioceptive** (pressing hands together, self hug, pushing against a wall or doorframe, press feet to the ground)

Ideas for Grounding Techniques using Cognitive Awareness:

- Positive thoughts/self talk (may use cue cards)
- Social story (read or listen to on MP3)
- Check calendar/schedule
- Look at today's newspaper
- Answer the questions where am I?, what day is it?, what is the date?, how old am I?, what season is it?, what is the weather like right now?

Connecting to Your Body – Grounding Exercise

- Sit in a chair with feet flat on the floor and hands on your lap.

- Progressively notice how each part of your body feels and the sensations in each part

- Pay attention to your feet – can you feel your socks? Shoes? The floor beneath your feet? Are they warm? Cold? Sore? Sweaty?

- Now pay attention to your calves and shins – can you feel your clothing on them?, notice if the muscles are tense or relaxed.

- Pay attention to your thighs – can you feel the chair beneath you? Can you feel your clothing? Are the muscles tense or relaxed?

- Pay attention to your seat – can you feel the chair under you? Can you feel your clothing? Are the muscles tense or relaxed?

- Pay attention to your back…your stomach…..chest….shoulders….arms…hands ….neck….face…..head.