

Quick Grounding Worksheet (Street & Shelter Use)

Purpose:

This short exercise helps calm the body, reduce fear, and make sense of intense spiritual or overwhelming experiences **without judging or dismissing them**.

This can be done in **5–10 minutes**, anywhere.

Step 1: What Happened? (Just the Basics)

Circle or write a few words.

What did you notice?

- ☐ Strong feelings (fear, peace, urgency, sadness)
- ☐ Body sensations (tight chest, heat, shaking, numb)
- ☐ Thoughts or messages that felt important
- ☐ Feeling watched, guided, tested, or judged

One sentence if you want:

Step 2: How Intense Is It Right Now?

Rate from **0–10** (0 = calm, 10 = overwhelming):

Right now: ____ /10

Step 3: Reality Check (No Blame)

Check any that fit **today**:

- ☐ Little or no sleep
- ☐ Hunger or dehydration
- ☐ Stress or danger

- ☐ Withdrawal or substance use
- ☐ Feeling alone or unsafe

(These can make experiences feel stronger.)

Step 4: Ground Back Into the Moment

Do **one** of these now:

- Name **3 things you can see**:
1. _____ 2. _____ 3. _____
- Press your feet into the ground for **10 seconds**
- Take **2 slow breaths**, longer out than in

After this, rate again (0–10): _____ /10

Step 5: Safe Meaning

Instead of asking “*What does this mean?*” ask:

“What might my body or mind need right now?”

Circle one:

- ☐ Rest / sleep
 - ☐ Food / water
 - ☐ Safety
 - ☐ Someone to talk to
 - ☐ Medical or mental health support
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Step 6: Gentle Reminder (Read Aloud)

This experience is real, but it does not mean I must act on it. I can slow down. I deserve safety and care.

Step 7: Support Check

- Do I feel a little calmer?

☐ Yes ☐ A bit ☐ No

If distress stays **7–10**, reach out to:

- Shelter staff
- Outreach worker
- Crisis line
- Medical or mental health support

Note for Staff / Outreach Workers:

Focus on **grounding and safety**, not proving or disproving beliefs. Avoid validating fear-based interpretations. Support basic needs first.

This tool supports stabilization, not diagnosis or spiritual instruction.

Peer Support Guide (How to Use This Worksheet)

Role of the Peer:

My role is to **walk alongside**, not interpret, correct, diagnose, or spiritualize the experience.

"A lot of people have intense thoughts or spiritual-feeling experiences when they're under stress. This is just a short grounding exercise to help your body calm down. We don't need to decide what it means right now. Would you be open to trying it together?"

While Doing the Worksheet

- See me sit at the **same level** as you
- I'm using a **calm, steady voice**

- We can go slowly; or skip steps if needed
- Reflect feelings, not beliefs

Helpful reflections:

- "That sounds intense."
- "Your body's been under a lot of pressure."
- "We can slow this down together."

Avoid saying:

- "That's not real"
 - "That's God talking"
 - "You're delusional"
 - "This has a deeper meaning"
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If Spiritual Language Comes Up, It's OK

Ground without validating fear-based meaning:

- "What you're feeling is real, even if it's scary."
 - "Stress can make experiences feel very powerful."
 - "We don't have to figure out the meaning to help you feel safer."
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Red Flags — We can Escalate Support If:

- Distress stays **8–10** after grounding
- Person feels commanded to act
- Strong paranoia or fear of harm
- Loss of touch with present time/place

Next step: We can connect to clinical, medical, or crisis support.

Closing the Interaction I speak to you...

"Thank you for trusting me with that. You're not alone, and you don't have to carry this by yourself."

Peer Support Principle:

Stability first. Meaning later. Safety always.