Grounding techniques

1. 100 minus 7 counting –

Start at 100 and count down in 7’s. e.g. 100 – 93 – 86 – 79 etc.

This exercise works well for those with limited numeracy skills as it engages the logical part of the brain and therefore changes the focus from the emotions and feelings which are causing distress. This technique is also very useful for those experiencing panic attacks.

1. Square breathing – you should visualise a square and:

a. Breathe in for 4 seconds picturing one side of the square.

b. Hold your breath for 4 seconds visualising the second side of the square.

c. Breathe out over 4 seconds visualising the third side of the square.

d. Hold your breath for 2 seconds visualising the fourth side of the square. This exercise should be completed as many times as required for the breathing to become calm and regular.

3. A simplified version of breathing as a grounding technique which can be used in stressed or aggressive situations is to:

a. Place both feet flat on the floor and breathe into the diaphragm (so the tummy expands)’ This needs practice but could help avoid aggressive and reactive fighting in the future.

4. Shoulder shrug –

a. Tense your shoulders right up to the ears and squeeze, for a few breaths, then let them drop, this forces your lungs to expand and inhale.

5. Another way of staying grounded is to use our 5 senses

a. Touch – what can you touch around you? How does the chair

you are sitting on feel?

b. Sight – What can you see around you?

c. Smell – What can you smell?

d. Taste – Can you taste anything?

e. Sound – What can you hear?

With the senses exercise, it is important to say out loud what you are experiencing.

This also helps the sound sense being brought into awareness due to hearing your own voice in the present time.

6. Fist clench –

Clench each fist and imagine all tension from anywhere in your body going directly down into your fists. Really clench your fists, allowing them to become as tight and tense as they need to be. Count silently to 10 while still clenching your fists. Then with an inbreath, imagine grabbing all of that tension with your breath and as you exhale, unclench your fists, releasing all of that tension from your body, mind, and soul.