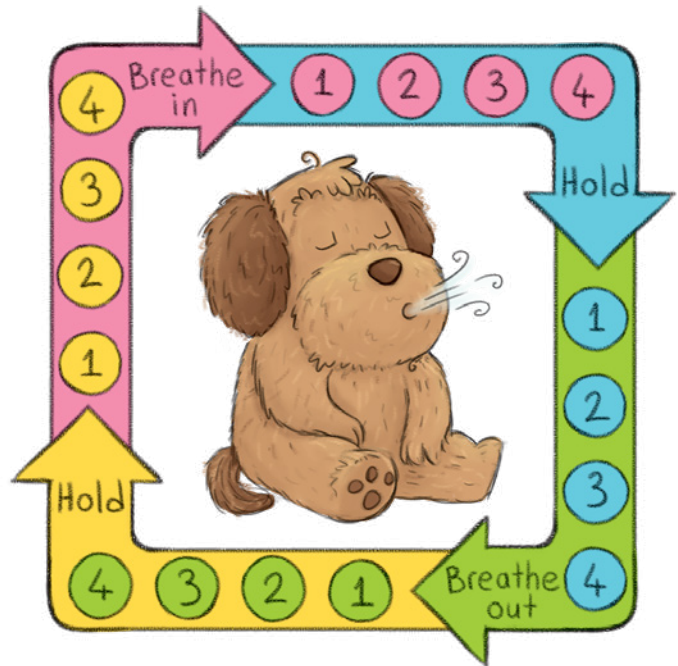




# For caregivers

## Grounding techniques for coping with stress

Grounding techniques can help adults stay in the present moment when experiencing intense or difficult emotions (e.g. during medical appointments). They can help you stay in the here-and-now rather than being distracted by worries or scary memories.



### 5-4-3-2-1 grounding exercise

This exercise shifts your attention from the past or future to the present by using your five senses:

- Name five (5) things you can see around you.
- Name four (4) things you can feel. You might actively touch something or notice something already touching your body (like clothes on your skin or the weight of your body on a chair).
- Name three (3) things you can hear.
- Name two (2) things you can smell. If this is tricky, name two scents you like.
- Name one (1) thing you can taste. Again, if this is difficult, name one thing you like the taste of.

Scan this QR code for more information and resources to help build your relaxation and mindfulness toolkit.



### Deep breathing

We do it everyday, but it's important to realise the power of breathing. Anxiety can cause us to take shallow breaths that don't give us enough oxygenated air. This can make us feel breathless, dizzy, and more anxious! Deep abdominal breathing helps us fully exchange carbon dioxide (when we breathe out) for oxygen (when we breathe in). It also helps slow our heartbeat and stabilise our blood pressure.

An easy way to practise deep breathing is by placing one hand on your stomach. Breathe in and watch your hand rise as your abdomen inflates like a balloon. As you breathe out, let your abdomen deflate and your hand sink.

For a slow steady rhythm, use a counting strategy like square breathing, also referred to as box breathing (see illustration above).

