

Undocu-Immigrant Mental Health Grounding and Reflection Toolkit

Practical Ways to Decrease Stress and Anxiety in Any Situation

Mindfulness and Meditation

Meditation reduces stress and anxiety, develops awareness of the breath and body, and helps the mind focus on the present moment.

Grounding

Grounding is a quick and effective way to reduce the intensity of emotions and anxiety. Use your five senses to soothe and reset your nervous system: Sight, Hearing, Smell, Taste, and Touch.

Try It: Notice 3 things that you see, hear, smell, taste, and feel.

Breathing Exercises

Deep breathing increases the supply of oxygen to your brain and stimulates the parasympathetic nervous system, which promotes a state of physical and emotional calmness/soothness.

Check out [Breathing Bubble](https://youtu.be/iaQed_Xdyvw) (youtu.be/iaQed_Xdyvw), a guided breathing exercise.

Try It: Inhale deep and slowly for 5 seconds; exhale completely for 5 seconds. Repeat 4 times or as many times you need.

Name Your Triggers

A trigger is a reminder of a past or current trauma that causes an intense physical, emotional, cognitive, or interpersonal response.

1. What is one thing in my environment that is causing me to experience an intense emotional or physical response? (e.g. watching the news)

2. How does this emotional or physical response show up in my body? (e.g. bodily sensation like having sweaty palms)

3. How does this emotional or physical response manifest in my body, mind, spirit, behaviors, relationships? (e.g. hair loss, feeling annoyed or worried)

4. How do I cope with this emotional or physical response? (e.g. breathe, remove myself from the trigger, go shopping, drink, etc)

Journal

The practice of using words to describe emotions and experiences can be cathartic and may provide emotional, spiritual, and physical relief.

How am I feeling right now?

What do I need in this moment (body/mind/spirit)?

Next Steps

Reach out for Support: Who can I talk to when I'm really stressed out that will listen without judgement and that makes me feel safe?

At home: _____

At school: _____

→ Contact information of my college's health or wellness center: _____

In my community: _____

Additional Resources



Immigrants Rising's Mental Health Connector provides undocumented young people with psychological support, allowing you to access your strengths and resiliency in order to achieve your personal goals and healing. This service is eligible to all who reside in California and are comfortable conversing in English. Learn more at immigrantsrising.org/MHC.



Immigrants Rising's Wellness Support Groups help undocumented young people stay grounded and connected to one another. These 6-week virtual sessions are open to all who reside anywhere in the U.S. and self-identify as undocumented or have DACA, TPS or refugee immigration status. Learn more at immigrantsrising.org/wellness.

This resource was co-created by Liliana Campos at Immigrants Rising, Christina Fuller at Santa Monica College, Michelle Segura at Los Angeles Trade Technical College, and Carolina Yernazian at Los Angeles City College.

Immigrants Rising helps you make decisions based on your potential, not your perceived limits. Visit our website so you can see what's possible: immigrantsrising.org. For inquiries regarding this resource, please contact mentalhealth@immigrantsrising.org. Released 12/2020.