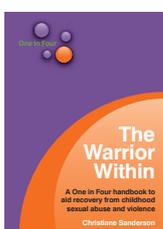


18 Plan for managing flashbacks



If you are working through *The Warrior Within*, this exercise and further useful information to help you in your recovery can be found on pages 72-73.

- Breathe fully, with feet on ground (see **Breathing** on page 66 of *The Warrior Within* or exercise sheet **16 Improving your breathing**).
- Recite your mantra reminding you that this is a memory (see **Managing flashbacks** on page 71 of *The Warrior Within* or the exercise sheet **17 Gaining control over flashbacks**).
- Check the date on your mobile phone, calendar or daily newspaper.
- Find your anchor or object from the present and look at it, hold it, feel it, smell it – make sure you have access to your grounding smell (see **Grounding techniques** on page 60 of *The Warrior Within*).
- Adopt your grounding position or walk around (see **Oases and safe place** on page 15 of *The Warrior Within* or the exercise sheet **5 Identifying your oases and safe space**).
- Shift attention from internal to external senses and name them out loud e.g. *'I see the sun shining, I can smell coffee, I can hear the news, today's date is...'*
- Look around the room and notice the colours, the shapes, the objects, the people and listen to the sounds around you – the traffic, voices or washing machine. Identify each sound and say them out loud.
- Evaluate actual external danger by reminding yourself that this is a memory and not actually happening, and that there is no danger.
- Stamp your feet, or grind them on the floor to remind yourself where you are.
- Consciously feel the boundary of your body and skin, the clothes you are wearing, the chair in which you are sitting, the floor supporting you.
- Have an elastic band to hand (or on your wrist), ping it and feel it on your skin. This will remind you of the present and that what you are experiencing internally is in the past.
- If you have lost all sense of where you end and the rest of the world begins, rub your body so you can feel its edges, or wrap yourself in a blanket or scarf and consciously feel it as it surrounds you.
- If you feel very unsafe call a trusted friend who knows the plan.



The content of this exercise sheet is based on *The Warrior Within: A One in Four handbook to aid recovery from childhood sexual abuse and violence* by Christiane Sanderson

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