

Your Wellness

Strategies for Mental Health, Career, and Family Success

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Recco Santee Richardson, Ph.D., LPC

Dr. Recco's Corner

All humans and people are created equally. While some of us look different and learn differently, we all are the same. Individuals who excel and overcome use various skills when challenged to comprehend and achieve. It is imperative that each of us maximize our gifts and talents. They should take us as far as we can go. Our lives, thoughts and perceptions are what we have as ammunition to go beyond the stars, change narratives and enhance the landscapes of our life.

In our own way, each of us are fortunate, crafty, marvelous, wonderful, necessary, and something to behold. What is often missing in the under-developed lives of people like you and me is confidence, an adequate foundation, support, blaming others, taking on the role of the victim, and a lack of unconditional love.

To expand and utilize our intelligence, ability to solve problems, resolve, and hopes, an intentional appreciation for ourselves, others, life, and the future is required. This is true because the stated and other ideas bring out the best in us, helps us to manage stress, can change the trajectory, and offers motivation to keep going.

Lastly, personal insight and a positive mindset are what sets apart those that excel and those who do not. It behooves each of us to quest to be the best, interact and interface at a higher level, achieve and be good to others, edit things out of our lives, write our own narrative, pay attention to details, expect the unexpected, and become all that we can be.

I'm ready to do all the fore-mentioned and then some. Are you ready? I'm ready to get where I'm supposed to be. Are you ready too? I want all that life has for me. Do you want the same?



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**"Our children often
need good help."**

Dr. Recco

A Review of Grounding Techniques

By: Chaunjona' Verdun-Jennings, Master's Level Counseling Intern

There are times when individuals may experience feelings of being overwhelmed. Such circumstances can arise from an excessive workload, challenges in personal relationships, bereavement, or global events.



To reduce these feelings, I will discuss the topic of grounding techniques. Grounding techniques help us reconnect with ourselves and stay present. Let's use being in a car accident for example. When in an automobile accident, our bodies naturally activate the "fight or flight" response (a concept frequently discussed during our school years). When we are in an automobile accident our body responds to the experience in various ways. Although we may not be harmed physically, the accident can cause our heart to race fast, our hands to feel shaky, and our thoughts stay stuck on "what could have happened" to us.

We might also feel disconnected, overwhelmed, or as if we are still in danger. Grounding techniques can calm the body and bring us back to the present. There are two grounding techniques I will discuss.

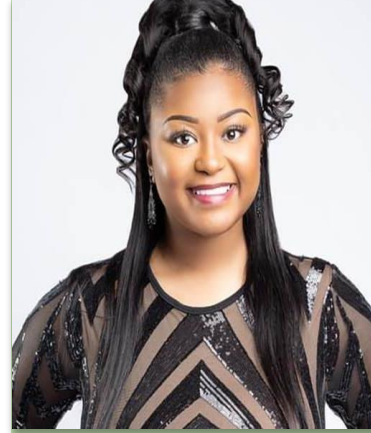
First, let's discuss the 5-4-3-2-1 technique. It is one of the most common types of grounding techniques to use. This technique grounds us to the present and reconnects us to all five of our senses. The ground tasks is to name:

- 5 things we see nearby.
- 4 things we feel.
- 3 things we can hear.
- 2 things we can smell.
- 1 thing we can taste.

Another technique is meditation, which helps with dissociation. There are various types of meditation exercises such as:

- Deep breathing – Sit or lie down, inhale slowly to a count of 5, hold for 5, and exhale for count of 6. Repeat 5 times to induce relaxation.
- Body scan – Lie on your back at stare at your toes, slowly move your body upward, noticing tension and release it continuing up to your head.
- Guided mediation – Use apps or videos to guide you through visualizations or specific mindfulness exercises.

Overall, grounding techniques are used to calm the body down in stressful situations. Regular practice can help with reducing stress, decrease anxiety, improve focus, and increase body awareness.



Chaunjona' Verdun-Jennings
Master's Level Counseling Intern

**"It is good to connect
with our senses."
Dr. Recco**



DEPRESSION

5-Session Workshop

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THROUGH A DIFFICULT SEASON.

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MISUNDERSTANDING WITH UNDERSTANDING, ISOLATION WITH
CONNECTION, AND HOPELESSNESS WITH HOPE.

"BEAR YE ONE ANOTHER'S BURDENS..."

GALATIANS 6:2

COME LEARN. COME LISTEN. COME ENCOURAGE. COME FIND HOPE.



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**"We can manage and
have victory over
depression."
Dr. Recco**



Therapist Spotlight

Featuring: Andrea Montgomery, B.S., Master's Level Social Work Intern

Andrea Montgomery is the Therapist Spotlight for September. She is the newest Master's Level Social Work Intern for Deborah Dewey Walker Family Services. Andrea has unique work experience as a result of working with families and children for the last 19 years.

She currently works at a local school district as a full-time classroom teacher for Early Head Start. During her internship Andrea will serve clients that are 4 years and older.

1. Why are friendships important and what is the key to them lasting a long time?

Andrea believes that friendships are important for personal growth purposes. For friendships to last, each person must have authenticity and there must be mutual reciprocity, kindness, and have the ability to agree to disagreement.

She stated that last one is difficult because people do not always realize that they can agree to disagree. There will be times that we do not agree with our friends, so we have to learn to move pass the disagreement.

2. What in life are you and your clients trying to protect?

With little hesitation, Andrea reported that she is protecting her clients via the social work code of ethics. She shared that all professionals have an obligation to protect clients, which is where the code of ethics comes into place. The code allows her to protect her clients from themselves and protects her.

Andrea went on to say that she believes that her clients try to protect her by not disclosing how they really feel about protecting themselves. She believes this because in her mind sometimes clients try to hide their true feelings to protect the people around them.

3. Why is it important to celebrate accomplishments?

She said it is essential to celebrate accomplishments because they bring and promote a sense of self-love and because every on deserves to be seen. Overall, Andrea feels that we do not celebrate ourselves enough.

4. What is something that your clients have a difficult time accepting?

Something that Andrea has noticed is families having a difficult time with their children becoming independent. She said that it is not easy letting our small children create space and explore themselves as they learn the difference between home and school.

Parents and guardians get used to everything being a certain way, so when their child is working toward independence, it can be difficult to accept. Andrea went on to say that no one wants their child to grow up because they fear it is a step closer to them not needing them anymore. This is not true in that children will always need their parents.



Andrea Montgomery
Master's Level Social Work Intern

**"Andrea is off to a good start and blends in well with our goals and team."
Dr. Recco**

5. To ensure happiness, what are things we should do daily?

Andrea believes to ensure happiness; we should check-in with ourselves to make sure that we are being emotionally kind to ourselves and spending time with ourselves. We also must work on being kinder to ourselves and more positive because that creates a better mindset for our lives.

She quipped that when it comes to being happier and kind to us sometimes we have to “fake it until we make it.”

6. What is the best way to overcome fear?

With a stern look, she offered that we all have fears that can be difficult to overcome. One way to overcome them is facing the fear head on. It is important to approach issues in a healthy way and to talk with a trusted person about the fear.

7. Share with us the importance of having peace of mind?

She shared that having peace of mind is important because it helps us think clearly. To think clearly and secure peace of mind, we can use breathing exercises to gather our thoughts or do something that is soothing.

8. What do you encourage your clients to do to enhance their self-esteem level?

Andrea encourages people to give themselves grace. The grace is important to have because we (and parents) do our best with what we have. She encourages others to focus on their positive attributes and to build solid relationships with others.

***"At the end of the day, we have to do what is best
for our own wellness and future."
Dr. Recco***

**"We are important
enough to check-in
on ourselves."
Dr. Recco**

How to Have More Peace in Life

By: Recco Santee Richardson, Ph.D., LPC

The word peace means freedom from disturbance and having tranquility. It also means the presences of calmness, being at rest, to appease, and the presence of quietness. It would surely be an understatement to say that we all need more peace in our lives. This is true because the world that we live in and the demands placed on us can zap the levels of peace that we have.

So far this year, peace and peace of mind have been the topic of hundreds of my mental health counseling appointments with clients. There seems to be a need and desire by my clients and others to have more peace in their life.

The following tips and strategies can help us secure additional peace and thus have a happier life.

1). Do Our Part: We play a part and have role in experiencing additional peace. It is an error to expect others to lasso peace and bring it to us. Individuals who have on-going peace in their lives decide to manage their relationships better, avoid certain places and people, focus on the positives, and accept the outcomes of decisions. Peaceful living seems to avoid individuals who are lazy, who make excuses and who put forth minimum efforts to be more joyful. At the end of the day, it is our responsibility and duty to work hard and be driven to procure more peace.

2). We Are Not Alone: For some reason ideas associated with being alone and abandoned set in motion chaos and chases peace away from us. This does not have to happen. Knowing that we are not alone, not the only one, not forgotten, and not surrounded is critical to fighting off concepts that are contrary to peace. By any means necessary our hope and faith must rest in knowing that we are not alone. Regardless of the regardless, there is always someone willing and available to help us.

3). Do Not Fear: When we look back at what stole our peace, we tend to find that trouble and fear are the culprits. A lot can be said about life changing troubles and bone shaking hardships that can push us towards fear. Amid the darkest situations, the ability to not fear is so important. Fear sometimes is false evidence that appears real. Typically, troubles and things are not as bad as they present themselves. Our storms and troubles will blow over. The goal is to ensure that they take the aftermath and resulting fear with them.

4). Forgive Ourselves: The forgiving of other people is often focused on. It does play a major role in us being free and filled with peace. I have found that the most difficult person for us to forgive is ourselves. The difficulty arises from us being too critical of ourselves, stuck on blaming ourselves, feeling dumb because we let things get out of hand, and so on. There is no if, and or buts about it. We must forgive ourselves as fast as we forgive others. The road to peace of mind and tranquility travels through our successful acts of forgiving ourselves.

5). Stop Being Offended: Peace and being at ease require us to not be too touchy, too sensitive, and too easily offended. Somehow or another, we must develop tougher skin, stop caring so much about what others think or say, focus on what is true and right, quickly let harmful things go, and pay less attention to how things unfolded. When we do the fore-mentioned, it frees our mental and physical faculties to receive the peace that we so badly need and want.

**"Peace is
necessary in life."
Dr. Recco**

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