

# VR videos self-help guide: when and how to use each practice

The InnerWorld project developed some accessible, youth-friendly mental-health support methods, and shares these practical resources for everyday use. These five short videos are simple, skills-based tools you can use on your own, to support your mental health when you feel the need. They are not therapy or a clinical treatment. If you are in crisis, think you might harm yourself or someone else, or your symptoms are getting worse, contact local emergency services or a qualified mental health professional.

## Before you start

Choose a safe, comfortable place where you can sit or lie down. If you feel dizzy, nauseous, numb, or disconnected at any point, stop the video, open your eyes, look around the room, and switch to the grounding exercise below. If you are using headphones or a VR headset, remove them immediately if you feel unwell. If you have a respiratory or cardiac condition, are pregnant, or find breath-holding uncomfortable, shorten the counts or skip breath-hold steps.

## If you start to feel worse

Pause the video. Name five things you can see, four you can feel, three you can hear, two you can smell, and one you can taste. Press your feet into the floor and notice the support beneath you. Breathe in through your nose and out through your mouth a few times. When settled, either stop for now or switch to the Grounding Exercise video below.

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## Triangle Breathing Exercise Video

Use this when you need a quick reset before class, work, or a conversation, or when you feel keyed-up. The triangle pattern means three equal phases: inhale, hold, exhale.

What to expect: a steadier heart rate and a clearer head within two to three minutes. Stop if you feel light-headed and switch to the Grounding Exercise.

## Square Breathing Exercise Video

Use this for steady focus or test anxiety. The square pattern is inhale—hold—exhale—hold, each the same length.

Tips: if breath-holds feel tight, drop to 3-counts or remove the holds. This practice is brief and can be done discreetly.

## **Body-Scan Guided Meditation Video**

Use this to release tension, improve sleep, or reconnect with your body.

What to expect: pockets of relaxation and better awareness of where stress shows up. If scanning increases discomfort, open your eyes, look around, and switch to grounding.

## **“Cinema” Guided Meditation (worry-as-movie) Video**

Use this when looping on worries you can’t solve right now. You will practice observing thoughts rather than wrestling with them.

Important note: if your worry involves trauma or unsafe situations, limit this practice to a few minutes and consider doing it with a trained professional. Stop if imagery becomes overwhelming and use grounding.

## **Grounding Exercise Video**

Use this any time you feel overwhelmed, spaced out, or pulled into the past.

What to expect: a stronger sense of here-and-now, enough to decide your next small step.

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## **How often to practice**

Short, frequent sessions work best. Triangle or Square Breathing can be repeated several times a day. The “Cinema” practice is most helpful when worries are present but manageable; keep it brief and finish with grounding.

## **Who these resources are for**

The project focuses on the needs of young people and aims to remove barriers such as language, cost, and distance so that support is easier to reach. These self-help videos are general resources that anyone may try, but they do not replace professional care. If you are under 18, seek guidance from a trusted adult before using practices that feel intense.

## **Final reminders**

These practices are safe for most people when done gently and within your comfort zone. Stop if you feel dizzy, short of breath, numb, or distressed; choose a simpler exercise, drink water, and reconnect with your surroundings. For ongoing difficulties, ask a mental health professional for tailored support. InnerWorld's aim is to make simple, effective support more available and to share practical guidance openly through our public resources.