

## Trauma Informed Higher Education: Resources

### Books (and their Amazon links)

- [The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness by Michelle Alexander](#)
- [The Color of Law: A Forgotten History of How Our Government Segregated America by Richard Rothstein](#)
- [How to Be an Antiracist by Ibram X. Kendi](#)
- [Stamped from the Beginning: The Definitive History of Racist Ideas in America by Ibram X. Kendi](#)
- [An African American and Latinx History of the United States by Paul Ortiz](#)
- [Whistling Vivaldi by Claude Steele](#)
- [This Book is Anti-Racist by Tiffany Jewell and Aurèlia Durand](#)
- [Feeling White by Cheryl E. Matias](#)
- [Teaching Race: How to Help Students Unmask and Challenge by Stephen D. Brookfield](#)
- [White Fragility by Robin J. DiAngelo](#)
- [Trans\\* in College by Z. Nicolazzo](#)
- [Beyond the Asterisk: Understanding Native Students in Higher Education Edited by Heather Shotton, Shelly Lowe, Stephanie Waterman and John Garland.](#)
- [We are Americans: Undocumented Students Pursuing the American Dream by William Perez](#)
- [American Like Me: Reflections on Life Between Cultures Edited by America Ferrera](#)

### Websites

- [LOOK DIFFERENT](#) is an online platform created by Harvard's Project Implicit and MTV to address bias, discrimination and microaggressions. It contains many exercises, ranging from a "Bias Cleanse", "Put Yourself in Someone Else's Shoes" and "Real Life Stories" to a series of responses to common micro aggression situations. I highly recommend this site.
- [Them.](#) "a next-generation community platform, chronicles and celebrates the stories, people and voices that are emerging and inspiring all of us, ranging in topics from pop culture and style to politics and news, all through the lens of today's LGBTQ community."
- [Project Implicit](#) is the Harvard implicit association online test. Consider having students take the tests and reflect on the results through intentional prompts designed to help them think further about the results.
- [The Southern Poverty Law Center](#) provides an online "Hate Map", "Extremist Files", "Active Case Dockets", and many "Featured Stories". Think about introducing the SPLC to students, have them engage with various resources on their website and create intentional assignments for them.
- [Teaching Tolerance](#) provides classroom resources, professional development and timely publications on issues impacting students in K-12. While not specific to Higher Ed., the website offers key overviews and lesson plans that can be modified for our setting.

### Podcasts

- [Teaching in Higher Ed](#) – explores the art and science of being more effective at facilitating learning. (Valentina highly recommends this one!)

### TED Talks

- [Kimberlé Crenshaw: The Urgency of Intersectionality](#)
- [How students of color confront impostor syndrome](#)
- [David R. Williams: How Racism Makes us Sick](#)
- [Priya Vulchi and Winona Guo: What it Takes to be Racially Literate](#)
- [Why we need gender-neutral bathrooms](#)
- [A powerful poem about what it feels like to be transgender](#)

## Trauma Informed Higher Education: Resources

### TED Talk Playlists

- [Love is Love Playlist: These moving, personal talks share stories of love and commitment in the LGBTQ community.](#)
- [Designing for Disability Playlist: Good design — and smart technology — should fuel inclusivity. These talks show how tech and design can empower.](#)
- [The Struggle of Mental Health Playlist: These speakers who've struggled with mental illness boldly share their stories, in hopes that others don't feel so alone.](#)
- [TALKS TO UNDERSTAND RACISM IN AMERICA](#)

### Other Resources:

1. Trauma Informed Teaching and Learning: Bringing a Trauma-Informed Approach to Higher Education <https://traumainformedteaching.blog/resources/>
2. Student Veterans: <https://www.mentalhealth.va.gov/student-veteran/info-for-faculty-staff.asp>
3. VITAL Education and Training for Faculty and Staff: <https://www.mentalhealth.va.gov/student-veteran/vital-education-and-training-for-faculty.asp>
4. VA College Toolkit: <https://www.mentalhealth.va.gov/student-veteran/index.asp#sthash.hmtAXdCw.dpbs>
5. NCTSN's Childhood Trauma Toolkit: <https://www.nctsn.org/resources/child-trauma-toolkit-educators>
6. Trauma Informed Teaching Tools: <https://otl.du.edu/types-of-trauma-teaching-tools/>
7. Secondary Traumatic Stress Screeners at UK CTAC: <https://ctac.uky.edu/projects-and-programs/secondary-traumatic-stress-innovations-and-solutions-center-sts-isc/screeners>

# Tips For Making Your Syllabus Veteran Friendly

## VA College Toolkit Handout

Creating a syllabus that reflects awareness of student Veterans as a student group can communicate your interest and respect for their service and success in school. One possibility is to include a Veteran-friendly statement in your syllabus. This one has been used at several universities.

*Veterans and active duty military personnel with special circumstances (e.g., upcoming deployments, drill requirements, disabilities) are welcome and encouraged to communicate these, in advance if possible, to the instructor.*

### HERE ARE SOME ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS FOR YOUR SYLLABI:

1. Today's student Veterans are non-traditional students. Many are several years older than traditional students (i.e., only 15% are between 18 and 23 years of age), and nearly half have children or are married. As a result, many student Veterans are managing multiple roles, such as parent, spouse, employee, and student. In addition, some students may be Active Duty, Reservists, and National Guardsmen, and they may still be participating in drill on the weekend or have the potential to deploy. Drill involves a commitment of one weekend every month, as well as two weeks during the year. This could intensify if a service member is scheduled to deploy.
  - **What can I do?** Provide the syllabus in advance, with specific dates for assignments and tests to allow for planning around work and childcare. While it may not seem helpful to give specific dates for exams, the student can schedule childcare or work schedules around this or use this as an opportunity to speak to you about rescheduling.
2. Being in combat, or even in the military, may leave a person changed. While many of these changes are positive, there may be some struggles with adjusting to civilian life. For many, this adjustment will resolve with time, but some student Veterans may need additional assistance.
  - **What can I do?** Veterans consistently say that other Veterans are their major support on campus, so become familiar with the Veteran club or Student Veterans of America (SVA) chapter on your campus and encourage the Veteran to get involved. Find out if mentoring services are available to Veterans through your school's Veteran service center. If classroom behavior and academic performance are impacted, consider a referral to the counseling center or the campus disability office to inquire about academic accommodations. Providing information about the disability office on the syllabus is beneficial for students who may feel that they need additional help.
  - For Veterans with established medical or mental health concerns, they may be receiving treatment at the local Veterans Affairs (VA) Medical Center. Be flexible if a Veteran requests time for appointments.



# GROUNDING

## Create personal calm

### Instructions:

Review this handout. Then, answer the reflection question that follows.

### What is Grounding?

Grounding is a set of simple strategies that can help you detach from emotional pain (e.g., anxiety, anger, sadness, self-harm). It is basically a way to distract yourself by focusing on something other than the difficult emotions you are experiencing. You may also think of grounding as centering, distracting, creating a safe place, or healthy detachment.

Although grounding does not solve the problem that is contributing to your unpleasant emotions, it does provide a temporary way to gain control over your feelings and prevent things from getting worse. Grounding anchors you, gives you a chance to calm down, and allows you to eventually return and address the problem that is triggering the unpleasant emotions to begin with. And grounding can be done anytime, anywhere, and no one has to know.

### Ways of Grounding:

There are three types of grounding. You may find that one of these types works better for you, or that each is helpful.

1. Mental (focusing your mind)
2. Physical (focusing your senses)
3. Soothing (talking to yourself in a very kind way)

### Mental Grounding:

1. **Describe your environment in detail**, using all of your senses – for example, “The walls are white, there are five blue chairs, there is a wooden bookshelf against the wall...” Describe objects, sounds, textures, colors, smells, shapes, numbers, and temperature. You can do this anywhere.
2. **Play a “categories” game with yourself**. Try to think of types of dogs, jazz musicians, animals or famous people that begin with each letter of the alphabet, cars, TV shows, writers, sports, songs, cities.
3. **Describe an everyday activity in great detail**. For example, describe a meal that you cook (e.g., “First, I peel the potatoes and cut them into quarters; then I boil the water; then I make an herb marinade of oregano, basil, garlic, and olive oil...”).
4. **Imagine**. Use a pleasant or comforting mental image. Again, use all of your senses to make it as real and vivid as possible.
5. **Read something, saying each word to yourself**. Or read each letter backwards so that you focus on the letters and not the meaning of words.
6. **Use humor**. Think of something funny to jolt yourself out of your mood.
7. **Count to 10 or say the alphabet**, very s . . . l . . . o . . . w . . . l . . . y.

Adapted from: *Seeking Safety* by Lisa M. Najavits (2002).

[www.winona.edu/resilience](http://www.winona.edu/resilience)

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### Physical Grounding:

1. **Run cool or warm water over your hands.**
2. **Grab tightly onto your chair as hard as you can;** notice the sensations and the experience.
3. **Touch various objects around you:** a pen, your clothing, the table, the walls. Notice textures, colors, weight, temperature. Compare the objects you touch.
4. **Carry a grounding object in your pocket** – a small object (a small rock, ring, piece of cloth) that you can touch whenever you feel unpleasant emotions rising.
5. **Notice your body:** the weight of your body in the chair; wiggling your toes in your socks; the feel of your back against the chair.
6. **Stretch.** Extend your fingers, arms, legs as far as you can; slowly and gently roll your head around.
7. **Clench and release your fists.**
8. **Jump up and down.**
9. **Eat something in a savoring way;** fully experience the food; describe the sights, aromas, textures, flavors, and the experience in detail to yourself.
10. **Focus on your breathing,** noticing each inhale and exhale. Repeat a pleasant word to yourself on each exhale.

### Soothing Grounding:

1. **Say kind statements,** as if you were talking to a friend or small child – for example, “You are a good person going through a hard time. You’ll get through this.”
2. **Think of favorites.** Think of your favorite color, animal, season, food, time of day, TV show.
3. **Picture people you care about** and look at photographs of them.
4. **Remember the words to an inspiring song, quotation, or poem** that makes you feel better (e.g., serenity prayer).
5. **Say a coping statement:** “I can handle this,” “This feeling will pass.”
6. **Plan a safe treat for yourself,** such as a piece of candy, a nice dinner, or a warm bath.
7. **Think of things you are looking forward to in the next week** – perhaps time with a friend, going to a movie, or going on a hike.

### TIPS:

- **Practice! Practice! Practice!** Like any other skill, grounding takes practice. So practice as often as possible and before you actually need it. Then, when you need to call upon this skill you will have it, know it, and use it well.
- **Try to notice which methods you like best** – physical, mental, or soothing grounding methods, or some combination.
- **Start grounding early on in a negative mood cycle.** Start before the anger, anxiety, or other feeling gets out of control.

# GROUNDING

## Create personal calm

- **Create your own method of grounding.** Any method you make up may be worth much more than those you read here, because it is yours.
- **Make up an index card or type in your phone a list of your best grounding methods.** Have the list available so it is there when you need it.
- **Create an mp3 of a grounding message that you can play when needed.** Consider asking your counselor or someone close to you to record it if you want to hear someone else's voice.
- **Have others assist you in grounding.** Teach family and friends about grounding, so that they can help guide you with it if you become overwhelmed.
- **Don't give up!**

**Now, list three of the strategies described above that you think will work best for you. Then practice these skills regularly, so in times of need you will know what to do and how to do it successfully.**

3 grounding strategies I am committed to learning, practicing, and applying:

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_

After practicing and/or applying these grounding strategies, what have you noticed? Do you feel more in control? Do your emotions change? Are you able to calm yourself and focus on something other than the unpleasant emotions and situations?

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