



The  
Jewish  
Board

# Grounding Ourselves During Difficult Times: A Toolkit for the Jewish Community

MANAGING STRESS AND CARING FOR YOURSELF WHEN THE WORLD FEELS HEAVY



In times of global unrest, many of us feel overwhelmed, anxious, or unsure of how to stay grounded. As members of the Jewish community—parents, friends, neighbors, students, caregivers—we often carry each other’s needs while managing our own feelings of fear, uncertainty, or fatigue. Here are some restorative practices to help you de-stress, build resilience, and stay grounded through it all.

## **SELF CHECK-IN**

Take 30 seconds in your day—whether you’re at work, with loved ones, or feeling overwhelmed to ask yourself:

- What am I feeling—emotionally and physically?
- What do I need in this moment?
- Can I offer myself a moment of compassion or stillness?

## **MINDFULNESS EXERCISE: BOX BREATHING (THE 4-4-4-4 METHOD)**

This calming breathing technique that can be done anytime, anywhere:

1. Inhale slowly through your nose for 4 seconds
2. Hold your breath for 4 seconds
3. Exhale through your mouth for 4 seconds
4. Hold your breath (again) for 4 seconds

Repeat a few rounds while noticing the air filling and leaving your body. You can also try saying to yourself: “Inhale calm... Hold peace... Exhale tension...” while going through those steps.

## **MINDFULNESS EXERCISE: BODY AWARENESS**

If you prefer to ground yourself through movement, try this:

1. Place both feet on the ground.
2. Press toes and heels downward.
3. Notice the weight of your body.
4. Name three things you see, hear, or feel.

## We’re Here to Help

Feeling overwhelmed, anxious, or just in need of someone to talk to? The Jewish Community Services team is here for you.

We offer supportive one-on-one conversations, crisis intervention, listening circles, and resources to help you care for yourself through difficult moments.

Please reach out to us by emailing [jcssupport@jbfcs.org](mailto:jcssupport@jbfcs.org).

## RECITE A SHORT PRAYER

Reciting a traditional prayer or personal words of peace can offer grounding. Choose your own or consider one of these options:

Mi Sheberach

[jewishboard.org/jcsprayer1](http://jewishboard.org/jcsprayer1)



Oseh Shalom

[jewishboard.org/jcsprayer2](http://jewishboard.org/jcsprayer2)



Prayers for Times  
of World Conflict

[jewishboard.org/jcsprayer3](http://jewishboard.org/jcsprayer3)



Prayers for Strength  
and Healing

[jewishboard.org/jcsprayer4](http://jewishboard.org/jcsprayer4)



Throughout history, Jews have also often turned to the Book of Psalms for comfort, guidance, and strength during times of hardship. Consider finding a chapter that brings you strength or comfort. If you don't know where to begin, Psalm 121 or Psalm 130 can be good starting points.

## MANTRAS AND REFLECTIONS

You can also let these words of wisdom ground you when words feel out of reach. Choose one that brings you strength, and place it somewhere you'll see often:

*"This, too, is Torah: when a person brings another comfort."*

— Talmud Yerushalmi, Peah 3:9

*"To save one life is to save an entire world."*

— Mishna Sanhedrin 4:5

*"The world we build tomorrow is born in the words we say today."*

— Rabbi Jonathan Sacks

*"May we nurture our relationships—with the Power, our world, our friends, family, and ourselves."*

— Harriet Rossetto, Founder of Beit T'Shuvah

*"We are not expected to be okay all the time. Even the earth was created with darkness before light"*

— Genesis 1:2 (interpretation)

And remember:

- Feeling fear, grief, or exhaustion doesn't make you weak. It's normal.
- Just being present—for yourself or someone else—can mean more than you know.
- Give yourself permission to take a break. It's okay to step away from the news or say no to one more heavy conversation.

## Naming What You're Feeling: "Traumatic Invalidation"

If you're feeling dismissed, unseen, or like your pain doesn't matter, you're not alone.

Jewish therapists Miri Bar-Halpern and Jaclyn Wolfman explained how this experience—having the emotional toll of abuse and neglect minimized or ignored—is Traumatic Invalidation.

Visit [jewishboard.org/jtatrauma](http://jewishboard.org/jtatrauma) or scan the QR code to learn more.



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