

## General Care

Make sure you meet your basic needs for food, water and rest. You may even need to set an alarm on your phone to ensure you are doing this regularly

Take breaks, you deserve and need to take breaks

Parents say they find it hard to do these things, but you must care for yourself to care for your baby!

Be kind and gentle to yourself, although everything feels out of control right now it won't always be like this. You are doing great!

### 5-4-3-2-1 Grounding Technique

Using your 5 senses is a fast way to bring you out of your thoughts or intense emotions into the present moment.

Name 5 things you can see

Name 4 things you can hear

Name 3 things you can touch within your immediate reach

Name 2 things you can smell

Name 1 thing you can taste

## Soothing Techniques

Read an inspirational quote or verse

Picture people you care about and look at pictures of them.

Say a coping statement – “I can handle this”, “The feeling will pass”

Chew gum eat crunchy snacks like carrots

Think of your favorites: favorite movie, color, place, animal, person, season, and/or music

Get something to drink. Drink it slowly, focusing on the sensations of taste, smell and temperature.

Wrap in a blanket and rock in a rocking chair, give yourself a hug

Take a warm shower

Play soothing music

Go out into the warm sun or cool air for 15-30 minutes

Put on some lotion and focus on rubbing it into each of your fingernails

Listen to a guided meditation-try "the mindful movement" on you tube

# How Taking Care of You...

# Helps Your Baby



Once your baby is born, they remain connected to their parent to help them feel calm and safe through a process called co-regulation. Baby can sense your emotions, so learning to calm and sooth yourself will help baby to feel safe and secure.

The process of working on your own soothing and grounding (calming our nervous system and returning to the present moment) is a gift to your baby

NICU families especially benefit from practicing these skills as they experience increased stress

## Grounding Techniques

Grounding techniques help to bring us back to the here. The more present you are in your body, the calmer and safer you will feel.

Some things to try and do:

Run cool water over your hands to wake up your hands and body

Place a cool washcloth on your head/face

Grab tightly onto your chair as hard as you can and notice your hands and arm

Touch various objects around you: a pen, keys, your clothing, or the wall. Name them.

Notice your body: the weight of your body in the chair; wiggle your toes in your socks; the feel of your chair against your back

## Grounding Techniques Continued

Slow your pace of breathing way down. Breathe deeply from your stomach area. Breathe out for longer than your breathe in (count 4 in and count 8 out)

Exhaling fully helps to calm

Eat something, describing the texture and flavors to yourself.

Scan the room and notice five things you see in detail

Count to 10 or say the alphabet. Very slowly

Place a heavy object like a large bag of rice on your lap. Feel the weight on your lap and then your body in your chair. Notice yourself in "the here and now".

Walk slowly; notice each footstep, saying "left or "right"... to yourself