

10 Ideas for Handling Nightmares and Flashbacks

1. If you've just woken up from a nightmare, remind yourself that you are safe by immediately turning on the light
2. Re-orientate yourself to your immediate surroundings by naming 3 things that you can see, hear and touch
3. Tell yourself you are having a flashback/nightmare and that this is OK and a normal response to trauma
4. Remind yourself that your trauma happened in the past but that it is not happening now
5. Say aloud what day, month and year it is, your current age, and your current location
6. Press your feet into the ground and move your body. Gentle yoga postures can be very helpful
7. Breathe deeply – breathe in for 4 counts, hold for 2 counts and breathe out for 6 counts
8. Do something nurturing such as having a bath, patting a pet or going for a walk
9. If you feel comfortable to do so, let supportive people around you know about what you are experiencing. This way they may be able to help you if you would like them to
10. Remember that flashbacks and nightmares are normal and are a sign that your brain is processing the trauma that you have experienced. You are not crazy!