



PATH Grounding Protocols Following a Major Disclosure Event

Psychological Alliance for Transparency and Humanity (PATH)

A major announcement concerning unidentified anomalous phenomena (UAP) or possible non-human intelligence could produce many different reactions: curiosity, excitement, disbelief, fear, confusion, fascination—or very little reaction at all.

There is no single “correct” emotional response.

These protocols are designed to help people remain psychologically grounded while reliable information emerges. Grounding does not mean denying what is happening. It means helping the nervous system settle enough to think clearly, connect with others, and respond wisely.

Protocols across the lifespan

SAFE • Children approximately ages 5–12
PAUSE • Adolescents approximately ages 13–17
GROUND • Adults
STEADY • Older adults and those who support them

Regulate first. Interpret second.

1 Child Grounding Protocol

For children approximately ages 5–12

SAFE

S — Stay Close

Remain physically and emotionally available. Children often determine how dangerous something is by watching the adults around them. Speak slowly. Keep your voice calm. Sit beside them. Maintain ordinary routines whenever possible.

A — Ask What They Know

Before explaining anything, ask:

“What have you heard?”

“What do you think it means?”

“Is there anything about this that scares you?”

Correct misinformation gently. Do not provide frightening details the child has not requested.

F — Feel the Ground

Bring attention back to the immediate environment. Invite the child to notice:

5 things they can see.

4 things they can touch.

3 things they can hear.

2 things they can smell.

1 slow breath they can feel entering and leaving their body.

Then remind them:

“Right now, we are here. We are together. We will learn more as the grown-ups learn more.”

E — Everyday Life Continues

Return to meals, school, play, pets, bedtime, family rituals, and ordinary activities. Limit repeated exposure to frightening television coverage, social media, videos, speculation, and adult conversations.

For Caregivers

Do not ridicule a child's fears or tell them they are being silly. Do not make promises you cannot know to be true. Instead of saying, “Nothing bad can happen,” try:

“There are still things we don’t know. But you are not dealing with this alone. The adults who care about you are here.”

2 Adolescent Grounding Protocol

For adolescents approximately ages 13–17

PAUSE

P — Put Down the Feed

Take a deliberate break from TikTok, YouTube, X, Reddit, livestreams, group chats, and breaking-news feeds. During rapidly developing events, repetition can make the brain interpret information as immediate danger.

A — Ask: What Do We Actually Know?

Separate information into three categories:

- Confirmed.
- Unconfirmed.
- Speculation.

A viral video is not automatically evidence. Neither is a confident commentator. Uncertainty can be uncomfortable without being dangerous.

U — Use Your Body

Get out of your head for several minutes. Place both feet on the floor. Slow your breathing. Walk. Stretch. Take a shower. Hold something cold. Notice where you are physically located right now. Tell yourself:

“Something important may be happening in the world. At this moment, I am here.”

S — Speak With Someone

Do not process overwhelming information entirely online. Talk with a parent, caregiver, teacher, counselor, coach, therapist, clergy member, or trusted adult. Fear becomes harder to regulate when experienced alone.

E — Engage With Your Life

Go to practice. Do your homework. Eat dinner. Walk the dog. Text a friend about something completely unrelated. Listen to music. Sleep. Continuing ordinary life is not ignoring an extraordinary event. Routine tells the nervous system that life remains navigable.

3 Adult Grounding Protocol

For adults

GROUND

G — Get Oriented

Stop scrolling for a moment. Feel your feet against the floor and your body against the chair. Look around the room. Name where you are, what day it is, and what you were doing before you encountered the information.

R — Regulate Before You Interpret

Slow the body before asking the mind to solve an unprecedented question. Try several breaths in which the exhalation is slightly longer than the inhalation. Walk. Stretch. Drink water. Eat something. Step outside. Do not make major life decisions while highly activated.

O — Observe Your Mind

Notice what your mind is producing: Fear. Wonder. Excitement. Skepticism. Religious questions. Existential questions. Anger. Vindication. Confusion. None requires an immediate answer.

U — Understand the Difference Between Facts and Narrative

Ask:

What has actually been confirmed?

By whom?

What remains uncertain?

Am I consuming reporting—or someone's interpretation of reporting?

Be especially cautious about dramatic claims circulating faster than they can be independently verified.

N — Network With Humans

Talk to people you trust. Avoid spending hours alone consuming increasingly alarming material. If conversations become heated, step away. You do not have to convince anyone what the event “really means.”

D — Do the Next Ordinary Thing

Make dinner. Take the dog outside. Go to work. Help your child with homework. Call someone you love. Sleep before drawing enormous conclusions. Human beings often cope with extraordinary uncertainty by returning to ordinary acts of living.

You do not need to understand the universe tonight.

4 Older Adult Grounding Protocol

For older adults, families, caregivers, senior communities, and residential settings

STEADY

S — Sit and Settle

Sit somewhere familiar and comfortable. Place both feet securely on the floor. Take several slow breaths. Look around and identify familiar objects and people. Begin with the present moment.

T — Take Information Slowly

There is no need to watch continuous television coverage. Choose one or two reliable information sources and check them periodically rather than continuously. Ask a trusted family member or caregiver for help distinguishing confirmed information from rumor or manipulated media.

E — Express What You Are Feeling

A major disclosure event could raise profound questions about religion, mortality, meaning, humanity, or one's understanding of the world. Talk about them. Fear is permitted. So are curiosity, skepticism, amazement, humor, and wonder.

A — Anchor in Your Life Story

Remember other moments when the world seemed to change suddenly. Wars. Political upheaval. The Moon landing. September 11. Pandemics. Technological revolutions. You have encountered uncertainty before. Your lifetime of experience remains part of your psychological strength.

D — Daily Routine Matters

Take prescribed medications normally unless a medical professional advises otherwise. Eat regular meals. Hydrate. Sleep. Walk or exercise as appropriate. Attend appointments. Maintain social contact. Continue spiritual, religious, recreational, and family practices that provide stability.

Y — Your World Is Still Here

Whatever humanity eventually learns, the relationships and values that mattered yesterday still matter today. Your family is still your family. A friend is still a friend. Kindness remains kindness. Love remains love. And this moment does not need to be understood all at once.

The PATH Principle

Across childhood, adolescence, adulthood, and later life, the central message is the same:

Regulate first. Interpret second.

During periods of extraordinary uncertainty:

- Slow down.
- Stay connected.
- Distinguish evidence from speculation.
- Limit information overload.
- Maintain ordinary routines.
- Allow uncertainty.
- Seek help when distress becomes difficult to manage.

Psychological preparedness is not prediction.

It is the recognition that human beings can encounter information that challenges deeply held assumptions—and still respond with curiosity, compassion, critical thinking, and care for one another.

Be skeptical. Be curious. Be grounded. Have a plan.

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Educational purpose and professional support

These materials are intended for general educational and psychological-preparedness purposes and are not a substitute for individualized mental-health or medical care. Anyone experiencing severe distress, inability to function, thoughts of self-harm, or a psychiatric emergency should seek immediate professional or emergency assistance.