

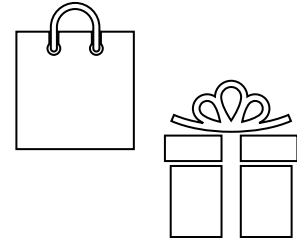


# Make Your Own Soothing Sensory Box

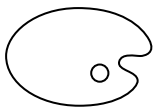
A soothing sensory box is a way to give yourself some support and self-care. You use it to support you in feeling grounded. The box aims to activate your senses by helping you connect through *touch, taste, sound, smell, and sight*, plus less well-known senses of *proprioception and interoception*.

## What do I need?

A shoe box, crate, bag, or anything able to hold nurturing items. Then choose which items to add to your box from the ideas below.



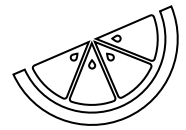
## Touch



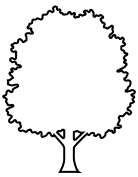
Using your hands to make something is an excellent form of self-regulation. Using clay or play-doh can help you transform tension or distract you from complicated feelings during a panic attack. If you are more in the mood for comfort, use a blanket to wrap around your shoulders to encourage a feeling of protection.

## Taste

Trying something spicy or fresh can awaken your taste buds and help you become grounded in the moment. Taste your selection and tune into the different sensations they create, for example, the sweetness of dried fruit or the spiciness of Bombay mix.



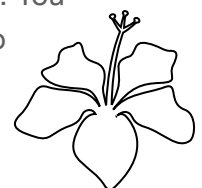
## Sight



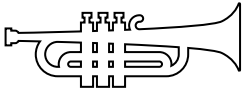
Connecting with photographs of friends, family, pets or happy times, such as fun days out or holidays can support us. Use pictures that embody how you want to feel, such as a sunset helping you feel calm, or a lake that evokes tranquillity.

## Scent

Our sense of smell can help us self-regulate by recalling pleasant times. For example, bonfires in autumn, cinnamon in winter, fresh flowers in spring, and coconut lotion in summer. You can spray your favourite scent onto a teddy or a cloth, or use aromatherapy oils to aid relaxation, such as lavender, ylang-ylang, and bergamot - always remember to read the label to check if these are safe for you to use. You can keep hand lotion and lip balm in the box as a reminder to use this sense to help you regulate.



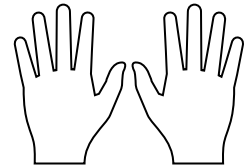
## Hearing



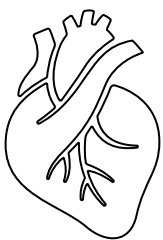
Keep a list of your favourite songs, lyrics, poems and quotes in your box to read to yourself. Try uplifting words and music.

## Proprioception (sense of movement)

Our sense of movement can be supported using all-over body taps, sweeping your hands over your arms and legs, yoga, or Qi Gong. These things help us move our bodies in a regulating way. Keep the *Body Tapping Sheet* in your box for reminders.



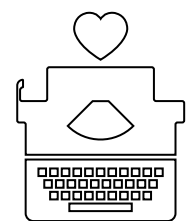
## Interoception (sense of internal state)



Interoception is the ability to understand our body's physical signals. Grounding exercises can support this sense. Turn your attention inwards, and notice what your body needs – are your muscles clenching? Is your jaw set and tight? Practising tuning into listening to what the body needs can help it shift into a supportive state. For example, you can place your hand over your heart if it is beating too quickly and observe your breath calming. You can sweep your fingertips across your forehead to soothe a headache. These actions help your body realise it is safe in this moment and bring you into regulation. You can keep stress balls and fidget toys in the box as a reminder.

## Relational Reminders

Keep photographs, notes and cards you have received from your friends, family, and other supportive people around you. When we are upset, our attachment needs can become activated, so it can be helpful to have reminders of people who love us or care about us.



## Water



Sipping water at regular intervals can reduce feelings of panic by helping us regulate our breathing. Splashing cold water on our face or wrists, or placing a flannel on the neck, can help us self-regulate.

Please see [www.healingmoon.org.uk/resources](http://www.healingmoon.org.uk/resources) for more information.

If someone has passed this leaflet to you and you are interested in finding out more about coming to art therapy, you can email Kae here: [healingmoon@proton.me](mailto:healingmoon@proton.me)

