

Self-soothe box

A self-soothe box has a number of different names including a crisis box, a distraction box or an emergency box.

When times are very difficult a self-soothe box is great for providing lots of ways to try and feel better. They can be used when you are feeling sad, upset, anxious, in crisis or having suicidal thoughts.

Important points:

The contents need to be personal, you should choose what goes in it as the box is for you.

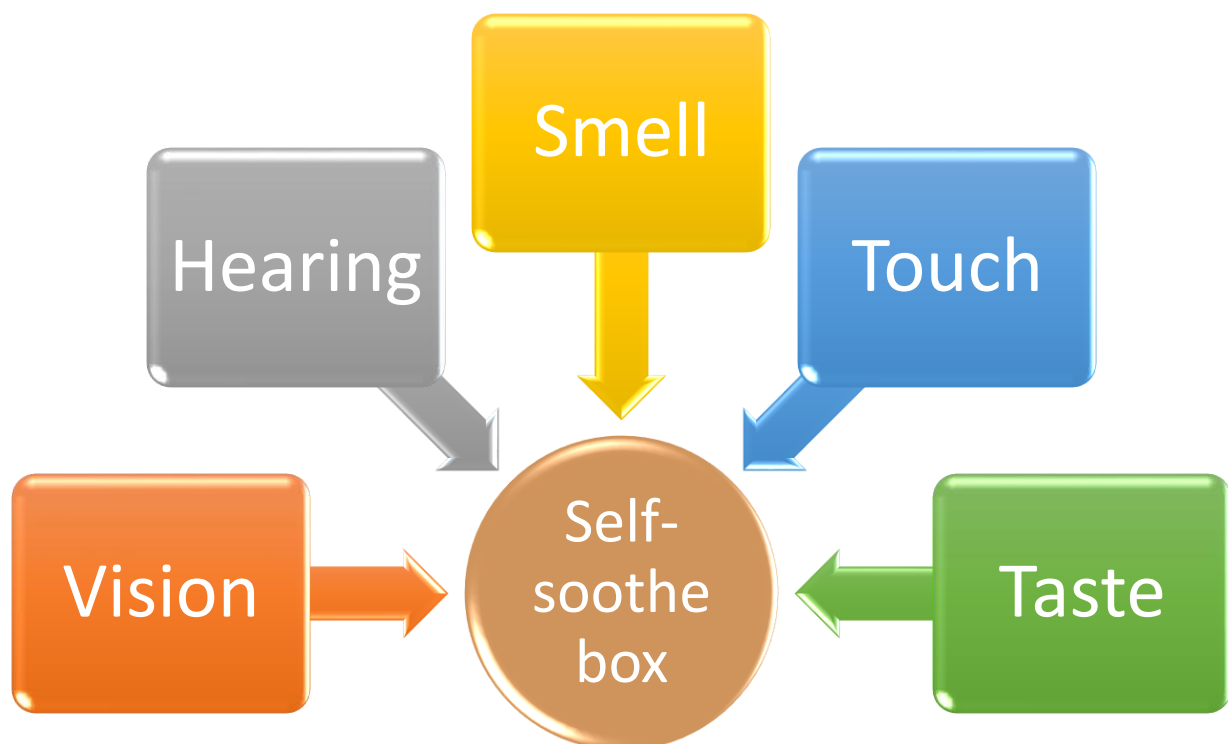
The box needs to be kept up to date and topped up. If something no longer helps, take it out.

It doesn't have to be a box – it could be a bag or anything you can keep things in. Some people like to decorate it, other people like to use something that already has a picture or design on it.

Finding a box or bag and choosing what goes in it can be a good distraction activity in itself.

You can have a main self-soothe box to keep at home as well as a mini-version which you can take out with you, just in case.

It can contain anything. To start with it can help to think of the different senses.



You can think of your own ideas, ask family or friends and look on the internet for ideas but here are some:

Touch

- a soft, cuddly cloth
- soft (slipper) socks
- soft toys eg a favourite teddy bear
- stress balls, squidgy toys or silicone poppers
- beads
- clay or play doh
- something hard or rough eg a nail file
- hot water bottle or a heatable beanie/wheat bag

Hear

- ideas of music or podcasts to listen to
- CDs or a memory stick with good sounds / music
- ideas of soothing sounds maybe rain, the sea, birdsong
- something you can make sounds or music with – an instrument perhaps

Smell

- a favourite perfume
- essential oils
- nice smellies (bath bombs, hand cream)
- jars of strong spices
- dried flowers or herbs

See

- photos of people you love or admire, or favourite pets
- pictures of places you've been to and felt safe
- ideas of TV and youtube videos to watch
- images of famous art you like

Taste

- nice foods and drinks
- very strong, spicy, salty, sour foods can help too eg peppermints, sour sweets
- interesting sensations eg popping candy

You can also include things which are associated with **happy memories**

- photos
- written descriptions
- pictures you've drawn
- tickets
- positive affirmations/quotes (from people you know or celebrities/famous people)
- cards and letters people have sent you in the past which are positive and make you feel nice

and **things to do**

- a fidget toy
- books to read
- colouring
- puzzles
- cards
- games
- craft items
- indulgent self-care (face mask, hair mask, nail varnish)
- hair brush

As well as **alternatives to self-harm**

- red pen for drawing on 'cuts'
- hair bands or elastic bands for pinging
- a raw chilli for biting
- straws or a paper bag to help if you start breathing too fast
- helpline / crisis telephone numbers
- reminders of things you have learnt in therapy
- paper and a pen to write down your thoughts and feelings

Remember - there are no rules except to keep it safe.