

# STRESS SOOTHING KIT

## 1. Self-Soothing Using Your Sense of **SMELL**

Smell is a very powerful sense that can trigger memories and make you feel a certain way. It's very helpful to identify smells that make you feel good. Here are some ideas:



Diffuse essentials oils.



Burn scented candles.



Take a walk and seek out flowers.



Wear your favorite perfume.



Carry a perfume card from a magazine in your bag.

## 2. Self-Soothing Using Your Sense of **SIGHT**

Vision is very important to humans. In fact, a large portion of our brain is devoted solely to our sense of sight. The things that you expose your eyes to have very powerful effects on you, both helpful and unhelpful. Each person will need to find images that have a soothing effect, but here are some ideas:



Go sit in a park and people-watch.



Take a walk and notice nature around you.



Walk through a museum.



Use a Zen Board or Zen Garden Tool.



Set your phone background to a picture of someone you love.

## 3. Self-Soothing Using Your Sense of **SOUND**

Certain sounds can soothe us. Use these examples to identify the sounds that help you relax:



Listen to soothing music.



Listen to audiobooks.



Listen to a water fountain.



Listen to nature sounds.



Listen to a relaxation exercise.

## 4. Self-Soothing Using Your Sense of **TOUCH**

Our skin is our largest organ, and it's completely covered with nerves that carry feelings to our brain. We often underestimate how certain tactile sensations can be pleasing. Find the ones that are most pleasing for you. Here are some suggestions:



Squeeze a stress ball or grip rings.



Do some dry brushing.



Carry a swatch of your favorite fabric.



Take a hot bath or shower.



Get a massage or do a self-massage.

## 5. Self-Soothing Using Your Sense of **TASTE**

Your sense of taste is so powerful that using it to self-sooth can be tricky. Food can certainly be pleasing and very comforting. However, often the foods that are the most pleasing overstimulate our brain circuitry and trigger addictive behaviors in us. If you are prone to overeating, bingeing, purging, or severely restricting what you eat, taste will likely be a slippery slope to self-soothe and you may want to talk to a specialist on how to best manage those symptoms. Similarly, if eating makes you anxious or nervous, use your other senses to calm yourself. I'm not a huge proponent of using our sense of taste to self-soothe, so proceed with caution.