

You will need

- A box, container or bag (e.g. a shoebox)
- Scissors
- Glue for the label
- Pens/pencils

Optional

- Stickers, glitter, photos or wrapping paper to decorate your box

We all struggle with how we're feeling sometimes and it's normal to have ups and downs. This year might have felt a little more down than up.

There are so many little things we can do to look after ourselves and support each other's mental health. Creating a self-soothe box is a little thing you can do to make a BIG difference to your mental health.

What is a self-soothe box?

A self-soothe box is a box that you can make that contains things that ground you, make you feel more relaxed and reduce symptoms of panic, anxiety or low mood. If you find yourself feeling anxious, stressed out, or down, you can turn to your self-soothe box to help manage your feelings.

Three simple steps to start

1. Find a box, container, bag, or whatever you have. Shoeboxes can be handy for this.
2. Customise the label we've provided and stick it on your box, or write the title on your box however you like.
3. Decorate the outside of your box. Stickers, drawings, glitter, photos – go wild!

What should be in my self-soothe box?

We recommend you have a variety of things in your box to focus your mind on. You could include something to touch, something to look at and maybe even something to taste.

To help you get started, here are some ideas to inspire you!

Touch

Something to touch is a good distraction for your hands. Playdough, fidget cubes or spinners and stress balls are great for this; they're satisfying to touch, and easy to put force into and relieve some stress. It can encourage your muscles to relax, which is what many methods to reduce worry involve.

Memories

Keep a few photos of people or places that make you smile and feel positive. These can remind you of all the different parts of your life, not just the feeling you are finding difficult at that time. If you don't have photos, then you could find an item which has positive memories attached to it such a book or a postcard.

Music

Do you have a favourite song? You could create a calming playlist with relaxing music to help you slow down and steady your breathing. Keep some earphones in your box, to make sure you can access your favourite music easily.

Positive affirmation / quote cards

Think of your favourite uplifting quotes from films, books, poets and accounts that you follow on social media and scribble these onto cards. Read these in your head or out loud and feel everything about you that makes you feel brave, strong and special.

Smell

This can be personalised based on what scents you prefer. A few typical ones include peppermint for grounding and lavender or rose for relaxation and tranquillity. Another great item is a candle. The scent of a candle is perfect to focus your senses on and has the ability to make you feel much more present. If you try to keep the scent fairly simple and consistent, you can end up associating this scent with relaxing, which increases its effectiveness.

Find out what our Activists have in their self-soothe boxes [here](#).

Label for your self-soothe box

Create your label by choosing your favourite one below, or use the blank one if you want to come up with a unique name for your box. Customise it, cut it out and stick it on your box.

