

Soothing box/bag

When we are very ***distressed***, it is difficult to think ***rationally*** and to decide how to help ***ourselves***. We can therefore resort to using self-destructive behaviours which may help at that moment, but can cause other problems later and in the long-term. It can be useful to keep an ‘Emergency’ or ‘Soothe’ bag or box, in a prominent and handy place, so that when you feel overwhelmingly distressed, you can go to your bag/box and find something that will help you cope and/or feel better.

Collect together items that are meaningful, or you know will be helpful. Try to stimulate each of your senses; vision, hearing, smell, taste and touch.

Ideas for what to put in your box or bag:

**Vision**: photo album, DVD, book or magazine, a picture of a beautiful safe place. Reminder for funny or inspiring YouTube video, walk or sit in the park or garden, guided meditation.

**Hearing**: soothing or inspiring music on CD or mp3 player, recordings of a friends voice, reminder of phone numbers to ring, a talking book.

**Smell** – Oils, favourite perfume, scented pebbles or granules. Strong smelling soap.

**Taste**: Fruity snack or treat, a sachet of hot chocolate or ready prepared cake mix. Mints or strong flavoured sweets.

**Touch**: soft woolly socks or blanket, teddy bear, comforter or grounding object, hand or foot lotion, massage oil, warm bubble bath, stress balls.

**Write all your favourite quotes all over the box**

*When you use these items, or whatever you do, pay attention to your physical senses: see, hear, smell or taste, and touch. Look around you and notice what you see (colours, shapes, light or shadow, movement), what you hear (nature sounds, sounds in the room, near and far), what you smell or taste (including from the environment around you), and what you can touch – right now, wherever you are as well as items from your emergency bag/box.*