
Self-Soothing with Your Senses

Learning to relax and soothe yourself is very important for many reasons. In a state of relaxation, your body is no longer in a state of constant emergency, preparing to either confront a stressful situation or run away from it. As a result, it is easier for your brain to think of healthier ways to cope with your problems. Included here are a list of simple relaxation and soothing activities that utilize your 5 senses of smell, sight, hearing, taste and touch. As you explore this list, think about what works best for you and be willing to try something new if it sounds exciting.

Smell

- Burn scented candles or incense in your room or house.
- Wear scented oils, perfumes or cologne that make you feel happy, confident or sexy.
- Go somewhere where the scent is pleasing to you, like a bakery or restaurant.
- Lie down in your local park and smell the grass and outdoor smells.
- Buy fresh cut flowers.
- Hug someone you know whose smell makes you feel calm.

Vision

- Go through magazines and books to cut out pictures that you like. Make a collage of them to hang on your wall or keep some of them with you in your handbag or wallet to look at when you're away from home.
- Find a place that's soothing for you to look at, like a park or museum. Or find a picture of a place that's soothing for you to look at, like the ocean.
- Draw or paint your own picture that's pleasing to you.
- Carry a picture or photograph of someone you love, someone you find attractive, or someone you admire.

Hearing

- Listen to soothing music. This can be anything that works for you. It might be music with singing or without.

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- Listen to audiobooks.
 - Turn on the television and just listen. Sit in a comfortable chair or lie down, and then close your eyes and listen.
 - Listen to a soothing podcast or video online.
 - Open your window and listen to the peaceful sounds outside.
 - Listen to a recording of nature sounds, such as birds and other wildlife.
 - Listen to a white noise machine.
 - Listen to a recording of a meditation or relaxation exercise.

Taste

- Enjoy your favorite meal, whatever it is. Eat slowly so you can enjoy the way it tastes.
- Carry lollipops, gum or other candy with you to eat when you're feeling upset.
- Eat a soothing food, like ice cream, chocolate, or something else that makes you feel good.
- Drink something soothing such as coffee, tea, or hot chocolate. Practice drinking it slowly.
- Suck on an ice cube or an ice pop.
- Eat a piece of fresh fruit and then eat it slowly.

Touch

- Carry something soft or velvety in your pocket to touch when you need to, like a piece of cloth.
- Take a warm or cold shower.
- Take a warm bubble bath with scented oils.
- Get a massage or massage yourself.
- Play with your pet.
- Wear your most comfortable clothes.

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My Relaxation Plan (Relaxation and soothing skills to use at home)

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Book: Cognitive Behavioral Therapy Made Simple By: Seth J. Gillihan PhD

Worksheet by: Janay Bailey, LMHC