

Comfort Bag / Box

Creating an Emotional First Aid Kit

These ideas can be used by adults or adolescents or used to help a child make their own emotional first aid kit. This kit can be prepared in advance of an emotional crisis point or mood swing so that it can become a go-to for comfort and/or coping during difficult times.

Music / Audio

- Tape or CD player
- Playlist or CD of favorite songs
- Meditation CDs, tapes, or playlist
- A sea shell to place to your ear to hear the sounds of the ocean
- An audiobook on tape or CD
- A homemade recording of family or friends talking about their favorite memories with you

Words

- Inspirational sayings, stories or words to songs
- Jokes that make you laugh
- Cards which contain inspirational words or a special note. (Don't sit around waiting for someone to send you a special card. Go out and buy yourself a card that says what you need to hear!)
- Special things that people have said or written about you
- Old love letters
- A notebook and pen so you can write down your thoughts and feelings
- Affirmations about yourself or your situation that help you feel strong, capable, loved and safe

Sensation (to either calm or release tension)

- A soft plush animal
- Objects and toys to fiddle with or stroke
- A "worry" stone or a smooth, polished rock to hold in your hand and rub*
- A squishy ball or toy which can be squeezed to release tension
- Playdough or Silly Putty
- Bubble bath or Bath salts
- Peppermint foot lotion
- Lotion for hands/feet
- A bag of soft tissues with aloe
- Head, hand, foot or body massagers
- Chinese "Happy Balls"
- A soft blanket

Things to bring out your "inner child"

- Toys or games that make you feel playful
- Candy that had special meaning
- Favorite movie or book as a child
- Crayons, watercolor, fingerpaint, sidewalk chalk, etc.
- A box/bag of Guatemalan "Worry Dolls" to tell your troubles to
- Bubbles to blow

Things to Eat / Taste

- An energy bar
- Some special chocolates (remember to store bag in a cool place)
- Some bags of your favorite tea & a mug
- Hot chocolate pouches
- An envelope with money to treat yourself to a nice meal, dessert, or appetizer
- A bottle of Gatorade

Things to look at

- Special memories written on index cards or in a journal
- A rock, seashell or pressed flower you kept to remind you of a special event or vacation filled with good memories
- Pictures of people or places that elicit pleasant, comforting memories
- A favorite or inspirational movie
- An envelope with money in it to treat yourself and a friend to a movie

Reminders that you are loved

- A pressed flower from a corsage or bouquet or special place given to you by someone who let you know you are loved
- Love letters
- Cards from family or special friends
- Gifts or toys that have special meaning because they were given to you by someone who loved you

Things to smell

- A scented bag of herbs or potpourri
- A candle whose scent is calming or pleasing or reminds you of comfort of things cooking in the kitchen
- Incense and incense holder
- A lighter to light candles or incense
- cinnamon sticks
- Perfume
- Essential oil

Things to wear

- A necklace that has special meaning to you – it could be a locket with pictures of people you love or who loved you, a stone with special properties, a necklace given to you, Some necklaces can hold a stone of your choice or have a vial filled with a particular essential oil.
- A piece of jewelry given to you which produces good feelings and memories when worn
- Soft, cozy socks
- An eye mask that is cool, weighted, or scented
- A neck pillow

Phone numbers of friends

We have all had times when we picked up the phone and called a friend, any friend, while feeling down or upset about something. Sometimes, we ended up feeling worse than before we called because that particular person didn't say what we needed to hear. The mistake many of us make is to realize we have friends who have different strengths. Before calling someone, think about what kind of support you would find most helpful. Then think about your friends and who would be the best person to provide that kind of support. What is it that you need? Someone who....

- Believes in me
- Is positive and welcoming
- Asks the right questions
- Is a great listener
- Tells me it will be okay
- Laughs and cries with me
- Allows me to be myself
- Offers safety and hope
- Doesn't give up on me
- Enjoys my company
- Has connections
- Understands and encourages me
- Is comfortable to be with
- Can provide a safe refuge
- Is comfortable with tears

Things to do with a notebook, photo album, or index cards and a metal book ring:

Make one or more of the following....

- **“What Makes Me Feel Good” Book** – Activities that are comforting, lift your spirits or make you feel good
- **My Book of Confidence** – things you like about yourself, what you are good at, positive comments others have said about you, copies of job reviews, letters of recommendation, etc. If you’re having trouble with this, ask a friend, loved one or therapist.
- **“Favorite Memories of Me” Book** – include some of your favorite memories and other people’s favorite memories about you
- **My Book of Favorite Quotes** – quotes that offer you reassurance, courage, inspiration or comfort.
- **Photos of Special People and Places**

Other things you may want to include:

- Hole punch
- Index cards
- Pen and pencils
- Colored markers
- Scissors
- Paper

**Worry Stones –smooth, polished stones which individuals rubbed as a way of reducing stress and creating a sense of calm; originated in Ancient Greece*

***Guatemalan Worry Dolls – small dolls made of twigs or wire wrapped with bits of colorful fabric originally made in Guatemala. According to folklore, children tell one worry to each doll and place the dolls under their pillows. The dolls worry in place of the child, thus taking away their worries and allowing the child to sleep peacefully*