

Hope



Box



What is a hope box?

A hope box goes by a lot of names: *crisis box*, *emergency box*, *self-soothe box*, *happy box*.

You can call it anything that makes you feel comfortable. The idea behind this box is that it is filled with things that can help you to feel better. When you're feeling upset, anxious, or experiencing thoughts of suicide then you can use the box as a way to feel better.



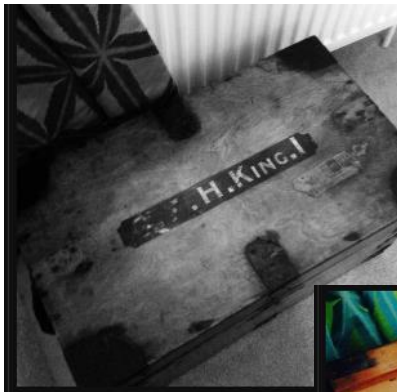
One key thing to remember about a hope box is that it is **personal to you**. This is really important, as everyone responds differently to different things. You can make your own box, or decorate any sort of container or bag to use, and some people even make small pocket-sized versions to take out with them in case they need it. The more personalised the better, and creating the hope box in itself can be a really good distraction technique or self-care activity.



What should it look like?

In short-anything you want it to! A hope box doesn't have to be a box- it can be a bag or box or anything you want it to be. Most people find it helpful to decorate it to make it personal, and sometimes to have a main hope box and a mini travel version to carry with them for when they need it.

Here are some examples:



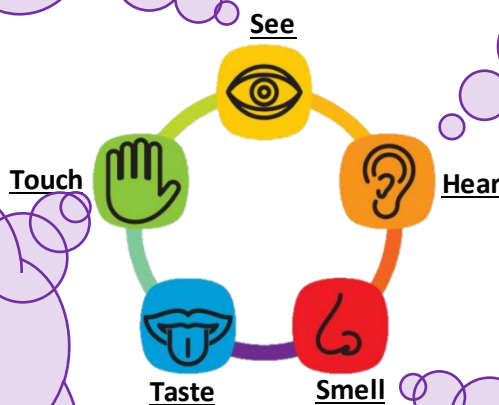
What do I put in it?

The idea of self-soothing:

Many people find it helpful to put self-soothe items into their hope box. Self-soothing is using things that feel good to each of your senses to help you to feel calm or happy. The 5 senses and some ideas of what these items could be are:

Such as; photos of loved ones, images of places you feel safe, something with soothing

Such as; a USB filled with relaxing noises, your favourite CD, a musical instrument, audio books, clickers.



Such as; stress ball, nail file, a soft piece of clothing, hand lotion to massage hands with, tactile beads, rubber bands to snap on wrist or stretch, clay, PVA

Such as; scented candle, aromatherapy oils, jar of spices, scented lotion, a comforting perfume, scratch and sniff stickers.

Such as; chocolate, hard sweets, mints, sour sweets, flavoured tea bag, hot chocolate, popping candy.

What else to put in:

Anything that brings you comfort or joy, or reminds you of hope for the future. Many people also find it helpful to include some things they use as alternative ways of coping or for distractions. These could include:

- * **Helpline numbers they can use in an emergency.**
- * **Your safety plan.**
- * **Elastic bands to snap.**
- * **Games to play.**
- * **Hot water bottle.**
- * **A colouring book.**
- * **Cut up straws to breathe into to listen to breathing.**
- * **Hair brush.**
- * **Nail varnish.**
- * **Slipper socks.**
- * **Coping statements.**
- * **Touch stones.**
- * **Reminders of key things learnt in therapy sessions.**
- * **Letters you or a loved one wrote to you when feeling more positive.**
- * **A notepad and pens to write down how you feel.**
- * **List of distraction ideas.**
- * **Breathing exercises list.**



Key things to note



A hope box is for you. This means that you need to make sure that it includes what you need it to and that you call it what you want to.

Have a look around on the internet if you need ideas of what to put in it.

If something no longer brings you comfort and joy in it then change it.

Keep the hope box where you can access it when you need it the most.

