

SELF-SOOTHING STRATEGIES

Strategies To Manage Stress

With Hearing

- ◇ Pay attention to sounds of nature (waves, birds, rainfall, and leaves rustling).
- ◇ Pay attention to the sounds of the city (traffic horns, city music)
- ◇ Sing to your favorite songs
- ◇ Hum a soothing tune.
- ◇ Burn a CD or make an iPod mix with music that will get you through tough times. Turn it on
- ◇ Be mindful of any sounds that come your way, letting them go in one ear and out the other
- ◇ Turn on the radio
- ◇ Listen to soothing or invigorating music

With Touch

- ◇ Take a long hot bath or shower
- ◇ Pet your dog or cat
- ◇ Have a massage. Soak your feet
- ◇ Put creamy lotion on your whole body
- ◇ Put a cold compress on your forehead
- ◇ Sink into a comfortable chair in your home
- ◇ Take a drive with the car windows rolled down.
- ◇ Hug someone
- ◇ Put clean sheets on the bed
- ◇ Wrap up in a blanket

With Vision

- ◇ Look at the stars at night
- ◇ Look at pictures you like in a book
- ◇ Buy one beautiful flower
- ◇ Light a candle and watch the flame
- ◇ Look at nature around you
- ◇ Watch a sunrise or a sunset
- ◇ Take a walk in a park or a scenic hike
- ◇ Browse through stores looking at things

With Smell

- ◇ Use your favorite soap, shampoo or lotions
- ◇ Burn incense or light a scented candle
- ◇ Open the window and smell the air
- ◇ Open a package of coffee and inhale the aroma
- ◇ Boil cinnamon. Make cookies, bread, or popcorn
- ◇ Walk in a wooded area and mindfully breathe in the fresh smells of nature

With Taste

- ◇ Eat some of your favorite foods
- ◇ Drink your favorite soothing drink, such as herbal tea, hot chocolate or a latté or smoothie
- ◇ Treat yourself to a dessert
- ◇ Suck on a piece of peppermint candy
- ◇ Chew your favorite gum
- ◇ Really taste the food you eat. Eat one thing mindfully.

DISTRACTION STRATEGIES

Strategies To Manage Stress

Activities

- ◇ Call or go out with a friend
- ◇ Listen to your iPod; download music
- ◇ Build something
- ◇ Read magazines, books, comics
- ◇ Go out for a meal or eat a favorite food
- ◇ Clean a room in your house
- ◇ Go walking, exercise or play sports

“Pushing Away”

- ◇ Leave the situation mentally
- ◇ Build an imaginary wall between you and the situation
- ◇ Yell “No!” at stressful thoughts
- ◇ Put the pain “on a shelf” for the moment
- ◇ Write down what you are stressed about and tear the paper into hundreds of tiny pieces

Sensations

- ◇ Squeeze a rubber ball very hard
- ◇ Listen to very loud music
- ◇ Hold ice in your hand or mouth
- ◇ Go out in the rain or snow
- ◇ Take a hot or cold shower
- ◇ Splash cold water on your face

Other Thoughts

- ◇ Count to 10; count colors in a painting or poster or out the window; count anything
- ◇ Repeat words to a song in your mind
- ◇ Work through a puzzle
- ◇ Try to remember every street in your neighborhood, or go through every TTC stop-then do the same thing in reverse