



## Soothing Yourself When You Are Upset

Learning to soothe yourself when you are upset is a critical part of mental health. All of the activities pictured below trigger biochemical in the brain that are associated with feelings of calm and contentment. Circle the ones that you feel are most useful in helping you feel better when you are stressed or going through difficult times. Do these activities several times a day when you feel particularly stressed or upset.



Find familiar smells.



Try yoga or stretching.



Chew gum.



Sit near a body of water.



Listen to relaxing music.



Pet a pet.



Meditate.



Take a hike.



Get a massage.



## Keep Track of Your Activities and Your Moods

The activities below can provide immediate relief when you are feeling upset, but using calming techniques on a regular basis will always be most effective. Use this sheet to record the dates you use each technique.



Familiar smells are particularly soothing. Certain smells seem to have an immediate influence on our emotions. Vanilla will help elevate your mood and lavender has a calming effect.

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Our bodies are meant to move. Any exercise, from simple stretching to a rigorous workout, will improve your mood.

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Repetitive muscle movement, like chewing gum, rocking, or knitting, produces serotonin in the brain, which will bring you a sense of calm.

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Sitting by a body of water will expose you to the mood-elevating effects of negative ions and the relaxing sounds of the water.

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Listening to relaxing music while you breathe deeply can help lower your cortisol, a biochemical associated with stress.

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Studies tell us that people with pets tend to be happier, healthier, and more resilient. Just being around animals can lower blood pressure and raise serotonin levels.

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Getting a massage triggers the relaxation response in the body. Self-massage can also help reduce stress hormones, improve circulation, and ease muscle pain.

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Taking a hike in nature combines the benefits of exercise with the benefits of being in nature. One study showed that looking at photos of nature helped reduce stress hormones.

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