

SENSORY TOOLKIT FOR ADULTS

HERE'S A GUIDE TO CREATING A SENSORY KIT TAILORED TO THE NEEDS OF ADULTS

1. SELECTING A CONTAINER

Choose a portable container to store the sensory items. It could be a small pouch, a durable bag, or a plastic container with a secure lid for easy transportation.

2. CALMING TOOLS

- **Stress Balls:** Squeezable stress balls provide tactile stimulation and help relieve tension.
- **Fidget Spinners or Fidget Cubes:** These handheld gadgets offer sensory stimulation and promote focus and relaxation.
- **Tactile Items:** Include textured items like soft fabrics, velcro, smooth stones, or textured surfaces to engage the sense of touch.

3. VISUAL AIDS

- **Calming Visuals:** Add calming images or photos that promote relaxation, such as nature scenes, serene landscapes, or peaceful artwork.
- **Sunglasses:** Provide items to block out bright lights or glare, offering visual relief in overwhelming environments.

4. AUDITORY TOOLS

- **Noise-Canceling Earplugs or Earmuffs:** Include earplugs or earmuffs to reduce noise sensitivity and provide auditory relief in noisy environments.
- **Relaxing Music or Soundtracks:** Include headphones and pre-loaded audio files with calming music, nature sounds, or guided meditation sessions.

5. SENSORY SOOTHERS

- **Aromatherapy Products:** Include essential oils or scented sachets with calming scents like lavender or chamomile to promote relaxation.
- **Hand Lotion or Scented Balms:** Offer scented lotions or balms for sensory soothing and tactile stimulation.

6. SELF-REGULATION TOOLS

- **Breathing Exercises Guide:** Include instructions or a printed guide for deep breathing exercises to promote relaxation and emotional well-being.
- **Prayer/Meditation Prompts:** Provide prayer prompts or mindfulness exercises to facilitate relaxation and stress reduction.

7. ADDITIONAL ITEMS

- **Personal Comfort Items:** Include any personal items that provide comfort or familiarity, such as a favorite blanket, stuffed animal, or memento.
- **Snacks and Water:** Pack healthy snacks and a water bottle to stay hydrated and regulate energy levels during stressful situations.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR USING A SENSORY TOOL KIT

1. SELECTING TOOLS

Choose sensory tools that you find most helpful. Consider your sensory preferences and the specific situation you're in.

2. IDENTIFYING SENSORY NEEDS

Recognize when you're experiencing heightened stress levels. Pay attention to signs such as feeling overwhelmed, anxious, or agitated.

3. CREATING A CALMING ENVIRONMENT

Find a quiet space where you can use your sensory tools without distractions. Dim the lights, if possible, and minimize noise to create a soothing atmosphere.

4. ENGAGING WITH TOOLS

- **Tactile Tools:** Use squishy balls, textured objects, or fidget toys to provide tactile stimulation and promote relaxation. Experiment with different textures to find what works best for you.
- **Visual Aids:** Look at calming images or picture cards to relax and reduce stress. Focus on the colors, patterns, or scenes that bring you comfort.
- **Auditory Tools:** Listen to soothing music or nature sounds through headphones to block out noise. Adjust the volume to a comfortable level.
- **Scented Items:** Inhale the aroma of scented playdough, essential oils, or scented stickers to evoke feelings of calmness and relaxation.
- **Breathing and Relaxation Techniques:** Practice deep breathing exercises to reduce tension.

5. USING TOOLS THOUGHTFULLY

Be present as you engage with each sensory tool. Focus on the sensations and experiences it provides, allowing yourself to fully immerse in the calming effects.

6. EXPERIMENTING AND ADJUSTING

Explore different combinations of sensory tools and techniques to see what works best for you. Don't be afraid to adjust or switch tools based on your changing needs and preferences.

7. TAKING BREAKS

If you start to feel overwhelmed, take a break. Step away from the situation, practice deep breathing, or engage in another calming activity until you feel ready to return.

8. REFLECTING AND REASSESSING

After using the sensory tools, take a moment to reflect on how they helped you. Consider what worked well and what you might want to adjust for next time.

9. STORING AND MAINTAINING TOOLS

Return the sensory tools to the kit after each use to keep them organized and easily accessible for future use.

10. SEEKING SUPPORT

If you're struggling, don't hesitate to reach out for support from the church staff or a volunteer. You're not alone, and there are resources available to help you.