Making a 'self soothe' box and deep breathing

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If you often find your child is struggling with feelings of anxiety or panic, a 'self-soothe box' is a great way to manage those feelings and help them to feel more grounded and relaxed.

What should I put into my box?			
Touch As a good distraction for your hands. Playdough, fidget cubes or spinners, and stress balls are great for this; they're satisfying to touch, and easy to put force into and relieve some stress. It can encourage your muscles to relax, which is what many methods to reduce anxiety involve.	**Memories** keep a few photos of people or places or nostalgic items that have only positive memories attached to them. **Music** Keeping some earphones and making an easy-to access, calming playlist on your phone is a nice, easy way of finding music to listen to.	**Smell** This can be personalised depending on what scents you prefer; a few of the typical ones include: peppermint for grounding, and lavender or rose for relaxation and tranquillity. You can put a few drops of essential oil on your clothing, stress ball or playdough.	**Water** Drinking water can be such a vital way of reducing symptoms of panic. Not only is it important to stay hydrated, but the regular sipping is a good way to keep a steady rhythm to your breathing. **Calming techniques** Have a card with some steady breathing techniques written on it. It acts as a reminder to keep calm and focused. Also have some muscle relaxation exercises written down on other postcards.

Take deep breath
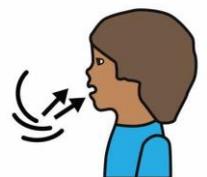
- Let your breath flow as deep down into your belly as is comfortable, without forcing it.

- Try breathing in through your nose and out through your mouth.

- Breathe in gently and regularly. Some people find it helpful to count steadily from 1 to 5. You may not be able to reach 5 at first.

- Then, without pausing or holding your breath, let it flow out gently, counting from 1 to 5 again, if you find this helpful.

- Keep doing this for 3 to 5 minutes.