

Calm Kit Instructions

De-Stress Ball

- Items in kit: 2 balloons & water beads ——— Items needed not in kit: water, scissors, empty disposable water bottle
- Put water beads in empty water bottle and then fill it with water
- Let the water beads sit for at least 6 hours- they will grow
- Dump out extra water but keep the water beads in the water bottle
- Put a balloon around the opening of the water bottle
- Turn the water bottle upside down and squeeze the bottle so the water beads go in the balloon
- Remove the balloon from the water bottle and tie it off
- Cut the very end of the 2nd balloon off and have a friend stretch this 2nd balloon open
- Push the water bead filled balloon into the 2nd balloon so that there are two layers of balloon material around the beads

How it helps: De-stress balls can be squeezed and relaxed which becomes a repetitive and sometimes subconscious movement. The tension built up can be redirected to the ball, thus helping to symbolize transferring the stress to another object. When you squeeze the ball, notice how your muscles in your hand are tensing. Notice the difference when you relax your hand muscles. When we are stressed, we often tense many muscles. Progressive muscle relaxation involves tensing various muscle groups and holding that tension for several seconds, and then relaxing the muscles. You can find you tube videos on progressive muscle relaxation for more information.

Flick-Up Beads

- Items in kit: pony beads & paracord string ——— Items not in kit: scissors
- Slide 1 bead to the middle of the Paracord string
- Take one end of the paracord string and put it through a 2nd bead
- Take the other end of the string and put it through the opposite side of the 2nd bead (where the first end just came out)
- Pull both ends of the paracord string so that the 2nd bead is resting on top of the 1st bead
- Continue to do this with beads 3 – 10 until you have 10 beads in a row
- Leave a couple inches of open paracord on both ends of the string and then tie the ends of both strings together in a knot
- Have fun fidgeting with your flick-up beads, moving them up and down the string

How it helps: Flick-up beads are a form of distraction tool or fidget toy. For some people, using fidget toys such as this can help them to focus and stay alert. They can also be used for meditation by watching the bead move from side to side. Some people may choose to repeat a meaningful calming word or phrase as they move each bead up and down. Distraction tools can also be used to help distract someone from mild pain or discomfort. It doesn't take away the pain completely, but it may help to focus on this activity rather than the pain.

Galaxy Jar

- Items in kit: Plastic container with lid- pre-filled $\frac{1}{2}$ way with corn syrup plus one drop of dish soap, glitter/objects
- Items not in kit: water, scissors, paper towel
- Open the top of the clear container that is filled with clear liquid
- Cut off a corner of the bag containing the glitter/objects and carefully dump the glitter/objects into the plastic container
- Add water to the container so that it is filled almost all of the way to the top
- Screw or snap on the lid so that it is very tight

How it helps: Imagine that the glitter pieces are your thoughts and emotions. When we are stressed or upset, we often feel like our thoughts and emotions are racing or swirling out of control. Shake the galaxy jar and notice how the glitter pieces are jumbled up and moving in all different directions. Now set the jar down and focus on the glitter. Slowly the pieces will settle to the bottom, move slower, and the jar will become calm. This is what typically happens to our thoughts and emotions over time when we are dealing with something that is very stressful. If we can take time to focus on our breathing, do some self-care, or talk with someone about what is going on, often the glitter will settle and we will return to being calm once again.

Scented Relaxation Eye Pillow

- Items in kit: fabric bag, rice scented with vanilla extract & ribbon ——— Items not in kit: scissors and glue (optional)
- Fill the fabric bag with the scented rice until it is as full as you want it to be
- If you have glue, put glue where you will be tying the bag to help prevent rice from falling out
- Tie the ribbon tightly around the bag in a few knots so that it doesn't come untied

How it helps: The scented eye pillow can help you with mindfulness. If you are comfortable with it, lay down and close your eyes, and put the pillow over them. Or you can just lay it by you too. Oftentimes we get so busy during the day that we forget to slow down and notice what is going on around us. It can help us deal with stress, when we become mindful of our senses throughout the day. Think about your senses. Look at the eye pillow. Notice the color and shape. Next close your eyes and feel the pillow. Notice the texture of the bag, ribbon, and how the rice feels inside. Can you hear the rice inside the bag or the sound of your fingers on the fabric? Next smell the eye pillow and notice the vanilla scent. Think of ways that you can be mindful throughout your day and focus on your senses as you experience everyday things.

These kits were made to address the injustice of the lack of support and education regarding stress and pain management in high school students through funding from a peace first mini grant. To learn more, visit <https://www.peacefirst.org/project/calm-kits>

Scented Relaxation Eye Pillow

- Items in kit: pinwheel straw (pink) with yellow extension and red/brown plastic fastener, pinwheel metallic foil and mini flower foil
- Remove the red/brown plastic fastener from the yellow extension. Keep yellow and pink pieces together.
- Put the tip of the yellow extension through the center hole of the pinwheel metallic foil pieces (leave stapled together)
- Pick one of the points of the metallic foil and insert the tip of the yellow extension through the peripheral point's hole. In a clockwise fashion, repeat this with each of the metallic foil points until the pinwheel takes shape. You will alternate colors back and forth. Do not skip any points of the metallic foil pinwheel.
- When you are done, put the tip of the yellow extension through the mini foil flower.
- Then put the red/brown plastic fastener back on the yellow extension as it was when you took it out of the bag.
- Practice deep breathing with your pinwheel.

How it helps: Breathing is one of the easiest ways to calm our body. We always have our breath with us, and at any time, we can focus on our in breath and our out breath. When we are anxious we often take fast, shallow breaths. We can slow down, even in the midst of stress, and take slower and deeper breaths, and help ourselves be in a more calm state of mind. You can use the pinwheel to help you work on taking deep in breaths and then fully exhaling as you see how long you can keep the pinwheel spinning. You can use the pinwheel as a reminder to focus on your breath when you are stressed, or need help calming down.

Gratitude Notes

- Items in kit: sticky notes ——— Items not in kit: pen or pencil
- On each sticky note, write a note about who or what you are thankful for
- Think of ways to share your gratitude with others (friends, teachers, parents, etc.)
- Example: "Thank you for being an awesome friend!" Stick it on your friend's backpack, locker, or place they will see it

How it works: We often get so focused on what is going wrong in our lives, that we don't take time to focus on all of the good things in life. There is a lot of research in the field of positive psychology that focuses on how gratitude may help emotional wellbeing. You can also write down a few good things that have happened to you today and also write down why you think these good things happened. If you want, you can take these gratitude activities a step further and share these thoughts with others. You may want to start a gratitude journal where you write down what you are thankful for on a daily basis.

*This information is not to be used as medical or mental health advice. The content and Calm Kit were produced as part of a Peace First project. If you have a medical problem, are in pain, or feel very stressed, please talk to a trusted adult, counselor, doctor, or medical professional. **Safety: Small items should not be used by young children. No items should be put in or near the mouth. Do not put water beads down a drain.***