



Dial Down Your Pain | Dial up your life

# FLARE-UP FIRST AID KIT

Pick 1 or 2 of these to do alongside following medical advice

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## BUILD A NEST

Find the most comfortable rest position for you. Use cushions, blankets, and duvets under your body to bring the surface you rest against to the shape of your body. Rest and release are important. See if you can soften into this support, allowing parts that aren't directly in pain to soften and relax.

## MOVE, STAY ACTIVE

Avoid bracing against the pain. Small movements like wiggling of your hips or shoulders can create a ripple of ease through your body. Or you might like to tense your muscles and then very slowly release the tension whilst noticing changes in your whole body (hands can work well for this).

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## DISTRACT YOURSELF

Worrisome thoughts make our pain worse. Distract yourself by taking your attention away from your body. Look out the window or listen to music. If you can concentrate on something other than the pain in our body you'll get a short break from it.

## INTERNAL DRUG CABINET

Smiling, laughing or remembering something joyful releases natural pain relievers:- serotonin, endorphins and dopamine levels. Soothing touch, when we stroke a pet or a soft blanket releases oxytocin.

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## TALK TO A FRIEND

When we show up as ourselves we deepen our connection with others. Don't think of yourself as a burden. Give your friends the chance to support you as you would for them. If we allow ourselves to be vulnerable it helps others feel safe to share too.

## RELEASE YOUR FRUSTRATION

You don't need to put on a brave face all the time. Have a tantrum. Pick an object like a ball of socks and give it all you got, swear/shout at it, squeeze it, throw it. Or if you prefer to put pen to paper draw, scrawl, scribble or write to let frustration out.

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## BOX OF GIFTS

When we're in pain we can forget the things that make us feel better. Have a box of objects that make you feel good when you look through them. Set up a music playlist to suit your different moods, or list your favourite TV shows or podcasts.

## ACCEPTANCE

Rather than trying to fight the pain, can you come to a place where things can be as they are in that moment? This isn't giving in to the pain. But it is giving up the exhausting battle of trying to conquer the pain.

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## HOPE

Despite how things feel at the moment, there's real evidence that your pain will change. Remember times when your pain hasn't been as bad and know that this flare-up will also pass.