



# Best Sensory Strategies for Teens, Adults and Parents

## YOUTUBE FREEBIE

Everyone has a unique sensory system, which means we can ALL feel overwhelmed or overstimulated at times.

Include these strategies into your daily routine to help proactively manage sensory overload!

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### STRATEGIES IF YOU'RE SENSITIVE TO SENSORY INPUT:

#### 1 EXERCISE

Movement and exercise release "happy" chemicals and can help your process the sensory world a little bit easier.

- Go for a walk around the block
- Go for a hike through the mountains
- Go on a quick run!

#### 2 PROPRIOCEPTION / HEAVY WORK

Proprioception is calming to the nervous system. Include proprioception and heavy work intermittently throughout your day.

- Lift weights
- Use weighted blankets or lap pads
- Do chair or wall pushups
- Chew gum
- Drink through a small straw

#### 3 DRY BRUSHING

Dry brushing can provide a sense of calm due to the deep touch pressure. Additionally it can help desensitize your tactile system, which can help if you are sensitive to tactile input.

#### 4 ELIMINATE CLUTTER

too much visual input can cause visual overstimulation, which can create a sense of anxiety.

- Decrease the amount of "things" you have around the house.
- Keep tables and counters clear of clutter.
- Use storage bins to eliminate unnecessary items throughout the house.

#### 5 NOISE CANCELLING HEADPHONES

If you find yourself overwhelmed from too much auditory input, try noise cancelling headphones.

These can also be a sign to your family that you are taking a break! ("When I wear my headphones, it means that I need a couple of minutes alone.")

**6****DEEP BREATHING**

Include a deep breathing exercise routine into your day.

- 10 deep breaths in the morning
- 10 deep breaths while driving
- 10 deep breaths before going home after work
- 10 deep breaths before bedtime

**7****SENSORY SNACKS**

Include more crunchy, chewy, resistive foods into your diet. These foods provide proprioceptive feedback to your jaw, which can be calming to your nervous system.

**8****OUTSIDE IN THE MORNING**

Spending a minimum of 10 minutes outside first thing in the morning has been shown to improve mood and focus throughout the day. Even if it's cloudy, aim to sit or walk outside in the morning without wearing sunglasses to absorb the natural light.

**9****MINDFULNESS PRACTICE**

Start a daily mindfulness practice. Maybe this goes along with your deep breathing routine. Maybe you attend a weekly class. Maybe you follow along with a YouTube video or podcast episode.

## STRATEGIES IF YOU SEEK OUT SENSORY INPUT:

### 1 VESTIBULAR INPUT

Include more vestibular-based activities into your daily routine - anything that includes a head position change. This provides your body with some of the sensory input you may be seeking.

- Go upside down (yoga is a great option)
- Swing
- Spin a couple of times in both directions

### 2 HIGH INTENSITY WORKOUT

If you're more on the sensory seeking side, a high intensity workout might be perfect for you!

- Running and hiking
- Biking or a cycle class
- Crossfit

### 3 TEAM SPORT

Getting involved in a team sport can help meet your sensory needs and has the added benefit of more social interaction!

### 4 BLUE LIGHT BLOCKING GLASSES

Invest in a high quality pair of blue light blocking glasses to wear anytime you're on a screen, and especially to wear in the evening before bed.

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## **7** FREQUENT MOVEMENT BREAKS

If you're a sensory seeker and you have a sedentary job, be sure to schedule frequent movement breaks into your work day. Set an alarm for 40-45 minutes - this is your focused work time. Then set a timer for 5-10 minutes - this is your movement break time. Repeat this for the full work day and watch your productivity and mood improve!

## **8** OLFACTORY INPUT

Your olfactory sense is your sense of smell. If you lean more towards sensory seeking, use essential oils to help meet your sensory needs. Diffuse your favorite oil while you work or put a couple of drops on a scrunchy and use it as a scented bracelet.

## **9** MUSIC

Use music to help stay focused during "boring" or "difficult" tasks.  
Use music during your work-day movement breaks.