



**Pleasant Activities List**  
(from *Stop Self-Sabotage*)  
**By Dr. Judy Ho**

Sometimes negative events and thoughts can get us down, and one way to improve our mood is to do something quick in the moment that brings pleasure and joy. And it doesn't matter how small or brief these activities seem, because the impact they can make on your feelings in the moment can be just enough to help reset your emotions so that you don't veer toward self-sabotage. The idea is to engage in activity that takes less than ten minutes and that you find interesting and fun. Take note of your mood before you take your break for the activity (for simplicity, rate it on a scale of one to ten, with ten being the most positive mood) and then also note your mood after. If you improve your mood only a bit, or the break serves to slow you down in your progression toward self-sabotage, then you have given a boost to your emotions and smoothed the path to your goals.

Check out the list below and try out a few today! Some ideas have been taken from the Adult Pleasant Activities Schedule<sup>i</sup> and from the Pleasant Activities List.<sup>ii</sup>

1. Listen to a favorite song
2. Lie in the sun
3. Read a brief article in a magazine or online

4. Doodle, draw, or paint
5. Do a few yoga poses
6. Do some jumping jacks or jog in place
7. Sing a song
8. Arrange flowers or care for plants
9. Do arts and crafts
10. Write a poem
11. Take care of plants
12. Cuddle with your pet or a blanket
13. Have coffee or tea
14. Make a to-do list
15. Do a quick chore around the home
16. Straighten a small area in your home
17. Look at photos
18. Dance to a song
19. Take deep breaths
20. Meditate
21. Solve a riddle or brain teaser
22. Do a crossword puzzle
23. Work on a jigsaw puzzle
24. Play solitaire
25. Put on a nice outfit
26. Smell a candle or essential oils
27. Say "I love you" to someone
28. Write a letter or email to someone you care about

29. Hug someone
30. Take a shower
31. Lie down on a couch
32. Use cologne or perfume
33. Look up a food recipe to try
34. Browse the Internet for vacation ideas
35. Window-shop (or online window-shop)
36. Take a walk
37. Read a few jokes
38. Send a text message to someone you care about
39. Play a quick game on your smartphone
40. Play with a stress ball
41. Do something nice for someone you care about
42. Admire a piece of art (even a photo of an art piece will work)
43. Trim your nails
44. Take 10 deep breaths
45. Put clean sheets on your bed
46. Put lotion on your body
47. Brush your hair
48. Give yourself a hand massage
49. Make a small donation to an organization online
50. Smile (even if you don't feel like it)

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<sup>1</sup> M. M. Linehan, *Skills Training Manual for Treating Borderline Personality Disorder* (New York: Guilford Press, 1993).

<sup>2</sup> H. G. Roozen, H. Wiersma, M. Strietman, J. A. Feiji, P. M. Lewinsohn, R. J. Meyers, M. Koks, and J. J. Vingerhoets, "Development and psychometric evaluation of the pleasant activities list," *American Journal of Addiction* 17 (2008): 422-35.