

Lorca Smetana

THE TENDER BOX



TOOLS: A box or basket, and things to put in it

TIME: 5 minutes

EFFECTS: Action, healing, lowered blood pressure, love

TO PLAY: Choose a box or basket to be placed in an accessible yet cozy place. In this basket go a number of things, to be curated by you through time. The idea is that when feeling bad, you don't need to go search for things. You can go to one place and rifle through it to see what feels the most right to add some heart's ease, or bodily ease, because they are related.

In the early boxes, I maintained many of the following things:

- a hot water bottle
- herbal tea bags -- throat or tummy soothing, restful, minty, or fruity
- favorite and most excellent children's (or adult, or both...) books
- a small pillow with a pocket in it for love notes
- [a galaxy jar](#) -- an easy-to-make jar of water, glitter and glue that calms and unwinds. kids like to make their own!
- bandaids
- a chime or small bells
- colored pencils and a small notebook
- keepsakes of absent loved ones
- bruise and ouch salves -- I made mine with our farm beeswax and herbs but you can also find lovely, child-safe ones out and about
- lavender buckwheat eye pillow
- a soft blanket
- whatever genius invites...

You know what is needed or not needed. This is a non-electronic self-soothing captain's station. More than once I watched a child stomp over to the box and yank it open, and wander away some time later diverted or eased or calmed inside. Yes, it saved me time and excitement as a mom, but even more, it helped my kids see that they were powerful, and that silence, solitude, stillness, slowness, and their senses made a difference, and that screens weren't needed to do so.



What is in your box? What would you love?

Tenderness, dear one, is a resilience skill.