

## **Journal Prompts: Sensory Overload**

### **Identifying the Sources of Sensory Overload**

1. What specific sensory inputs (e.g., loud noises, bright lights, strong smells) are contributing to my sense of overload right now?
2. How do I physically experience sensory overload? What sensations in my body alert me that I'm reaching my limit?
3. What recent situations have triggered sensory overload for me? How can I pinpoint the specific sensory experiences that caused it?
4. What is the intensity of my sensory overload? Is it mild, moderate, or extreme? How does the level of overload affect me differently?
5. Are there particular environments (e.g., crowded places, noisy rooms, busy streets) that tend to trigger sensory overload for me? What patterns do I notice in these situations?
6. How do I react emotionally when I experience sensory overload? What feelings arise (e.g., frustration, anxiety, irritation)?
7. What are the most common triggers in my daily life that lead to sensory overload? How can I anticipate and prepare for these situations?

### **Managing and Coping with Sensory Overload**

8. How do I currently cope with sensory overload when it happens? What strategies (e.g., taking a break, closing my eyes, deep breathing) help calm me down?
9. What physical sensations or calming activities help me regain a sense of balance when overwhelmed by sensory input?
10. How can I remove or reduce the sensory stimuli that are overwhelming me in the moment (e.g., wearing noise-canceling headphones, finding a quieter space)?
11. When I feel sensory overload coming on, what are the immediate actions I can take to prevent it from escalating (e.g., retreating to a quiet space, focusing on my breath)?
12. How can I practice grounding techniques (e.g., focusing on my senses, holding a comforting object) when I'm experiencing sensory overload?
13. What calming self-care practices can I implement in my daily routine to reduce the likelihood of experiencing sensory overload (e.g., meditation, yoga, deep breathing)?
14. How can I ask for support from others when I feel overwhelmed by sensory input? What do I need in these moments (e.g., space, quiet, understanding)?
15. How can I communicate my needs with others when sensory overload occurs, so they can help me manage the situation more effectively?

### **Reflecting on the Emotional Impact of Sensory Overload**

16. How does sensory overload affect my emotions and mental state? Do I feel irritable, anxious, or fatigued during or after an episode?
17. What negative thoughts arise when I'm experiencing sensory overload? How can I challenge or reframe these thoughts to create more self-compassion?

18. What emotions do I struggle with when experiencing sensory overload (e.g., frustration, helplessness, embarrassment)? How can I process these emotions in a healthy way?
19. How do I feel about my ability to manage sensory overload? Do I feel empowered, or do I feel like I'm losing control?
20. How do I treat myself when I'm dealing with sensory overload? Can I be kinder and more patient with myself in these moments?

### **Creating an Environment to Prevent Sensory Overload**

21. How can I create a sensory-friendly environment at home, work, or in my daily life to reduce the chances of overwhelming stimuli?
22. What changes can I make in my environment (e.g., softer lighting, quieter spaces, fewer distractions) to make it more conducive to my well-being?
23. How can I modify my routines or schedules to minimize situations where sensory overload is likely to occur (e.g., limiting long trips, managing social events)?
24. Are there certain spaces that feel more calming and less overwhelming to me? What can I do to spend more time in these spaces?
25. What tools or resources (e.g., noise-canceling headphones, sunglasses, stress balls) can I keep on hand to manage sensory overload in various settings?

### **Understanding and Preventing Sensory Overload in the Future**

26. What patterns or cycles do I notice in my experiences with sensory overload? Do they tend to happen at certain times of day, during specific activities, or after particular stressors?
27. How can I develop a self-awareness practice that helps me tune in to my sensory thresholds before they reach overload?
28. What are the early signs or warning signals that sensory overload is beginning? How can I respond to these early signs before the situation becomes overwhelming?
29. What small adjustments can I make in my lifestyle (e.g., limiting screen time, managing social commitments) to reduce sensory overload in the long term?
30. How can I monitor my emotional and physical health over time to identify when I'm becoming more sensitive to sensory input or stress?

### **Reframing Sensory Overload**

31. How can I view sensory overload not as a flaw or weakness, but as a signal from my body that I need rest, boundaries, or a change in environment?
32. What positive qualities can I embrace in myself when dealing with sensory overload (e.g., resilience, self-awareness, adaptability)?
33. How can I remind myself that it's okay to set limits and prioritize my well-being, even when others may not fully understand my sensory needs?
34. What role does sensory overload play in my overall self-care and well-being? How can I reframe it as an opportunity to practice self-compassion and mindful adjustment?

35. How can I use my experiences with sensory overload to better understand and advocate for my sensory needs in other aspects of my life (e.g., work, relationships)?