

Relaxing 'Safe Place' Imagery

Safe Place Imagery is used to help your mind and body find safety when the external world feels stressful or there is a build-up of stress from the past. We use the word imagery or imagine yet everyone is different in how they imagine – this may show up for you as an image in your mind or a thought or a feeling in your body or a simple sense of knowing. It is important to open to any of these ways of perceiving.

All visualisations can be strengthened by ensuring you engage all your senses in building the picture in your mind's eye - it's more than just "seeing"! If you notice any negative links or images entering your positive imagery, then discard that image and think of something else. Avoid using your home (or bed) as a 'safe place'. You can create a place that is completely imaginary or a place that is known to you. It could be a place you read about in a book or saw in a movie. Go with what comes up and let your imagination guide you.

An example of the meditation:

Start by getting comfortable in a quiet place where you won't be disturbed and take a couple of minutes to focus on your breathing, close your eyes, become aware of any tension in your body, and let that tension go with each out-breath.

Imagine a place where you can feel calm, peaceful, and safe. It may be a place you've been to before, somewhere you've dreamed about going to, somewhere you've seen a picture of, or just a peaceful place you can create in your mind's eye.

Look around you in that place, notice the colours and shapes. What else do you notice? Now notice the sounds that are around you, or perhaps the silence. Sounds far away and those nearer to you. Those that are more noticeable, and those that are more subtle. • Think about any smells you notice there.

Then focus on any skin sensations - the earth beneath you or whatever is supporting you in that place, the temperature, any movement of air, anything else you can touch.

Notice the pleasant physical sensations in your body whilst you enjoy this safe place.

Now whilst you're in your peaceful and safe place, you might choose to give it a name, whether one word or a phrase that you can use to bring that image back, anytime you need to.

You can choose to linger there a while, just enjoying the peacefulness and serenity. You can leave whenever you want to, just by opening your eyes and being aware of where you are now and bringing yourself back to alertness in the 'here and now'.