

Handout for clients: Safe Place Imagery Instructions

Pick a time of day that you can be alone, uninterrupted, and a time that you are feeling relatively calm. Get as relaxed as you can.

- Go to your safe space; pick a place or space that is opposite from where you got hurt, a place you have felt safe in, or a place or space that's completely made up.

Tips: Don't pick one from your childhood.

It can be a combination of real and made up.

It's a place that nothing bad has ever happened in.

Some people have one Safe Space, some have more than one, and some go to different ones every time.

- Once you are in your Safe Space, look around and notice everything about it that makes it safe.

Tip: Some people have Safe Spaces that are totally made up of sound (e.g. being surrounded by a song) or feelings (e.g. soft blankets).

- Notice what you're seeing, hearing, feeling, smelling, touching.
- Notice if there's anything that doesn't feel quite right and if there is, look around and as you look around you'll either see something that will help, or some thoughts will occur to you that will help.

Tips: What you see that helps doesn't have to make sense!

If you cannot see or figure out something that helps, you can try adding a couple things like putting a force field or a fence around it or adding a friendly guard dog.

Sometimes it can help to draw a picture of your Safe Space, see if it feels like a place you could feel safe in, and then add anything you need.

Another option is to move to a different Safe Space that's even safer.

If nothing works, or it feels too unsafe, stop working on it. Make a note about what made it too difficult and bring the notes to your next therapy session.

- Once you are in your Safe Space you can just settle in to being there and relax. The goal is to create a place that you can feel totally safe, comfortable, and relaxed in.
- Note: Learning to do Safe Space Imagery is just like learning to do anything. It often takes a little practice, and like anything, is easiest learned when you're in a relatively calm state. It's like learning to drive a car. You start out in a quiet parking lot, and leave rush hour and high speed merging for later. Eventually, you will be able to use it to center yourself when you're having strong feelings, but that takes practice.
- Remember: A goal is to work up to doing Safe Space Imagery every day for 10 - 20 minutes. For most people, doing Safe Space Imagery every day will eventually help them feel calmer overall.