

Taking yourself to a safe place in your mind

To begin with, practice this in a place where you're feeling safe and comfortable. Perhaps lying in bed or in the safe space you've created. As you get more familiar with the exercise, you can use it to help settle yourself when you're in an environment where you're not so comfortable, such as in hospital, on a train or in a waiting room. You may want to ask someone close to you to read the script out to you, or even record it, until you know it off by heart.

- Sit comfortably or lie down, somewhere safe, warm and cosy.
- Take two changing breaths to tell your body you're moving into a different gear.
- Notice what your breath feels like moving through your body. There's no need to try and make your breath be a particular way. Just be aware of your own free, natural breathing.
- Notice the sensations in your whole body from your head to your feet. There may be places in your body that are more or less relaxed. You might like to imagine releasing tension as you breathe out.
- Imagine yourself in a place of great peace and tranquillity where you can be totally free and relaxed. Somewhere you feel completely safe and at home. It may be a place you know well where you have happy memories, or it could be a made up place or a mixture of both.
- In your mind's eye, explore your special place. What are you sitting or lying on? In this place, there are no limits. You could be floating or flying, resting on silk pillows or wild mountain heather. You could be in a boat, or a hammock or the most comfortable bed in the world.
- What can you hear? Is there music? Voices? Can you hear children playing? Bees humming? Wind in the trees or water flowing? Whatever sounds give you a sense of peace, comfort and freedom.
- Is there a special smell you associate with this place? Sea air? Baking bread? Your favourite flowers? A special someone's perfume?
- Is there anyone with you? Remember, this is your special, safe place. It can be exactly how you like. Whoever you want to be with you can be here.
- If you want to, get up and explore your special place, you can move freely here, without pain or limitation. What can you see around you? Bring

whatever scenery you find most beautiful and relaxing. You could be by a beautiful forest waterfall, or on an alpine meadow, by the sea or in a lovely room or garden. It doesn't need to be a place that exists or which even makes realistic sense. You can bring in any elements you like.

- Come back to resting in your special safe place. You may feel a sense of healing energy flowing through you, a lovely feeling of safety and relaxation wherever you are.
- Stay in your special place as long as it feels right.
- When you're ready to come back take two more changing breaths before gently opening your eyes. Wiggle your fingers and toes, and if comfortable have a stretch. Remember you can come back to your safe place any time you like.
- Take a drink of water before continuing with your day.