

Visualisation

This is a longer relaxation, imagine pictures and scenes that have positive associations for you. This is called visualisation, and can help you feel calm and at ease. With practice, you can bring any image or scene to mind. For this relaxation, you will be guided to imagine an outdoor space. Begin by finding a comfortable posture, with your feet on the floor, sitting upright with your back supported and your hands resting on your lap. If you are lying down, find a restful position on your back, with your legs stretched out and arms by your sides. Use pillows or cushions to keep yourself comfortable. Close your eyes, or keep them gently open. And now turn your attention to what you can picture in your mind's eye.

Bring to mind a peaceful garden, park or other outdoor space. This may be a place you know, or somewhere you can imagine. You may have a clear image of the space, or just a sense of it. Letting the image take shape in its own way, in your imagination.

Picture yourself making your way to this garden. You may be walking along a path, opening a gate, or stepping outside from a building. Once you have reached your garden, pause for a moment to look around at all you can see. Noticing the shape of the garden. It may be a small patio, or a vast field stretching out into the distance. Observing what you can see within your garden. You may see trees, plants, flowers, wildlife. There may be buildings, sculptures or other objects created by your imagination. Look up at the sky, take in the world around you. Getting a sense of the time of day and year, the season that you find yourself in.

Now imagine moving through this outdoor space. Notice how the ground feels beneath your feet. Move at your own pace, observing what you can feel in your body. Notice the sensations on your skin. You may feel the warmth of the sun, soft rain or a gentle breeze. Sensing the freshness of the air as you take a few deeper breaths.

Now listen for any sounds you can hear. You may hear the sounds of birds, insects, and animals. The leaves rustling in the breeze. There may be the sound of water. Continuing to explore your senses, observe what you can smell. You may imagine the scents of your favourite flowers or trees, or freshly cut grass. Look around you for anything edible in this outdoor space. This may be ripe berries or fruit, or even a stall with your favourite food or drink. You may want to imagine taking a bite or enjoying a drink, savouring the taste.

And now continue to explore your garden. This is your time for what you feel will nourish you. You may want to keep walking through the space. You may see yourself doing something you find meaningful. Or you may find somewhere to simply rest. Spend a few more moments here in your garden or outdoor space. And now it's time to start making your way back to where you first stepped into your space. Take some time to look around you again, know that you can come back to this space any time you want to, in your mind's eye. You may want to send yourself a little thank you for taking this time to bring to mind calming pictures and scenes.

Now it's time to slowly come back to being here, in this room. Keeping your eyes closed, notice the seat of your chair or the surface you're lying on. Feel how solid it is, how supported you are. Hear the sounds around you. When you are ready, open your eyes and start making small movements, as this relaxation comes to a close.

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