# Comfortable Place

## Safe/Neutral Place Imagery

*Estimated Time: 15 minutes*

Imagery designed to facilitate the development and introjection of a comfortable (safe or neutral) place. The objective is to decrease sympathetic activation -- quiet the fight/flight response by activating the parasympathetic nervous system. Subsequent listening provides reinforcement of this positive experience.

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# Script

Allow yourself to be comfortable...either lying down or sitting up -- with your back, neck and spine fully supported. Knowing that you will not be interrupted for the next little while, begin by gently closing your eyes.

***[Instruction] Breathe audibly with the exhalation longer than the inhalation***

Now begin to bring your attention to your breath -- the direct experience of your breath -- however it is...and however it changes. Allow yourself to softly focus your awareness on to the breath that is arising right now...the in-breath and the out-breath...the rising and the falling. If you can, try to follow one full cycle of the breath -- from the beginning of the in-breath, through its entirety...the beginning of the out-breath through its entirety. Allowing yourself the time and the space to be in direct contact with the breath throughout one entire cycle.

***[Instruction] Breathe audibly with the exhalation longer than the inhalation***

As you continue to pay attention to the breath, you may notice distractions that arise. Just allow yourself to notice...those distractions...any bodily sensations...any thoughts that may arise. If possible, allow yourself to become aware of the separateness of those bodily sensations -- notice how those sensations are separate -- distinct from your thoughts, your ideas and your words.

***[Instruction] Breathe audibly with the exhalation longer than the inhalation***

Now, as you continue with this focused awareness, you will notice how often you lose contact with the breath...maybe you become caught in a thought or an idea or plan or maybe some other bodily sensation has pulled your attention. ...When this happens, simply notice that you have lost connection with the breath, and, gently bring your awareness back to the breath.

***[Instruction] Breathe audibly with the exhalation longer than the inhalation***

We'll begin now with a deep breath in through your nose...inhaling slowly and deeply. Exhale through pursed lips until all the air has been released.

***[Instruction] Breathe audibly with the exhalation longer than the inhalation***

We are going to be creating a silent, healing space all around you...in order to do that, focus only on your breath and the sound of my voice...as you begin to let go....I'm going to count from eight to one. And, with each descending number, find yourself becoming more and more relaxed. More and more able to stay connected to your breath...more and more able to stay

with the sound of my voice as you continue letting go. Eight....allowing your breath to relax your body...gently inhaling...Seven...bringing the breath deep down, lowering all the way to Six....allowing the relaxation to gently drift ...as you go deeper still to Five...letting go....as the breath deepens and you feel those muscles softening...Four...as the relaxation gently encloses your heart and your lungs...you're aware of deep comfort...deep relaxation. Notice how gentle and quiet your breathing is becoming....Three just noticing as each breath allows you to become more and more relaxed. And, going deeper, you relax. Two...More and more relaxed....And, letting go....And, one....You now find yourself outdoors in a very, very comfortable place. Perhaps this place is new to you? Or maybe you have been here many times...in real life or in the beauty of your own mind. You see this beautifully serene place....Allowing the images to come....For in this place of beauty and comfort -- your place of comfort, you may invite anyone you like, or you may prefer to keep this a private place...either is fine, so long you remain perfectly comfortable.

***[Instruction] Breathe audibly with the exhalation longer than the inhalation***

In this place of serenity, you know only peace....Allow the images to come....Notice the color of the sky at your favorite time of day. And, in this place, at this most perfect time of day, at the season and the temperature that you like on your skin, allow your senses to become more and more awake. Drink in the surroundings you allow yourself to see; if not with your eyes, then sense with your heart....Each time you come here, you will develop it and allow it to become more and more beautiful. Allow yourself to see what is here now....Notice the colors around you. Let the colors and textures come alive as you look from side to side, up and down....See what makes this place so perfect for you. Now listen....what do you hear in this place, what do you hear that lets you know that this your ideal place?...And breathing in the beauty and the comfort of this place, you may notice certain scents...the smell of the air, or the sweet smell of nature all around you....Breathe in the smells of your ideal place. ...Let yourself bask in the comfort and beauty and the peace....Allow yourself to walk around, to be in this place, to notice more and more of what is here for you in this place....Here is a place where you may create anything you like.

*[Pause — 15 seconds]*

***[Instruction] Breathe audibly with the exhalation longer than the inhalation***

If you feel like it, you may build special places for special kinds of feelings that need to be healed, special places to wash away fear and pain....Perhaps a waterfall or a healing pool of water. You may wish to stand under the waterfall -- wash away whatever should be washed away....anything that you'd like to be finished with. Each time you come to the waterfall or

the healing pool of water, you can wash away more and more of the past....more and more of what no longer fits...more and more of what no longer serves you....You may plan to use these waters again the next time you visit...

*[Pause — 15 seconds]*

***[Instruction] Breathe audibly with the exhalation longer than the inhalation***

For now, allow yourself to begin walking around this...your...place....as you do, you come upon your very favorite spot...the best of all this place.

*[Pause — 15 seconds]*

As you arrive, feel free to sit down, and get comfortable....Breathe in the serenity...the peace.

***[Instruction] Breathe audibly with the exhalation longer than the inhalation***

As you take a final look around, you breathe in...knowing absolutely that this is your place...that you have been here before...you are welcome here; you belong....and you may return any time you like.

***[Instruction] Breathe audibly with the exhalation longer than the inhalation***

And, when you are ready, gently bring yourself back to the room by counting up from one to five. When you reach the number five, your eyes will gently open. You will be awake and alert, and feeling only peace. One....Two....Three. Take a deep breath....Four....And five.

"Comfortable Place" by Linda Curran

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