



Guided imagery is a relaxation technique that uses positive mental images to influence how you feel. Just as your body can become tense and stressed in response to thoughts that make us angry or anxious, it can also become calmer and more relaxed in response to calming, peaceful, and pleasant thoughts.

### **5 Quick Steps to Guided Imagery**

1. Find a quiet comfortable place where you can focus without distractions.
2. Close your eyes and breathe deeply until you start to feel more at ease.
3. Imagine your happy place. It can be a real or imaginary place where you feel calm and peaceful.
4. Add the details. What do you hear, feel, see and smell?
5. Hold on to this feeling. Come back to this place whenever you need to relax.

One of the most basic ways to use imagery to relax is to close your eyes and imagine being in a place that is peaceful and relaxing to you.

It may be a place you have actually been in the past, or it may be a place created in your imagination. Use all of your senses in your imagination. For example, see the waves gently lapping on the shore or the light filtering through the leaves of the trees. Hear the birds singing or the leaves rustling. Smell the flowers, the grass, or the salt air. Feel the sun or gentle breeze on your skin. Feel that you are actually there.



## Practice Imagining Your Happy Place

Use the following exercise to help you visualize the image of your happy place.

1. Pick an image to focus on. This could be real or imaginary. Briefly describe it with words or an illustration in the box below:



2. Close your eyes for a moment and picture the setting. What kind of space are you in? How bright is the light? How clear is the image you see? Is it more like a series of still photos or a movie? Can you see yourself? Do you see other people?
3. What sounds do you hear? Is music playing? Are there voices? Are you saying anything?
4. Do you notice any smells or tastes?
5. Finally, imagine what your body feels like physically as you have the experience you've set out to have. Are you energized? Relaxed and calm? What do you feel in your fingers, toes, stomach, head? Describe all the sensations you experience.

The more you try it, the more familiar you'll get with the process and how it works for you. Eventually you might discover you do it unconsciously and without effort!

## **YouTube clips**

Relaxation Visualization - Mountain Forest - helps you de-stress and relax. (9 mins)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mkoqtERaNY8>

Guided Sleep Meditation Forest Relax

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?time\\_continue=255&v=PaMVjcsyoxo](https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=255&v=PaMVjcsyoxo)