

6. Safe place

Hi! In this video, I will have focus on establishing a 'Safe Place' as a strategy to ground oneself. Techniques involving a "Safe Place" can be used as a distraction away from overwhelming trauma reactions, flashbacks, distressing feelings, unhealthy and potentially devastating impulses and actions, or when it is time to rest following intense trauma-work. At the same time as they distract, they also have a calming effect.

Think of a place, a place in your life where you felt very calm, safe, and protected. You can emphasize either feeling peaceful, such as on a beautiful beach at sunset, or you can emphasize feeling safe and secure, like on a remote uninhabited island, where you have a full view of everything and anyone who may be approaching. Your safe place may be a place you imagine, or a real place, which you have actually used to retreat to in the past for safety. Examples of the peaceful safe places are a place on the mountain where you experience beauty and peaceful silence, or when you sit in your favourite chair with a blanket in front of the fireplace, or you are on a boat far away from shore on a beautiful day.

Examples of safe and secure places you know of from the real world are: a tree in the forest where you retreated and experienced security, or grandmother's house, where she provided you with security, love and care. Your safe place may include some good people in your life, or you may choose to be alone. You may retreat to your safe place in your fantasy, away from the painful memories and feelings of trauma, and overwhelming triggers and stress. Only the fantasy sets limits for how safe one can be. Your safe place can include anything and anyone you want, anywhere you want, with as many details as you want. The more details you have, the better it will work to capture your awareness and distance yourself from the trauma reactions.

We can take the opportunity to do practice and exercise now:

You can close your eyes if you wish. Now follow your imagination:

You travel to the place you want, the place that has exactly the conditions you want. Time and money set no limits. Where are you then? Imagine you are there.

See that you are there, look around, pay close attention to what you see, what do you notice? What do you see? Exactly what you find good to look at is there. Look at it, take it in, feel and sense that it is good.

What sounds do you hear, just the sounds you want to hear. What do you hear? Notice it, take it in, feel and sense that it is good.

What do you notice in terms of temperature, exactly the temperature you like, how is it to feel it? Feel it, feel and sense it is good, take it in.

Notice the scents - that are exactly the ones you like. What do you smell? What do you sense? Feel and sense and take it in.

If you want to taste something good, you can. Taste what is good, what you want, feel and sense how good it is.

What are you doing? Sitting, standing, other? Know what it's like to do exactly what you want there and then. Notice it and take it in, feel and sense how it feels good!

Are you with someone, or alone? Notice that it is exactly the way you want it, feel - and take it in.

Now you can take it all in. Feel and sense how good it is, notice and take it in.

This is your place, just yours. You can go here as much and as long as you want and when you need it.

When you are ready you can come back to the present reality here, you can gradually open your eyes and reorient yourself to the room here and now.

You can return to your safe place any time you want to.

You have your safe place as a temporary place you can go back to when you are in the process of being overwhelmed by trauma reaction. It should not lead to overuse. It is not an alternative to safety and security in real life - just a place to temporarily retreat to for stabilization. In other words, the imagery technique should not be abused but can be used wisely as a way to distract oneself from being overwhelmed by unhealthy emotions, impulses and actions.

If you have "parts" (dissociative parts of the personality), you may work in your therapy on getting all the parts a safe place, which they can retreat to when they

need to be shielded from everyday situations, which would otherwise be too overwhelming to you.

You can also investigate whether you have or can establish a concrete place in the physical reality in the here and now that gives you an inner sense of safety that you can retreat to when you need to distance yourself from overwhelming trauma reactions and to find the feeling of inner safety.

Take time to establish a safe place!

Good luck! Thanks for now!

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