

3.1 Getting started: Grounding

Please consider the following instructions as an invitation. You can follow the instructions and participate in the exercises, if you want to.

You are always in control of what is happening during the exercise.

You can close your eyes during the exercise – this will help your concentration and focus. If you don't want to close your eyes, keep them open and focus on any point in front of you in the room.

Please find a comfortable and relaxed sitting position.

Make sure that your feet are comfortable and both are touching the ground.

Make sure that your body is in a relaxed position.

Your back is touching the back of your chair.

Your hands and forearms are resting on your upper legs without any tension.

Feel free to adjust your sitting position, until you'll have found a comfortable way to sit.

3.4 The inner safe place

I want to invite you to a further exercise: it's called "The inner safe place".

Please see a picture of a place in your mind where you would go to feel safe and protected – where everything is good for you.

It may be a place that you have been to before. It could also be an imaginary or made up place. A place you have read or heard about - or one of which you have dreamed of.

Maybe, this is a place outside in nature, like a place by the sea, on a beach, a place in the mountains, in a forest, in a field of flowers or by a beautiful lake. Maybe, it is an island, a cave, on top of a mountain, on another planet or in a fairy tale kingdom. I may also be a real place, that you know.

Sometimes, it is hard to find such a place straight away. Don't worry, there is such a place for you.

Take your time. You can decide how it looks and feels to be there.

Please protect this place in a way, so you can feel totally safe and comfortable there. You can decide how the place should be and if you want to allow friendly, helpful others to stay in this place.

The important thing is that it is a place where YOU feel safe, happy, peaceful and protected. Take your time, there is not rush.

If you have several pictures come into your mind, know that there is no right or wrong choice. Just take a few breaths and let yourself settle on one place, just for now.

Notice how light it is at your safe place. Maybe, the light is bright, clear, and fresh. Maybe, the light is a warm and friendly twilight. Feel free to change the brightness at your safe place. Let it become brighter or darker, until the light is comfortable for you.

Notice what colors are there at your safe place. Maybe, they are bright and intense colors or, maybe, they are soft pastel colors. Feel free to experiment with the colors, until they are good for you.

Notice what you can hear.

Are the sounds and tones you can hear comfortable for your ears?

Everything your ears hear should be pleasant and comfortable for you.

Change the sounds until they are comfortable for you.

Maybe you can hear the wind, the soft rustling of the forest leaves.

The calming waves of the sea. The happy murmur of a stream. Or the pleasant song of a bird?

Or maybe, after a while, you can hear a melody in the sounds?

Notice what you can smell. Everything your nose can smell, should be good and pleasant smells.

Which good smells can you notice in the air. Maybe flowers?

Or maybe you can taste something?

Mindfully notice the temperature at your safe inner place. Maybe, there is a soft breeze, it is refreshing and cool, maybe, the sun is gently warming your skin

How does the ground beneath your feet feel?

Are you walking on soft ground which absorbs your weight with every step, in a forest, in a field or on a beach?

Are you walking bare foot or with shoes?

Can you feel grass or sand beneath your feet?

Perhaps there are other things you can hear or feel or perceive in this place where you feel safe and secure

Mindfully notice the place in every detail.

Note that you can change anything that you don't like with the power of your imagination – you can change the colors, sounds, smells – until you feel totally comfortable, safe, and protected there.

Mindfully notice, how comfortable and safe you are feeling now: your body is feeling comfortable, the temperature is fine, the colors are pleasant for your eyes, the brightness is comfortable. Smell and taste and everything you can hear or see are good for you. Everything you need to feel comfortable is there at this safe place.

Slowly breathe in and out - With every breath you take the peace and strength of this place flows through you. Feel how the good power and energy of this safe inner place is spreading through you and filling every cell of your body.

This place is protected and you are safe here.

Remember that you can leave and come back to this safe place anytime you want to. When you close your eyes, you can picture this safe inner place in your mind, in your imagination. The picture of you in your safe place surrounded by all that that makes you feel good and comfortable soothes and grounds you.

3.5 Coming back to the here and now

When you are ready, slowly start bringing your attention back to the here and now, take all these good feelings with you to the present. They are stored in your body.

And now silently tell yourself that you will slowly finish this exercise.
Please take a deep breath.

Bring your attention back into this room.

Feel your body sitting in the chair, your arms touching your legs, and feel your feet touching the ground.

Stretch & move your arms and legs. You can also clench your fists, if you want to, or you can stand up and shake your arms and legs a little.

If you haven't done so before already, please, open your eyes, look around the room, and notice all the little things in this room.

Notice the new feelings of strength and energy in you.