

Developing And Enhancing A Happy/Calm/Safe/Special/Secure Place

"I'd like you to create a place you can go to in your mind where you can feel happy, calm, safe, secure, peaceful, or some other positive feeling. There are three guidelines. 1) I prefer it be somewhere in nature, because nature has a grounding effect; 2) There are no other people there because there's never been a relationship that hasn't had some yuck associated with it at some point; and 3) It is imaginal — the absolute perfect place for you. What image represents your place? Tell me about it." _____

Emotions And Sensations

"As you think of that happy place, what emotions are you feeling? What sensations do you notice in your body?" _____

Enhancement

"Focus on your happy place — its sights, sounds, smells, and the good feelings. Tell me more about what you are experiencing." _____

Eye Movements

"Bring up the image of this place. Focus on where you feel the good things in your body and let yourself to enjoy them. Focus on that and follow my fingers. [4-8 round trips of slow BLS] "What are you noticing now?" _____

If positive

"Focus on that. [4-8 round trips of slow BLS] What are you noticing now?" _____

[If the positive experience continues to expand, you may repeat the above to enhance and strengthen the adaptive network you are creating.]

If negative

Redirect to identify another calm place or consider some other self-soothing strategy such as a container, mindfulness, or a breathing exercise. Ask the client to put any negative material into their container.

Cue Word

"What would you like to call your special place? Think of [repeat the word they give you] and notice the good things you feel you when you think of that word. Concentrate on those those feelings and [the word/phrase] _____ and follow my fingers [4-8 round trips of slow BLS]. How do you feel now?" [Repeat and enhance positive feelings with BLS several times.]

Self-Cuing

"Now I'd like you to say that word _____ and notice how you feel."

Cuing With Disturbance

"Now imagine a minor annoyance (SUD 1-2) and notice how you feel. Bring up that word _____ and notice what happens. What did you notice?" _____

Self-Cuing With Disturbance

"I'd like you to think of another mildly annoying incident (SUD 2-3), notice how you feel, then bring up your word _____ by yourself, especially noticing your body when you focus on your cue word."

Practice: *"I'd like you to practice using your happy place several times a day, whether you need it or not."*