

Calming Pictures in your Head

Children are usually good at thinking in pictures. Here are 3 picture strategies children can learn to feel better. Help your child read and practice each one, and choose the one that works best.

My Safe Place
The Light Stream
The Spiral

It's a good idea for children to practice whichever one they choose a lot so that they get good at it. Once they can get the pictures in their heads easily, it's possible for them to do this when they feel upset, worried or angry. Your child will need a lot of help and prompting to use these strategies, but if this is learned at a young age, children cope much better with feelings that don't feel good.

Calming Pictures in your Head

Here are 3 picture strategies you can try. They are good ways to help you feel better. Try all of them and choose the one that works best for you.

My Safe Place
The Light Stream
The Spiral

It's a good idea to practice whichever one you choose. The more you do it, the better you will be at it, and the better it will work when you don't feel good. If you want, ask an adult to do them with you. You can ask the adult to read out the instructions while you do it. You can also ask an adult to remind you to practise, or to remind you to use the pictures when you are worried, upset or angry.



My Safe Place

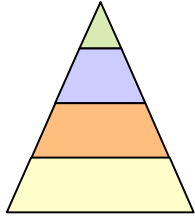


Think of a real or pretend place that makes you feel completely safe and happy. Get a picture of it in your head. What can you see? What can you hear? What can you smell? What can you taste? What textures can you feel?

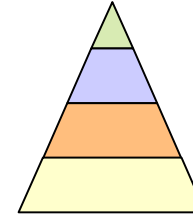
Keep the picture in your head for a few minutes. Think about any good feelings in you get in your body. Think about the picture to make the good feelings stronger. If you don't get any good feelings, choose a different place.

Choose a name for your safe place. Practise getting the safe place picture in your head as often as you can. The more you practice, the easier it is to get the picture in your head. The good feelings will be stronger too.

When you are good at this, use your safe place picture when you feel bad. You can get the picture to come by saying its name to yourself. The picture in your head will help you feel better and calmer. You can do this anytime and anywhere without anyone noticing.



The Light Stream

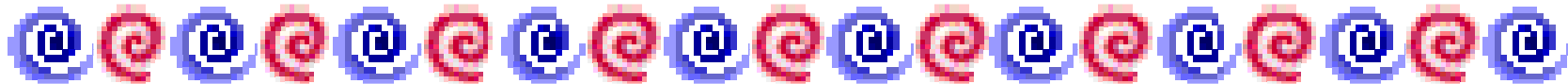


Think of a picture in your head that gives you a feeling that doesn't feel good. It might be a picture that makes you feel worried, upset or angry. Think about this feeling in your body.

What shape is it? What size is it? What colour is it? What pattern does it have? Now think about your favourite happy colour. Imagine it is a light stream coming in through the top of your head onto the feeling shape inside you. The more of the light stream you use, the more there is and the stronger it gets.

The light stream flows over the feeling shape and around it. What is happening to the feeling shape? Is its size changing? What is happening to its colour? Keep thinking about the light stream shining powerfully onto the feeling shape inside your body until the feeling has disappeared or become so small you can barely notice it.

Let the light stream fill your head and flow through your body down to your toes.



The Spiral

Sit in a comfy chair. Close your eyes.

Think about how your body feels. Start at your head and move slowly down to your toes. Think about any part of your body that does not feel good.

Pretend that this feeling that does not feel good is shaped like a spiral.

Which way is the spiral turning? What colour is it? How fast is it turning?

Now, pretend there is another spiral in front of your body. What size is it?

What colour is it? Let this good spiral turn the opposite way to the first one.

Watch the good spiral turning.

Pretend that the good spiral can come into your body and cover the first one.

Watch the good spiral turning as it twists itself around it. It starts to turn the same way as the first one. Watch what happens and notice how your body feels.