

## Safe or Special Place Imagery

### *Purpose:*

- Reduces stress and anxiety, increases relaxation
- Provides a kind of mental and emotional time out
- Strengthens the capacity to draw on one's own emotional resources
- Provides a foundation for other imagery exercises
- Provides a "safety net" in the event of abreactions during other experiential work

### *Music:*

- Riley Lee, "Oriental Sunrise" or any instrumental background music you like

### *Cautions & Contraindications:*

- May provoke strong emotional memories
- For those that may have been recently traumatized, the word "safe" may be a trigger and "feeling safe" may not be impossible. Instead of talking about "safe place" you may want to use "special place" or "comfortable place".

### *Safe/Special Place Imagery Script:*

*Sit comfortably, breathe, and relax, trusting that your imagination will do the work for you... Feel yourself supported by the chair or the floor... Allow your eyes to come closed if that is comfortable for you, or find a soft gaze on the floor in front of you... And allow your attention to move to your breathing... Let your breathing become even and comfortable... Breathing is one of the most powerful conscious influences you have on your nervous system...*

*So now I'd like you to imagine yourself in a very special place... it could be a real place... a place you may actually have been... a beautiful spot in nature or comforting place in your own home... You may know the place well or have never seen it before... Your special place may be an imaginary place... a place in fairy tales... indoors or outdoors... it doesn't really matter... Should more than one place come to mind, allow yourself to stay with one of them....*

*The only thing that matters is that it is a place in which you feel completely comfortable... You feel comfortable and safe... Begin to appreciate this scene with all of your senses... Hear the sounds... smell the aromas... feel the air as it caresses your skin...touch and feel the whole environment that you are in.*

*Notice what you are wearing...*

*If you have anything on your feet...*

*Notice the time of year, and time of day...*

*Become aware of the temperate of the air on your skin... is it warm or cool? ...*

*Notice how old you are there...*

*Notice if you are alone, or if someone else is there? Perhaps an animal?*

*And look around you to notice if there is anything else that would make this place more comfortable for you... Perhaps something you need to remove from the place or something you would like to bring in... If you would like to bring someone or something else into this space, do it now...*

*Breathe deeply, and enjoy the feelings of relaxation and comfort. And now thank yourself for taking the time... this time for yourself... and perhaps promising yourself... and reassuring yourself that you will visit this place or some other place on your own, whenever you need to...*

*Know that you can return to this place anytime you wish to relax and be replenished... just by doing exactly as you are doing, sitting or lying down in a comfortable position, allowing your eyes to come closed and bringing the image of your special place... but for now, begin to gently come back to the room... become aware of yourself, sitting or lying down, breathing deeply, connected to this space in this room. Slowly open your eyes.*