

**Mind Over Matter Psychiatry**  
**646-397-6063**

# Guided Imagery



**Guided Imagery is the use of relaxation, visualization, and imagination to improve well-being, health, and mood. It can be done alone or with a therapist, CD, or video.**

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Dr. Martin Rossman (an expert in healing stress and anxiety) says, in his article about Guided Imagery, “you can worry yourself sick or think yourself well”. Below are instructions on how to do Guided Imagery.

- 1. Find a quiet place to sit or lie down and become relaxed.** Be sure you are comfortable. You can use the Deep Breathing or Tense & Relax Methods to become more relaxed. You can use the instructions on the back of this page to learn how to breathe more deeply.
- 2. Clear all thoughts out of your mind and begin to imagine something.** You can imagine any one of the following, or come up with your own image:
  - Imagine your favorite place (real or imaginary) or a place you would like to go to, like a peaceful lake, a sunny beach, or a beautiful mountain area.
  - Imagine that your pain or discomfort is an electric current and you can turn it off by turning off the switch.
  - Imagine any pain you have can dissolve into a cloud and it can float away.
  - Imagine having a conversation with your pain or disease; pretend your pain or disease can talk and imagine what it would say and what you could say back.
  - Imagine you can feel clean water flowing through you cleansing out all the pain and discomfort.
  - Imagine you are a flower or the sun and you can feel your petals or rays flowing in the air.
  - Imagine you find a key and then a door that enters a room where you can leave all your pain and discomfort.

Whatever you choose to imagine, try to imagine it with all your senses. How warm or cold is it? What do you smell? If you could imagine touching something, how would it feel? What sounds do you hear in your image? What colors do you see?

Don't worry, there is no right or wrong way to do this. Just relax and use your imagination for at least 10 to 20 minutes.

# Deep Breathing Method

**Deep breathing can help with chronic pain, stress, muscle tension, anxiety, sleep disorders, and other conditions like high blood pressure. It can help to bring a Relaxation Response in your body.**

1. Find a quiet place to sit or lie down.
2. If you are sitting, try not to slouch but make sure you are comfortable. You can use cushions or back rests to help you sit more easily. If you are lying down, place a pillow under your head if you need to. Your face should be parallel to the ceiling and not tilted up or down.
3. Close your eyes.
4. Feel your breath as it comes in through your nose and fills your lungs and then goes back out.
5. Put one hand on your lower belly. Be sure your arm is relaxed and your elbow is resting on the floor or a pillow.
6. As you breathe in (inhale) slowly:
  - let your belly expand like you have a balloon in your belly that expands forward, sideways, backward, upward and downward
  - as your belly expands, feel your lungs fill with air
  - breathe in slowly like this for 4 to 10 counts.
7. As you breathe out (exhale) let your belly relax. Gently let the air in your lungs come out. This should take at least 4 to 10 counts too.
9. As you breathe like this, don't think about other things. Just think about your breathing. If you have other thoughts come up, just gently send them away.
9. Continue to breathe in and out as described in steps 6 and 7 for at least 10 to 20 minutes.
10. You can do the Tense & Relax Method after this deep breathing for more relaxation. Ask your health care provider for a handout on Tense & Relax or other relaxation methods.

