

## Creating Your Special Place

In creating your own special place, you will be making a retreat for relaxation and hearing your inner voice. A special place might be at the end of a path that leads to a pond. Grass is under your feet, the pond is about 30 yards away and mountains are in the distant. You can feel the coolness of the air in this shady spot. The birds are singing. The sun is bright on the pond. The flowers' sweet smells attract the bees buzzing over them. Or your special place might be a sparkling clean kitchen, with cinnamon buns baking in the oven. Through the kitchen window you can see fields of yellow wheat. A wind chime flutters in the breeze. Try taping this exercise and playing it, or have a friend read it to you slowly.

To go to your safe and special place, lie down, be totally comfortable. Close your eyes...Walk slowly to a quiet place in your mind...Your place can be inside or outside...It needs to be peaceful and safe...Picture yourself unloading your anxieties, your worries...Notice the view in the distance....What do you see?...What do you smell?...What do you hear?...Notice what is before you...Reach out and touch it...How does it feel?...Smell it...Hear it...Make the temperature comfortable...Be safe here...Look around for a special spot, a private spot...Find the path to this place...Feel the ground with your feet...Look above you...What do you see?...Hear?...Smell?...Walk down this path until you can enter your own quiet, comfortable, safe place.

You have arrived at your special place...What is under your feet?...How does it feel?...Take several steps...What do you see above you?...What do you hear?...Do you hear something else?...Reach out and touch something...What is its texture?...

Sit or lie in your special place...Notice its smells, sounds, sights...This is your place and nothing can harm you here...If danger is here, expel it...Spend a few minutes realizing you are relaxed, safe and comfortable.

Memorize this place's smells, tastes, sights, sounds...You can come back and relax here whenever you want...Leave by the same path or entrance...Notice the ground, touch things near you...Look far away and appreciate the view...Remind yourself this special place you created can be entered whenever you wish. Say an affirmation such as, "I can relax here," or "This is my safe and special place. I can come here whenever I wish."

Now open your eyes and spend a few seconds appreciating your relaxation.

Source: Adapted from Davis, M, Eshelman, E, and McKay, M. *The Relaxation and Stress Reduction Workbook*. 1995, New Harbinger Productions, Inc. Retrieved 7/21/2010 from <http://www.ohrd.wisc.edu/Home/Portals/0/OPC/2009/Letting%20Go%20of%20Stress.pdf>