

Guided Imagery

Visualization, or *guided imagery*, is a variation on traditional meditation that can help relieve stress. When used as a relaxation technique, guided imagery involves imagining a scene in which you feel at peace, free to let go of all tension and anxiety. Choose whatever setting is most calming to you, whether a tropical beach, a favorite childhood spot, or a quiet wooded glen. You can do this visualization exercise on your own, with a therapist's help, or using an audio recording.

Close your eyes and let your worries drift away. Imagine your restful place. Picture it as vividly as you can—everything you can see, hear, smell, and feel. Guided imagery works best if you incorporate as many sensory details as possible. For example, if you are thinking about a dock on a quiet lake:

- **See** the sun setting over the water
- **Hear** the birds singing
- **Smell** the pine trees
- **Feel** the cool water on your bare feet
- **Taste** the fresh, clean air