

Balloon visualisation

Find a place where you won't be disturbed for at least ten minutes.

Think about your environment; make sure the lighting is not too bright. You may choose to close your eyes and play some quiet, soothing music, particularly if there are any distracting sounds. Make sure that you are warm, as it is normal to cool down during relaxation.

Sit, well supported, in a chair, with both feet flat on the floor. Alternatively, lie down on a rug or blanket on the floor. Use a cushion under your knees if your back is uncomfortable.

Focus on your breathing for a moment and make your out-breath a little longer than your in-breath. As you breathe out, allow the features of your face to soften, allow your shoulders to soften and drop down and away from your ears. Soften into your belly and let go.

Allow your breath to settle.

Now picture yourself lying in a warm place, you are comfortable and completely safe.

Take your thoughts back to your breathing and as you breathe out, imagine that you are slowly and silently blowing up your own personal balloon.

Each time you breathe out, the balloon grows a little bigger.

Imagine what colour or colours your balloon is, any colour you like. Imagine what shape it becomes as you inflate it...

Now imagine that you can place any worries, cares, or concerns you might have inside your balloon. You can place any roles that you play in your life or responsibilities that you hold into your balloon; gently breathe them out into your balloon.

Now as you breathe out, picture your balloon floating up and away, gently and silently into the sky. If you feel that you cannot completely let go of those responsibilities, tie a kite string onto the balloon and slowly pay it out.

Watch as your balloon drifts gently up into the sky, becoming smaller and smaller, less and less significant against a pure blue sky.....

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Gently bring your thoughts back to the room.

Become aware of any sounds.

Bring your thoughts back to your body and the points of contact between your body and the floor or chair.

Become aware of your breathing and gently deepen your in-breath.

Wriggle your fingers and toes.

As you breathe in, have a good stretch and a yawn as you breathe out.

Get up slowly and have a little shake and a stamp of your feet.

Return to your day with renewed energy levels and a calm mind.