Guided Imagery for Pain Management

What is Guided Imagery?
Guided Imagery uses thoughts to ease pain in the body and promote relaxation. This method uses mental images to create feelings of well-being. You can also use other senses to help enrich the mental image.

One common guided imagery scene is seeing yourself on a beach where you can feel sand, hear waves, smell sunscreen, and taste a cool drink.

Here are the 5 steps to your first guided imagery session:

**Step 1:** Find your “Why” and set the scene. Remember that your goal is to ease your pain. To set the scene, think about your “happy place” – real or imagined. You will use this happy place later.

**Step 2:** Find a relaxing pose. A popular pose is lying on the back with hands. If you find this pose painful, you may try other poses. You can also try lying how you like to fall asleep. You can even use a pillow or warm blanket! The key is to be comfortable.

**Step 3:** Controlled breathing pattern. Once you are in a comfortable position, the focus turns to breathing. Deep breathing alone has been shown to have a lot of mental and physical health benefits. Breathing through the nose and out the mouth is recommended. Count up to 3 seconds while inhaling and 5 seconds while exhaling. Use an easy tempo and keep a focus on the breathing throughout the session.

**Step 4:** Create an image of the environment. Think of the happy place you decided on in Step 1. Try to use all of your senses – what sounds and smells surround you? What would you feel on your skin?

**Step 5:** Remember your “Why”. Imagine yourself pain-free and relaxed. Imagine what you would do in that scene if you had no pain. Guided imagery sessions can last as long as you want them to. Do not rush the experience so you can feel the full effects.
There are also many phone apps, recordings, and online videos to help you learn and practice guided imagery.

Other ways to access guided imagery from home:

- YouTube
- Podcast
- Book
  - [https://amzn.to/3rhpcUk](https://amzn.to/3rhpcUk)
  - [https://amzn.to/3bYMoQH](https://amzn.to/3bYMoQH)
- Guided Imagery Script
  - [https://amzn.to/3uMnRqD](https://amzn.to/3uMnRqD)
- App
  - [https://www.headspace.com](https://www.headspace.com)
    - Available on Apple iOS or Android devices
  - [https://www.aurahealth.io](https://www.aurahealth.io)
    - Available on Apple iOS or Android devices
- Online course