

Safe Space Activity

1.

This is a mindfulness-based grounding activity designed to assist clients who may be dysregulated or experiencing anxiety, panic, stress or strong cravings. It contains a suggested script for guiding your client through the activity.

Firstly, ask permission

It sounds like you are getting a lot of overwhelming feelings at the moment and sometimes when we feel this way it can be helpful to have a way to relax and feel calm. Is it okay if we try a little activity to see if it might be helpful to you? *(wait for response)*

Explain the concept

This short meditation activity is called 'Safe Space'. It's a simple exercise you can do by yourself but I'm going to talk you through how to do it. Is that okay? *(wait for response)*. Before we start, I want to check that you are somewhere where it is okay to do this activity. Are you able to go somewhere where you won't be disturbed by other people? *(explore if necessary)*

Begin the activity

Okay, so I might pause at different times during the activity just to let you think, but I will still be here on the end of the phone, okay? *(wait for response)*

To start we will just take a couple of moments to try to focus on your breath and, each time as we breathe out, I want you to imagine any anxiety or tension in your body being released as you breathe out. If you feel safe doing so close your eyes and we will just take a few slow breaths. So breathe in..... one.....two.....three..... and out.....one..... two.... three..... And breathe in.....one..... two.....three..... and then out.....one.....two..... three..... and last breath in..... one..... two.....three..... and then out.....one.....two.....three.....

Okay now I want you to imagine a place where you feel calm. This is a safe space. It might be somewhere you have been in the past where you felt relaxed, or somewhere you might have seen or dreamed of before. It might be the beach, or a rainforest, or a particular house or room, or just seeing the floating clouds above you. I'm just going to pause for a few seconds while you picture that image in your mind before we continue. *(pause for 5 seconds approx.)*. At any time if you see or feel any negative images entering your mind go back to the image of this safe space.

Okay so now look around that place, notice what it looks like, what are the colours and the shapes that you see? What do you notice about this place? *(pause for approx. 5 seconds)*

What are the sounds that you hear in this place? Are there birds or water? Or is there just silence? *(pause for approx. 5 seconds)*

Are there any smells that you notice in this place? *(pause for approx. 5 seconds)*

Now I want you to focus on any physical sensations that you might feel in this place. What does the ground feel like under your feet? What does the temperature feel like? Is there anything you can touch in this place? *(pause for approx. 5 seconds)*

How does this place make you feel? Where are you feeling this in your body? *(pause for 5 seconds)* What is the name you can give this place, so you can come back here whenever you need to in the future? *(pause for 5 seconds)*

So now we have found this safe space we know we can go back there anytime we need to. But for now, we are going to come back. We are going to slowly wiggle our feet and push them into the ground underneath us, slowly moving our body a little bit at a time, maybe stretching our arms, and when you're ready just slowly open your eyes.

Debrief the activity

So tell me, how did you feel doing that activity? *(explore)*