

HOW TO CREATE YOUR INNER SANCTUARY

1 GET COMFORTABLE

Get into a comfortable seated or lying position in a place where you will not be disturbed. With your eyes closed or open, focus your attention on your body. Notice the sensations you're having including how your chest is moving as you inhale and exhale.

2 DESIGNATE A LOCATION

Now focus on identifying all the areas of your body where you feel calm or neutral. It could be a hand, a finger, a toe, a shoulder, etc. Next, designate one area to be the location of your Sanctuary. For example, my left wrist is often a calm part of my body, so I locate my Sanctuary there.

3 PICTURE YOUR SANCTUARY

Focus on that area right now. Picture a space where you feel calm, comfortable, safe, and comfy. In this space, you are free to have whatever thoughts and feelings you experience related to your loved one or situation. You have several resources available to you in your Sanctuary.

4 YOUR RESOURCES

You can have any resources you need, and compassion, encouragement, hope, wisdom, and strength are always available. Identify at least one person, image, or memory that represents each resource. The person or image can be a human or pet, real or fictional. Examples: a teacher, a cat, nurturing mother, movie character, time when you acted compassionately towards someone, etc.

5 EXAMPLES

If you're judging yourself or others, apply your compassion resource. If you're feeling unmotivated or pessimistic, use your encouragement and hope resources. If you're struggling with knowing what to do, call on your wisdom resource. And if you're feeling weak or unstable, you can call on your strength resource.

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6

ACCESSING YOUR SANCTUARY

Whenever you feel difficult feelings such as grief, anger, etc. focus on the part of your body that feels calm or neutral and picture yourself entering your Sanctuary at that part. It's okay if the location changes. Think of it as the place where you can be fully present with your feelings.

7

APPLYING YOUR SANCTUARY

Once you've entered your Sanctuary, let yourself feel the comfort, warm, and security present. In your Sanctuary, nothing can harm you. Once you feel comfortable, go to the place in your body where you feel a disturbance connected to the difficult feelings you're having.

8

APPLYING YOUR SANCTUARY

Allow yourself to feel any disturbing sensations. Just notice them and any urges to act. If you feel the urge to cry, do so. If you want to ball your hands up into fists and squeeze them, do so. If you just want to shake your arms, do so. Jump up and down, etc. Continue noticing them until they begin to subside. You can then choose to leave the Sanctuary or remain until they completely subside.

9

APPLYING YOUR SANCTUARY

If your feelings get overwhelming, take slow deep breaths to begin calming down your nervous system. You can also access the appropriate resource to help you by picturing it and allowing it to provide you with what you need. For example, giving you strength or compassion, or asking for advice, or receiving a hug.

10

MODIFY AS NEEDED

You can modify your Sanctuary as needed. If you want it to be outdoors, a treehouse, a bedroom, or a beach, it is entirely up to you. What's most important is that it is a place that feels comfortable, warm, and safe.