

VISUALIZATION

Guided imagery is probably best done with someone else narrating the experience. It's hard to truly get into it as you're reading a handout. However, if you'd like to structure a guided meditation session yourself, here are some pointers:

- Create a mental image of a relaxing scene, such as a gorgeous, deserted beach or tranquil clearing in a forest. You might also imagine a place in the city, while making it peaceful by removing the crowds and congestion. For example, you might picture yourself strolling through Times Square at night without any traffic or tourists. The nighttime lights and colors could be quite pretty. Or you might recall a recent trip to a local park (see below).
- Use all of your senses in describing the scene. You not only want to notice what you see, but you also want to check-in with other sensory aspects of the experience.
 - What do you hear? Waves on the shore? Chirping birds? Wind?
 - What scents are carried on the air? Pine? Suntan lotion? Maple syrup? Coffee?
 - Do you feel anything on your skin, such as the warm rays of the sun or the softness of your sweater?
 - What do you see? What are the shapes, colors, and textures?
 - Can you taste anything? Perhaps you're drinking lemonade or sucking on a mint.
- In order to guide yourself best through the visualization exercise, either write down or draw the details of the scene that you will be bringing to mind. Ideally, you would record a guided description for yourself, but you might not have the necessary recording equipment readily available. You might also use a photo or postcard to prompt you.

