



Senior Nutrition Program Activity Guide: Guided Imagery Relaxation

Guided imagery is a simple way to address health and well-being. This relaxation technique involves focusing on a specific object, sound, or experience. Benefits can include strengthening the immune system, reducing pain, decreasing depression, and improving sleep.

This activity requires at least one person to lead the activity and one participant. It can be offered by phone or virtual platform (e.g., [Zoom meeting](#)). The leader needs a script for the session and the ability to play soft background noise like instrumental music or ocean sound.

Coordination

- Assign someone to plan and manage the activity.
- Select a time and date for the event and schedule the teleconference or online meeting event.
- If requiring registration, create a sign-up form and distribute to potential participants.
- Remind participants the day before the event and tell them how they can prepare (e.g., quiet space).
- Start the event 15 (phone) or 30 (video) minutes early to troubleshoot any technical issues.

Sample Script

After welcoming everyone and answering questions, give the following directions as well as any others specific to their unique activity and format (e.g., placing phones on mute).

Find a quiet place, free from distractions. Lie on the floor or recline in a chair. Loosen any tight clothing. Close your eyes. Rest your hands in your lap or on the chair. Take a few slow, even, deep breaths, in through your nose, and out through your mouth.

Very slowly, begin the guided exercise. Suggested places for long pauses are represented by an arrow.

Imagine you are walking down a path in a beautiful forest. There are some big evergreen trees, some smaller oak trees, dogwood trees with white flowers, and some very fragrant trees. The air smells so crisp and fresh.

It feels wonderful to be out here, in nature, enjoying the beauty. It is a warm summer day, and the sun is shining through the branches of the big trees.

As you continue to walk, the path divides. You decide to go down the right side of the path. In the distance, you hear the sounds of water. You slowly walk towards the sound, taking in all the beauty along the way. At the end of the path, you see a stream. As you gaze up, you see the most beautiful waterfall in front of you.

It is calming and the sun is cascading down onto large rocks. The sound of rushing water relaxes you. You can feel the mist coming off the waterfall. It feels cool and refreshing on this warm summer day.

You decide to sit for a while and enjoy the spectacular scenery. Just sit, relax, take in all the beauty, and escape from the hustle and bustle of life. As you sit in this magical place, you feel a calm come over you.

As you are taking in the beauty of this place, you notice a green leaf in the stream. Allow this leaf to carry away any worries and stress. Watch the leaf as it floats slowly down the stream, over the rocks, and fades away. Just let go. ▶
Just let go.

Here in this place, any stress or worries seem to be washed away. It clears your mind and carries away any frustration and difficult thoughts.

There is a feeling of calm and relaxation here. ▶

It is now time to return home. As you stand up, you take one more look at the stream, the waterfall, and the beauty this place offers. You head back down the path, feeling calm. You know you can come back to this peaceful place at any time to calm your body and mind and let go of any worries or stress. This calm, peaceful place by the waterfall invites you to wash away your worries or stress anytime.

You feel calm and refreshed now. You can feel renewed energy entering your body and revitalizing you completely.

You take in a deep breath, and when you are ready, open your eyes.