

Lead a series of youth workshops – Lesson 5: Guided Imagery

Guided imagery can have many health-related physical and emotional benefits. The steps that follow can help you teach young people to use their imaginations to actually change how they are feeling and what they are focused on.

What You Need

- Electronic devices for each participant or one with a larger screen that can be seen by all
- Internet connection
- Smart Board or projector
- Copies of the “Create the State You Want” worksheet: changetochill.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/05/Create-the-State-You-Want-worksheet.pdf
- Pen or pencil (one for each participant)
- Copies of “Self-Guided Imagery activity” worksheet: changetochill.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/10/Self-Guided_Imagery_worksheet.pdf
- Copies of “Guided Imagery Step-by-Step How-to” flier: changetochill.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/10/Guided_Imagery_Step-by-Step.pdf

Step 1: Check In – Sleep Tracker

Ask participants to say which activity or suggestion from the website they have done since your last meeting. Ask them to describe what they did and what it felt like.

Step 2: Better Sleep Tips

After discussing findings from participants’ sleep trackers, distribute the “Better Sleep Tips” handout for them to take home.

“Better Sleep Tips” flier (pdf): <http://www.changetochill.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/08/Better-Sleep-Tips-flier.pdf>

Step 3: Guided Imagery

Show the Guided Imagery video together and choose one of the processes for participants to try, either to de-stress or to focus on a future goal. At the end talk about how they think they could use this strategy in different specific situations.

Guided Imagery video: <https://youtu.be/BD3ubF-5KCg>

- Special Place Guided Imagery practice

Listen to the audio or read the “Special Place Guided Imagery” script aloud to the group. When you’ve finished, ask the group these questions:

1. How do you feel?
2. What did you notice during this relaxation practice?
3. At what points during your day could you use a few minutes of guided imagery? Do you think practicing using this method could help you do that?

Listen to the audio: <https://youtu.be/VbtYP4OINos>

“Special Place Guided Imagery” script (pdf): changetochill.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/08/Special-Place-Guided-Imagery.pdf

- Distribute the “Self-Guided Imagery” and “Create the State You Want” worksheets and explain that one of the most powerful yet simple self-awareness techniques is guided imagery. Guided imagery can have many health-related physical and emotional benefits. It can help you feel less nervous or upset, be less bothered by pain or reach a goal such as an athletic or academic achievement. Through guided imagery you can learn to use your imagination to actually change how you are feeling and what you are focused on. Have participants complete the worksheets and if they are comfortable doing so, share what they wrote or drew with one other person.

“Self-Guided Imagery Activity” worksheet (pdf): changetochill.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/10/Self-Guided-Imagery-worksheet.pdf

“Create the State You Want” worksheet (pdf): changetochill.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/05/Create-the-State-You-Want-worksheet.pdf

Step 4: Get Focused Meditation

Listen to the audio or read the “Get Focused” meditation script aloud to the group. When you’ve finished, ask the group these questions:

1. How do you feel?
2. What did you notice during this relaxation practice?
3. At what points during your day could you use a few minutes of relaxation? Do you think practicing using this method could help you do that?

Point out that learning to focus works to calm you and relieve stress.

Listen to the audio: <https://youtu.be/aNNSeHt19Uw>

“Get Focused” meditation script (pdf): changetochill.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/05/Get-Focused-meditation.pdf

Step 5: Mindful Movement

As time and space allow, pick and choose as many or as little of the following mindful movement relaxation activities to follow along with. These simple, short exercises provide teens with more options to help them feel better and stress less.

- Front Stretch Right: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vSs06opurd0>
- Front Stretch Left: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mBDSIH_t--k
- Basic Spine Flex: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dRxbqzq1oEw>
- Neck Turns: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GmY85gSirlc>
- Washing Machine: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wutpgAQZi6Y>
- Shoulder Rolls: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DK6VtanFiZI>
- Shoulder Shrugs: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CaICnGnZ7NY>
- Half-Moon Neck Rolls: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=e9SF1e7B8h4>

Step 6: Chill at Home

Try guided imagery as a stress management tool. Point out that Changing to Chill is what’s known as a practice. It’s something you do regularly and learn about over time. No one ever just learns to chill once and then is done. Encourage teens to continue a guided imagery practice as a stress management tool.

Guided Imagery Step-by-Step How-to (pdf): changetochill.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/10/Guided_Imagery_Step-by-Step.pdf