

Ways to Wellness™

Integrative Medicine for Kids

MENTAL IMAGERY



What's it about? Try finishing this sentence:

Right now, I would rather be...

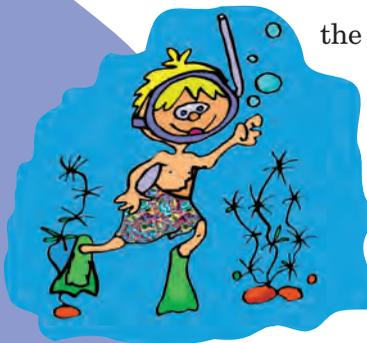
- a.) *sitting on a sunny beach with my toes in the warm sand.*
- b.) *waiting for the school bus in the freezing rain.*

No-brainer, right? Notice how fast your body reacted to those two ideas.

Just thinking about the words “warm sand” probably made you relax a little, while the words “freezing rain” may have made you a little tense.

And that gives you a quick idea of what Mental Imagery is all about. Basically, it's about helping your body by letting your mind take you to healthy places that feel good.

How does it work? If you're really good at daydreaming (and who isn't?), you've probably figured out that your mind is a pretty powerful tool. It can take you away from wherever you are—like your math class—and plunk you down in a place where you feel safe, comfortable, happy or excited. You might picture walking along the beach, looking at waves. Or snuggling up on the couch, watching your favorite TV show. Or getting a home run. Or riding your bike down a big hill on a sunny day.



Sometimes, of course, that's not always the best use of your mind. (Think about the grades you'd get if you did this all the time!) But when your body has problems, it's good to know that powerful mind of yours can help you feel better. If you have pain, for example, your mind can help you picture yourself soothed and relaxed. If you're sad or afraid, your mind can bring you to places that feel happy and calm. If you worry a lot, your mind can replace those worried thoughts with reassuring thoughts. Every change in your thinking results in a change in your body.

Go where you want to go. All of this sounds pretty simple, but it does take some practice. After all, if your mind is very good at worrying, it may be hard at first to convince it to do something else!

Professionals trained to teach kids relaxation with mental imagery (also called self-hypnosis) can help you learn these skills. They'll guide you into finding those special places in your mind where you're in control, and where you feel happy and comfortable. You'll learn to go wherever you want to go—whenever you want—in order to feel better.



For more information call 612-813-7888
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