

Tip Sheet: Take Steps to Reduce Your Painful Thoughts

- Start by closing your eyes and taking a few deep breaths. Let your breathing become slow and regular.
- Now picture yourself in a safe, beautiful, and relaxing place. For example, picture yourself lying on a blanket in a beautiful meadow on a warm, comfortable summer's day. You are surrounded by a forest where the only sounds are birds chirping and a gentle brook babbling by. Focus on what you can detect with each of your senses.
- *Feel* the warmth of the sun on your face, *hear* the water running over the stones of the brook, and *smell* the fresh scent of trees and the aroma of the grass and flowers in the meadow. Picture yourself looking up at the clouds drifting by slowly and the birds flying in the distance.
- Tell yourself: "I may have cares and worries, but I don't have them here and now." Enjoy the feeling of peaceful relaxation.
- When you feel calm and relaxed, let yourself come back gently to the real world, take a few deep breaths, and stretch.