

## Visualization:

Visualization is a conscious use of **imagination** to create sensory cues which trigger relaxation. An important distinction to remember is that relaxation is quite different than sleep. The brain wave pattern associated with **deep relaxation** is “*alpha*” or “*theta*” while it is “*delta*” for sleep. The relaxation brain waves have many valuable qualities. For someone who gets adequate sleep, the revitalization from a short relaxation practice, such as visualization, can be significantly more potent than from having a short nap.

**Note:** To increase the effectiveness of this exercise, tape the following narrative, or have someone with a gentle, pleasing, melodic voice do the taping for you, or simply read it to you. Read it very slowly. Play a relaxation tape (ocean, gulls, soft music) in the background.

Sit back in a chair with your spine supported. Bend your knees and place your feet on the floor with your hands resting in your lap. Place your awareness on your forehead and eye muscles and consciously relax them to the point where you do not want to open them they are so relaxed.

Now, in your mind, picture yourself walking on the soft sands of a distant tropical beach, far away from civilization, on a yet to be discovered island in the south seas or a beach you once were on and remember as peaceful and secluded. This is a special place just for you, a place you can go to, anytime you wish, to find peace and solitude—a place where there is no one else and a place you can relax and be yourself with all the worries and cares left behind you, do not need them here.

Picture yourself on this warm, sunny, tropical beach and feel the soft, warm sand under your feet and see the great expanse of turquoise ocean in front of you, stretching all the way to the horizon. Look at the quiet, deep blue of the endless sky, with soft, fluffy clouds drifting lazily across the sky, so slowly that they hardly seem to move. Feel the warm breezes as they flow across your skin and through your hair. Smell the soft, salty smell of the ocean and feel the healing warmth of the sun as it bathes your face and body in its rays.

As you stand there, relaxing and letting all your tension go, allow yourself to hear the soft, melancholy cries of the seagulls as they float on the soft currents of wind high above the beach. Walk slowly along this beach now, and be aware of the soft, warm sand under your feet and the hypnotizing rhythm of the small waves as they lap the shoreline in front of you. Down the beach you can see the palm trees waving slowly in the soft breezes. Allow these sights, sounds and smells to flow over your body, bringing you peace and tranquility and a feeling of serenity.

This is a place you can relax and have all tension, muscle pain, worries and discomforts washed away. You are in a magical place, a beautiful place where you can relax and rejuvenate your mind and body. This is your special hide-away, and you can come here anytime you wish, just by closing your eyes and seeing yourself here. Look around you and see the wonders, feel the warmth and hear the peaceful sounds. Relax... Look at the beauty and become peaceful. In this place, your aches and pains disappear—you can be as healthy and as strong as you wish to be, knowing that when you leave here, you will be more healthy and relaxed and more sure of your life.

Rest and relax now, and enjoy your paradise for awhile. Just look around and be peaceful for awhile. Have a few minutes of silence as you heal and relax. (Period of Quiet 5-10 minutes).

Now, slowly look around you one last time. Memorize the beauty and the solitude so you can come back and so you can call up this wondrous feeling anytime you wish. It is there now, in your subconscious, and you can draw on it in times of stress by saying the word “ocean” and letting the feeling wash over you. This is your place now, and you can come here anytime to find peace, relaxation and healing. Now, slowly walk away from the beach into the forest behind you and close your mind’s eye. Be aware now, of the chair or couch under you and count to five slowly. At the count of five open your eyes and feel relaxed and fresh and so peaceful. Now you have the energy and strength to do whatever you wish.