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Radiation Therapy Imagery

Welcome to this Healthy Living To Go podcast from Kaiser Permanente, designed to fit the way you live and the way you learn. Listen, live well, and thrive.

Hello. I'm Belleruth Naparstek, and this is a guided imagery tape designed to help you relax, feel stronger and help you work with your radiation therapy.

Guided imagery is a kind of deliberate, directed daydreaming. We know from research that listening to guided imagery can help speed up healing, soothe your nerves, restore energy, and relieve pain.

So in addition to taking time to rest, using good nutrition, getting physical and emotional support when you need it, and choosing your activities carefully, listening to this guided imagery tape is another good way to take good care of yourself.

This tape will have a stronger and stronger effect the more you use it.

Don't worry if you find your mind wandering as you listen. With repeated use, the healing words and images on this tape will seep into your mind and body, even if you fall asleep. One caution though: please don't play this side of the tape while you're driving.

Try to play the tape once or twice a day, before or after your treatments, but remember, any time is a good time, and some time better than no time. Most people do well listening once or twice a day. An especially powerful time to listen is just as you're waking up or falling asleep. After several weeks, you may want to set it aside for a while, try some others or just listen to the music on the other side, and then come back to this side.

So see if you can take this next while to commit yourself to this process of engaging the power of your imagination to help you heal, with this safe and easy process. All you need to do is settle in, relax and let yourself listen...

To begin with, see if you can position yourself as comfortably as you can... shifting your weight so you're allowing your body to be fully supported... with your head, neck and spine straight... and gently allowing your eyes to close...letting your hands rest comfortably on your body... aware of the rise of your body as you breathe in... and the way it settles back down as you breathe out...

Becoming more and more attuned to your breath as it moves in and out of your body... inhaling as fully and deeply as you comfortably can... all the way down into your belly if you can... and breathing out as fully and completely as you can...

And this next time, as you're breathing in... see if you can imagine that the warm energy of your breath is going to any part of your body that's sore or tense or tight... and releasing the discomfort with the out-breath... so you can feel your breath going to all the tight, tense places.. warming and loosening and softening them... and then gathering up all the tension.. and breathing it out...

So that more and more, you can feel safe and comfortable... relaxed and easy... watching the cleansing action of your own breath...

And any unwelcome thoughts that come to mind... those too can be sent out with the breath... released with the exhale... so that for just a moment the mind is empty... for just a split second, it is free and clear space... and you are blessed with inner stillness...

And any emotions that are rocking around inside... those too can be noted, and acknowledged and sent out with the breath... so that your emotional self can be still and quiet... like a lake with no ripples...

And now, if you would, see if you can imagine a place... where you feel safe and peaceful and easy... a place you used to go to... or go to now... or somewhere you've always wanted to be... it doesn't matter... just so it's a place that's good and safe and peaceful to you...

And allowing the place to become real to you.. in all its dimensions... looking around you ... taking the place in with your eyes... enjoying the colors.. the scenery... looking over to your left... and over to your right..

Listening to the sounds of your place... whether it's the music of birds singing.. a bubbling brook... the rustling sounds of a soft wind through the leaves... or the powerful crash of ocean waves... just so you're letting your ears become attuned to all the beautiful sounds of this place... that is so safe and peaceful to you...

And smelling its rich fragrance... whether it's the sweet heavy scent of grass and flowers... or the sharp brace of salt sea air... the pungent, dark green smell of peat moss in the forest... or maybe it's the ozone-clean air of a snowy mountain top...

And noticing the feel of the air on your skin as it touches your face and neck.. and it might be crisp and dry... or balmy and wet... so you're just letting your skin enjoy the wonderful presence of this place... that is so safe and peaceful to you...

And as you become more and more attuned to the safety and beauty of this place... feeling thankful and happy to be there... you begin to feel a kind of tingling... a pleasant, energizing something in the air all around you.. a sense that something wonderful is just about to happen.. and you may even smile to yourself, because maybe you haven't had that feeling in a while.. but now you do know with some certainty that there is magic in this place... and something wonderful is just about to happen...

You suddenly realize that you are not alone... that there is a warm presence all around you... and surprised but not surprised, you can see that you are surrounded by a circle of powerful, caring allies... and some may be familiar... or some not... but they are all smiling and nodding their encouragement... warming you with their protective presence...

One of them approaches you... and you can see in the eyes that are looking into yours a gentle, powerful trustworthiness... and, with great focus and exquisite concentration... points to the place on your body that needs healing... sending a powerful ray of finely focused light ...bright and humming with its own healing energy... directly into the chaotic cells that need to be removed... a ray of light so powerful and intelligent... the intention behind it so clear and strong... that it knows exactly where to go... and what to do...

You can sense your body responding ... healthy tissue stepping back, making room for the light to do its work...

And you can feel the lesions start to melt, sense the clusters of cancer cells dissolving.. unable to resist the power of this remarkable light...

And perhaps you can feel other things melting too... long held hurts.. ancient fears... crusty old pockets of grief and guilt... all dissolving in the fierce intensity of this loving, laser-like light...

And your whole body picks up its cue... renewing its intention to be strong and well... shipping out fresh armies of fighter cells... utterly committed to your well being...patrolling the body for any unfortunate cancer cells that may cross their path...

Because you know.. you have things to do... purposes to accomplish... and you require a clear mind and a strong body for this... and you understand that you can do this... and there is help all around you...

Your ally nods and smiles... and with a look of deep understanding... and great reassurance... withdraws... and you can watch, peaceful and easy.. as the gentle ones all around you smile and follow suit.. because you know you can call them back... whenever you wish... to further the healing work you have already done...

And so... taking a cleansing breath... you can once again become aware of your safe and peaceful place... attuned to its special beauty... and knowing you can enter this place whenever you wish.. with the power and reach of your own remarkable mind..

And so... feeling the support beneath your body... the breath in your belly, the soft weight of your limbs... your hands and your feet... very gently and with soft eyes... allowing yourself back into waking reality... knowing in a deep place that you have done important, healing work... that you are better for this....

And so you are...