


Coping Strategies for Dealing with Intrusive and Distressing Images


Images



BREATHE
Practice mindful breathing, being aware of any sensations. Allow images to come and go in the background.




***Name the picture-'Aha! The.....picture/memory'. *I'm having the image/memory of....**



***Adjust your environment
*Guide your relaxation all the way through your body
*Focus on your breathing**



Place the image on a TV screen. Experiment with flipping, spinning, and stretching the image.



Add a humorous subtitle or voice-over to the image on the screen.



Add a musical soundtrack to the video clip.



Visualise the image in different locations, e.g. on a T-shirt, as a tattoo, or as a postage stamp.




Convert the image into a video clip then play it in slow motion, double speed, in reverse, black-and-white, or in different genres—e.g. Disney, Western, etc.




Place the image in a bubble and watch it float away.




Place the image on a leaf and watch it float down the river.



Look up recovery focused pictures online and substitute the negative images with these new ones.



Visualise the image in different locations, e.g. on a banner flying behind an airplane or as a bumper sticker.



Imagine the images as clouds floating by and eventually passing out of sight.



Imagine your greatest fear/thought as a decorated party banner.



Substitute/alter images of self-harm to make them comical or less intense.



My mind's showing me a picture of...

Some cognitive and acceptance strategies retrieved from:

- Harris, R 2007, *The happiness trap*, Trumpeter Books, Boston, Massachusetts, USA.
- Linehan, MM 1993, *Skills training manual for treating Borderline Personality Disorder*, The Guilford Press, New York, USA.

Sarah-Louise McKenzie